XVIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies

፲፮ኛው የኢትዮጵያ ጥናት ዓለም አቀፍ ጉባኤ

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies

Volume 1

Edited by
Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele

NTNU

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies

Volume 1

Edited by
Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele

Department of Social Anthropology,
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, 2009

Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele

ISBN 978-82-90817-27-0 (printed)

Vol. 1-4

http://www.svt.ntnu.no/ices16/

Printed in Norway by NTNU-trykk, Trondheim 2009

Table of contents

Table of contents, vol. 1

Anthropology

Islam

Ethiopian Orthdox *Täwahedo* Church

Politics

Table of contents, vol. 2

Development

Urban studies

Children

Human rights

Education

Music

Fine arts

Literature

Linguistics

Appendix: Conference programme

Author index

In: *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009

Preface

The 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies took place in Trondheim 2-7 July 2007. We remember these as hectic days, and we hope that our participants remember them as days of fruitful and challenging discussions in a friendly atmosphere. The weather was nice—probably quite some surprise to many of our guests—the museum in the centre of town hosted a special exhibition relating to Ethiopia, the conference sponsored a public concert with Ethiopian music, and the municipality flew Ethiopian flags on the main bridge in honour of our guests. Many participants have sent us kind messages after the conference, for which we would like to express our sincere gratitude.

Finally, the Proceedings are available. We shall explain details below, but there are a few points that need to be emphasized. The current publication is the official Proceedings of the conference, to which all participants were invited to submit their papers. The Proceedings will be printed in a limited number for documentation purposes, but the main form of distribution will be electronic. It will be permanently posted (as long as we are around) on our website, www.svt.ntnu.no/ices16, and we shall make the electronic version available to other institutions that may want to host it, e.g. the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Access and downloading is open to everybody and without charge.

In addition, a limited number of papers were selected for publishing by Harrassowitz Verlag[1]. The papers published in the book went through an extensive editing process and there were strict limits on length. The two versions of the same paper may therefore differ. While the paper published on Harrassowitz is a more carefully edited version, it is useful to check the Proceedings for any additional material.

There is one aspect where the Proceedings in its digital form is superior, viz. in illustrations. For financial reasons, illustrations are printed only in black and white, although they were submitted in colour. If you are interested in any of the illustrations, we strongly recommend checking the digital version.

The organization of the Proceedings is modelled on the conference programme (see appendix 1). There are some differences, however, due to the simple fact that the programme had to fit various panels into a set of rooms. For the Proceedings we have reorganized the panels in a more logical succession for the current purpose.

As mentioned above, all participants were invited at the conference to submit papers for the Proceedings. On the other hand, participants were also encouraged to use other publication outlets. Many have reported that they have done so. For those who did not submit or inform us that they published elsewhere, we sent several reminders, and we ended up with 116 papers. Due to changes of email addresses, this was not an easy process and there may be participants whom we could not reach.

The choice to publish the Proceedings primarily on the internet was dictated by our concern with costs and accessibility. A printed version would be quite expensive. One would also typically expect a stricter adherence to a uniform style than what we have

[1] *Research in Ethiopian Studies: Selected papers of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Trondheim July 2007,* ed. by Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra, Shiferaw Bekele, and Svein Ege, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag: Aethiopistische Forschungen Vol. 72, 2010. ISBN 978-3-447-06146-9.

enforced in the Proceedings. For the current publication we supplied a style sheet and transcription standards, but within certain limits the choice was largely up to the authors themselves. In a number of cases we had to ask the author to produce the final PDF file in order to reproduce the text correctly. In Ethiopian studies the great variety of fonts used is a major practical challenge. In many cases the only alternative would have been to retype the manuscript, a solution quite beyond our capacity.

The original idea, as reflected in the initial deadlines, was that the Proceedings would only receive light editing and would be published within a year of the conference. But as such undertakings before it, ours took much more time than expected, mainly due to our own limited capacity, but also due to the fact that papers have continued to be submitted and revised long after the deadlines.

The International Conference of Ethiopian Studies is a very special institution, rather unique in African studies. Outside Ethiopia, there are few institutions with more than a handful Ethiopianists. It is therefore very stimulating to meet once every few years to discuss issues with other specialists. The value of the Conference is well illustrated by the list of participants, here limited to those who presented papers at the conference:

Table 1: Number of participants by country

Ethiopia[2]	66
Germany	31
USA	24
Japan	16
Norway	14
France	11
Italy	7
United Kingdom	7
Israel	6
The Netherlands	3
Russia	3
Sweden	3
Poland	2
Belgium, Canada, Eritrea, Ireland, Switzerland	1 each

The conference was organized according to the traditional divisions, supplemented by a number of special panels, such as Islam, human rights, children, and music. Music was also integrated into the conference through the use of Ethiopian music and musicians both at the opening ceremony and at a public concert in town. There was also a special panel on film, combining the showing of films and academic studies of film. For a more detailed picture of the programme, the reader is referred to appendix 1.

There were 246 registered participants at the conference, 197 of whom presented papers. When preparing the conference, we aimed at only including actual presentations in the programme and the abstracts, but due to various last-minute changes, there are some minor discrepancies in the numbers. The printed abstracts for the conference contained 204 papers, but this was trimmed down to 198 participants in the final programme. A few of these participants were not able to attend, while a few others arrived unexpectedly at the conference and were included, leading to the final number of 197 presentations.

[2] Due to incomplete addresses, this number may include Ethiopians living abroad.

Editing the Proceedings is a very special experience. It is of course an overwhelming task, but more than anything we are struck by the great scope, the commitment and the vibrancy of Ethiopian studies. Here is everything, ranging from controversial discussions of current politics to the most erudite studies in ethnography or fine arts.

Table 2: Presentations by subject

Subject	At conference	In Proceedings
Archaeology	3	2
History	33	21
Anthropology	27	15
Islam	7	4
EOTC	7	5
Politics	20	13
Development	18	14
Urban studies	9	6
Children	4	4
Gender	2	0
Human rights	10	3
Education	7	5
Music	10	9
Fine arts	7	4
Literature	12	7
Linguistics	21	4
	197	116

This conference came about against many odds. There are a number of Ethiopianists in Norway, but they are scattered on a number of different institutions. Since the late 1990s Norwegian representatives had been encouraged to make an initiative to host the conference, but due to obvious shortcomings both in relevant manpower and the unlikelihood that we would get financial support, there was no great enthusiasm on the Norwegian side. We were therefore very happy to support the Italian attempt to host the conference. Unfortunately that did not work out, and the Norwegian representative was again requested to make an initiative.

The conference would not have come about but for the immediate positive reply by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, followed up by a promise by the Faculty of Social Sciences at NTNU to make a major contribution. With these two donors in place, we knew that a conference of some sorts could be held. We could thus start planning, and gradually we were fortunate enough to add enough donors to cover all priority activities. A full list of donors is presented on the last page of the programme in appendix 1.

A great many persons contributed to the conference, too many to mention by names. The Norwegian organizers would, however, like to express deep gratitude to Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele of Addis Ababa University. They were involved in the planning from an early stage and they made vital contributions to finalizing the programme during a few hectic days in May 2007. Furthermore, Bård Li was basically hijacked from the Programme for Development Studies; first he was asked to do some minor administrative work, but gradually this turned into his major task for about a year. We are of course also deeply grateful to his employer for consenting to this use of his time. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to our excellent conference secretary, Gunvor Sofie Tønne, and the “green shirts”, the students serving as hosts and guides during the conference.

The International Conference of Ethiopian Studies has become overwhelmingly successful. The first conference took place in Rome in 1959. Since then it has become an institution with considerable reputation and weight in the international community concerned with Ethiopian issues in the fields of social sciences and the humanities.

Table 3: Historical data on the International Conference of Ethiopian Studies

Year	No	Location	Published	Papers	Participants
1959	1	Rome	35	33	
1963	2	Manchester	31	35	78
1966	3	Addis Ababa	79	80	116
1972	4	Rome	59	59	
1977	5A	Nice	35	35	66
1978	5B	Chicago	61		82
1980	6	Tel Aviv	31	31	40
1982	7	Lund	71	70	87
1984	8	Addis Ababa	140		174
1986	9	Moscow	129		145
1988	10	Paris			
1991	11	Addis Ababa	117	113	
1994	12	Michigan	149		
1997	13	Kyoto	158	158	
2000	14	Addis Ababa	130	130	338
2003	15	Hamburg	130	344	More than 400
2007	16	Trondheim	116	197	246 registered

Note: The number of papers and participants is taken from various sources. The definitions used may vary and the figures should therefore be taken as approximations. The number of papers usually refers to published papers.

To organize the International Conference of Ethiopian Studies is a major challenge. There seems to be widespread agreement that for the conference to have a future, reform is necessary. The number of participants will have to be limited to the capacity of the organizer, and the quality of papers should be raised. On this background we set out with the goal that the 16th conference should aim to host no more than 200 papers. We also decided to use the internet extensively and that abstracts and papers should be posted on the conference website before the conference. At this stage papers were accessible only by password supplied to registered users. All information should thus be available to participants before they arrived in Trondheim. We also arranged a computer room so that participants could access and print papers while in Trondheim. Only the programme and the abstracts were printed. Many of the practical aspects are explained in more detail in appendix 2.

With the benefit of hindsight, we might consider a number of changes. First of all, the initial registration of abstracts could have been simplified. We were not able to utilise the information efficiently for planning purposes, and the main function of the data turned out to be to serve as a platform for applications for funding.

One aspect that worked very well, however, was our insistence on including only papers actually submitted. This meant that the conference programme and the printed abstracts corresponded exceptionally well with the actual presentations at the conference. It would have helped though to put an earlier deadline, and to start posting papers on the website as soon as they arrived. With the rather late deadline, we were flooded with papers, often in several versions, and our attempt to enforce some

consistency in style led to quite some delays in posting the papers. We would recommend therefore that the style at this stage should be left to the authors, and that all manuscripts should be submitted only in the PDF format.

The conference followed a well established pattern of plenary sessions in the morning, followed by parallel sessions for the presentation of papers. The papers presented in the plenary sessions were not specially commissioned but picked from among the papers already submitted for presentation. In selecting these papers we aimed to cover all the major disciplines, and to select papers combining high quality with broad appeal. We are very grateful to the plenary speakers, many of whom were asked to take on this role only a few days before the conference, in some cases during their travel to Trondheim.

Publishing the proceedings is no less of a challenge than organizing the conference. We had decided to use three publishing channels. The Proceedings would be electronic, thus combining reduced costs and improved accessibility. We would also try to publish a subset of the papers in a book (see footnote 1 above). And finally, participants were encouraged to publish their papers elsewhere.

The idea was that the electronic Proceedings would be published soon after the conference and that we would then turn to the much more carefully edited book. However, we were soon caught up by our regular university duties, already long overdue, and for the next year there was little time to devote to this task. This meant that the two processes became somewhat parallel and probably quite confusing to many of the contributors. We now think that it would have been better if we first finished the Proceedings and only then turned our attention to the book.

Our approach to organising the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies was a quite modest reform, modernizing tradition. Although we scaled the conference down and although we adopted a simplified publication system, it certainly was at the very limits of our capacity. A more radical reform might be needed in order to limit the burden on the organizers. The most obvious choice is to adopt the quite widespread practice of making a first call for panels, and limit the conference to these panels. It would then be up to scholars in different fields to take on the responsibility of organizing panels, corresponding with the participants, editing papers etc. There will of course be protests against such a reform, but the alternative may be that the International Conference of Ethiopian Studies grinds to a halt, basically due to its popularity.

Trondheim and Addis Ababa, 18 December 2009

The editors

In: *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009

The Temple of Yeha: Geo-Environmental Implications on its Site Selection and Preservation

Asfawossen Asrat[1]

The Temple of Yeha is located about 30 Km Northeast of Adwa town. Previous researchers attributed the selection of the site to the 'exceptional fertility of the soil in the well-watered broad valleys of the area'. The good preservation of the Temple has also been attributed to its subsequent conversion into a Christian church. However, geo-environmental studies in the area suggest that the selection of the site is attributed more to the strategic location of the site, being surrounded by mountain edifices. The soils are not exceptionally fertile nor are the valleys exceptionally broad. The thin residual soils developed on colluvial deposits. This paper further argues that the good preservation of the main wall of the Yeha Temple is mainly attributed to the durability of the sandstone used for its construction.

Introduction

The ancient history of Ethiopia can be traced back to around the eighth century BC when some sort of contact, apparently quite close, seems to have been maintained between Ethiopia and South Arabia (Munro-Hay, 1991). Archaeological excavations in many places in Ethiopia and Eritrea have unearthed many religious or funerary installations with strong similarities to those in South Arabia, which could be traced back to this Era (Munro-Hay, 1991; Phillipson, 1998). Among such sites, the notable ones are Hawelti-Melazo, about 15 Km south of Axum (de Contenson, 1961), and the temple, related buildings and tombs at Yeha, about 30 Km northeast of Adwa (Anfray, 1973). In general some ninety sites have been attributed to this pre-Aksumite period (Fattovich, 1989).

According to Munro-Hay (1991), it seems that the pre-Aksumite society on the Tigrai plateau, centred in the Aksum/Yeha region but extending further north and south had achieved state level during the sixth or fifth century BC (Phillipson, 1998), and that the major entity or state/kingdom came to be called D`MT (Daamat). The ruins of the temple and the related buildings and graves at Yeha are considered to be the evidences of this kingdom.

The selection of the Yeha site has been attributed by many to the exceptional fertility of the soils in the broad valleys and the good preservation of the Temple to the subsequent conversion of the latter to a Christian church (e.g. Phillipson, 1998). This paper presents results of a geological investigation of the Yeha site and the Temple which indicate that the selection is rather related to the strategic importance of the site rather than the broadness or exceptional fertility of the site.

[1] Department of Earth Sciences, Addis Ababa University, P. O. Box 1176, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Methodology

Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) images with 90m resolution have been used to construct the topographic maps, Digital Elevation Models (DEM), and cross-sections used in this study, using Global Mapper 5.0 and 3DEM Terrain Visualization softwares. A geological survey of the Yeha site and surrounding has also been conducted for the purpose of ground truthing and description of the geology of the terrain and the Temple.

Monuments in Yeha

The Temple of Yeha is located some 30 km northeast of the town of Adwa, accessed by an all-weather dirt road that branches from the main Adigrat-Adwa road and heads north for about 5 km (Fig. 1). Though Yeha is famous for the remarkable monument known as the Temple of the Moon, there are other remains of archaeological importance located in proximity to the site of the Temple.

Archaeological investigations by the Deutsche Axum-Expedition in 1906 and later by Francis Anfray in the early 1970s in a locality called Grat Beal Gebri, located some 200 m northeast of the site of the Temple, unearthed a series of massive square-sectioned monolithic pillars which, due to lack of appropriate conservation after their excavation, are now badly deteriorated (Phillipson, 1998). Francis Anfray also unearthed a series of rock-cut graves, one of which may have belonged to one of the D'MT rulers (Fattovich, 1990), on the lower southwestern slopes of the outcrop on which the Temple stands. Vertical shafts lead to one or more tomb-chambers, the contents of which included abundant pottery, copper-alloy sickles and other tools, and an alabaster vessel (Phillipson, 1998).

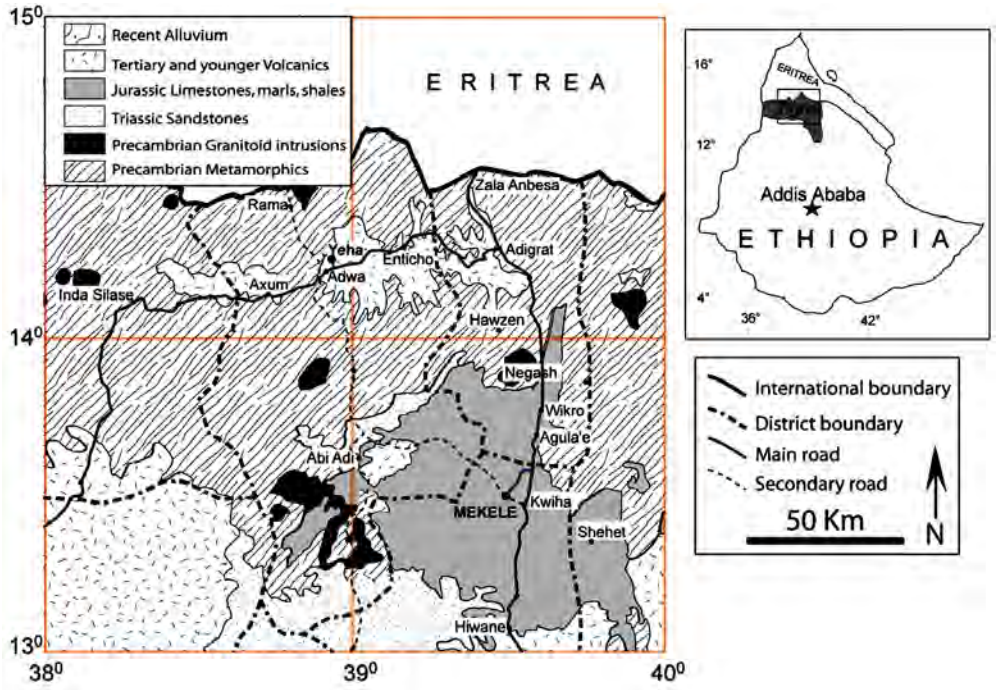


Figure 1. The location of Yeha village and the geological map of Northern Tigrai.

The Temple of Yeha

The Temple stands on a rocky hillock composed of a trachytic material, surrounded by plugs (Fig. 2). A modern church stands next to it on the same rocky hillock, within the same enclosure. The Temple is considered by the locals to belong to the sacred church precinct.

Figure 2. Yeha is located at the foot of a phonolite plug with a curious shape of a "Sitting Lion".

The Temple is a rectangular building measuring 18.5 by 15 m whose plain walls without apertures other than a single entrance still survive to a maximum height of more than 11 m (Fig. 3). Regular rectangular blocks of up to 3 m length were used to construct the wall, without the use of any mortar. A great precision has been exercised to dress the outer faces, edges and corners giving an impression that the lines among the blocks were carvings into a superb monolithic structure (Fig. 4). The main wall of the Temple is well preserved.

Figure 3. Front view of the Temple (view from west to east).

Figure 4. Regular rectangular sandstone blocks of up to 3 m length were used to construct the walls of the Temple, without the use of any mortar.

The interior of the building, though less well preserved than its exterior, presents an amazing construction style where it is possible to see that the wall, whose total thickness is about 60 cm, is not just a single structure but there are two walls interconnected to each other by smaller blocks of stone which serve as anchors (Fig. 5). The floor is also superbly built with 5 layers of variously sized blocks some measuring 1m by 50 cm, others 1m by 1m or 50 cm by 50 cm (Fig. 6). Close to the back wall of the interior part of the building is a rectangular hole (Fig. 6), which according to the locals, was excavated by the Deutsche Axum-Expedition in 1906.

Figure 5. View of the interior walls of the Temple indicating that they were built of another layer of equally well-dressed blocks as those of the exterior wall.

Figure 6. Floor of the Temple (left). A rectangular hole in the southeastern interior corner of the temple was excavated by the Deutsche Axum-Expedition in 1906 (right).

In front of the main entrance to the Temple are erected two roughly shaped granite stelae of three metres height. The date of their erection seems to be much more modern. A modern church stands next to the Temple and the former either incorporates in its walls or safely houses in its treasury some carvings and slabs, which probably were once part of the Temple structure. Two finely carved stones depicting a frieze of stylized ibex figures are incorporated in the walls of the modern church, while three stone slabs with Sabean texts, two of them from the same inscription with raised lettering, and another incised (Phillipson, 1998) are kept in the church treasury.

Geo-Environmental Setting of Yeha Site

The Yeha site is located in a narrow valley surrounded by phonolite plugs and domes. These plugs and domes, considered to be Pliocene in age, are found above the Trap sequence, northeast of Adwa, in an area of about 20 km by 30 km, generally following a northeast-southwest orientation (Fig. 7), probably indicating their eruption along a weakness line oriented in the same direction. The plugs are phonolitic to trachytic in composition, forming inverted cone-shaped isolated peaks and circular domes, whose shapes were later modified by differential weathering (Fig. 8).

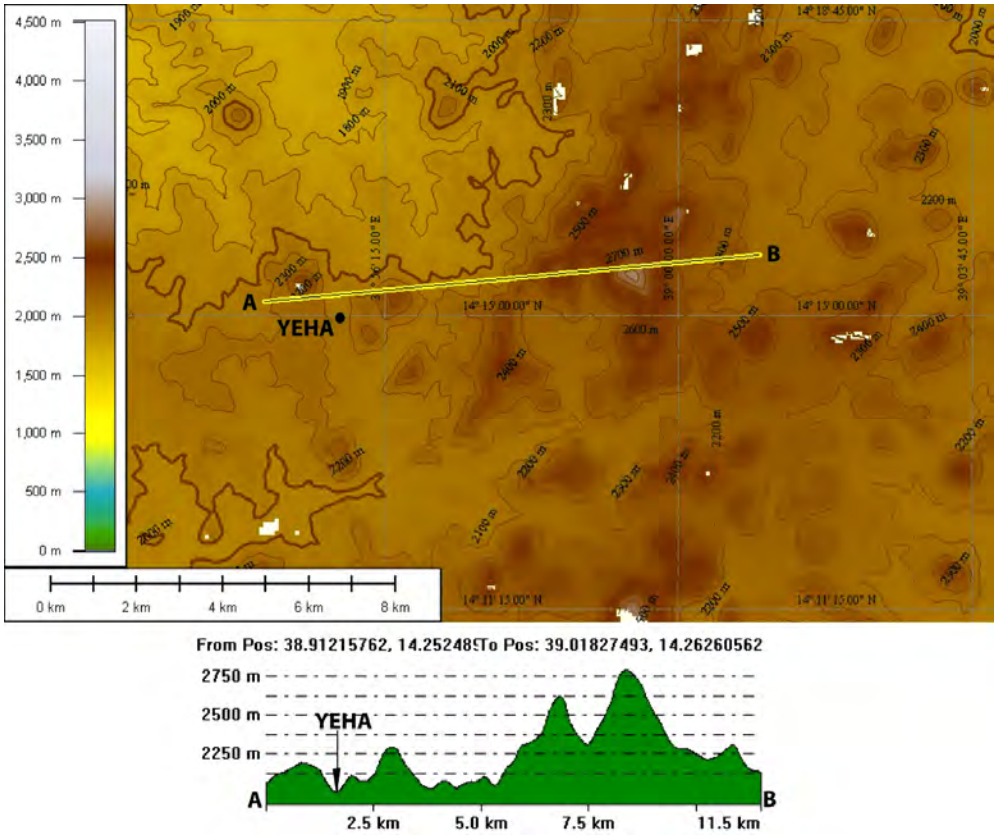


Figure 7. Topographic map of the Yeha area and its surrounding. The profile section (bottom) clearly depicts the distinct inverted cone-shaped phonolite plugs. The location of the site of Yeha is marked.

The narrow valleys are filled by colluvial deposits which have been eroded from the phonolite plugs. The thin soil developed on these colluvial deposits is mainly of cambisol type while luvisols form close to the ridges and volcanic plugs. The cambisols are characterized by altered subsurface horizon with dominant textures being very fine sand, loamy very fine sand or silt. These cambisols occur mostly on slopes and are shallow or contain many stones or rock outcrops. Luvisols occur scattered dominantly at the foot of structural or volcanic ridges. The dominant types are vertic luvisols, which may be attributed to the volcanic source of the soils. Although such soils may have considerable amount of weatherable minerals, their permeability may be low and their fertility is generally low.

Figure 8. The Adwa phonolite plugs as viewed from East to West.

Discussion

Construction Materials

The architectural perfection of the Temple is the most important aspect of the site at first glance. However, close inspection of the construction materials makes it more interesting. The Temple is entirely built of fine-grained sandstone blocks which show striking uniformity in composition and texture, implying that they must have been quarried from a massive sandstone bed. The sandstone is qaurtzose arenite (with more than 95 % of quartz grains) with some silicification, although cements may vary from calcite to iron oxides as can be observed in the reddish to brownish staining on the weathered surface of the blocks (Asrat, 2002, Asrat et al., 2005).

There are no any indications as to where these sandstones were quarried from. These sandstones belong to the Adigrat Sandstone (Asrat, 2002) and the nearest natural exposure of these sandstones is some 50 Km east or southeast of Yeha. However, the western equivalent of this sandstone known as the Tekeze Sandstone is exposed in some gorges only some 15 Km southwest of Yeha. The sandstone used to construct the Temple may have been quarried from such gorges, seeing their proximity to the place of construction, though no compelling justification can be given to disregard other possibilities.

Site Selection

The selection of the Yeha site has been generally attributed to the broad valleys filled with fertile soils. Phillipson (1998) particularly describes the setting of the site in the following terms: “Yeha lies in a well-watered valley with deep fertile soils, surrounded and sheltered by mountains”, and attributes the selection of this site to the exceptional fertility of the soils. However, terrain analysis indicates that the Yeha site lies in a very narrow valley which is surrounded by the phonolite plugs (Fig. 7 to 10). The particular valley where the Temple of Yeha, and probably the centre of the civilization, was located lies in a particularly narrow valley of not more than 1 km across. The terrain East of Yeha is mostly rugged as it is covered by the phonolite plugs, while the terrain west of Yeha is covered by highly foliated metamorphic rocks which form elongated ridges and valleys covered by thin soil. The Yeha site is not, therefore, uniquely a broad valley covered by exceptionally fertile soils.

The most striking feature of the Yeha site is that it lies at the foot of a phonolite plug which is the western most plug in the rugged terrain. The rugged terrain of the phonolite

plugs extends for more than 20 km to the east, northeast and southeast starting from the Yeha site (Fig. 9). The Yeha Temple, therefore, seems to be in an exceptionally strategic location as the phonolite plugs may have served as natural garrisons or edifices along a north-south line (broken line in Fig. 9) against any possible attack. This calls for a conclusion that the selection of the site should be attributed to the exceptional strategic location of the site being surrounded by mountain edifices than to the "exceptional' fertility or "broadness" of the valley.

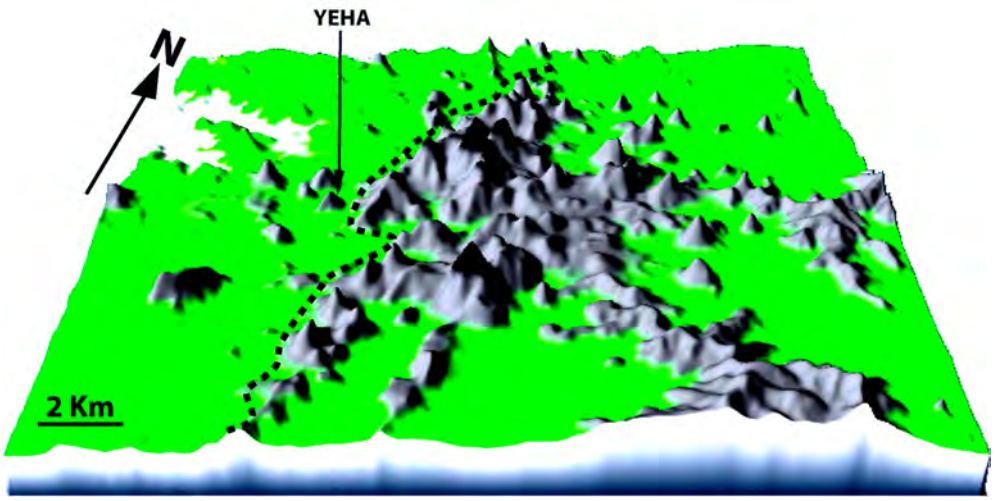


Figure 9. A Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the Yeha area constructed from SRTM images. The rugged terrain (grey hills, altitude greater than 2200 m above sea level) is the phonolite plugs while the plain field (less than 2200 m above sea level) is covered by basalt flows. The dark broken line is considered to be the north-south "barrier".

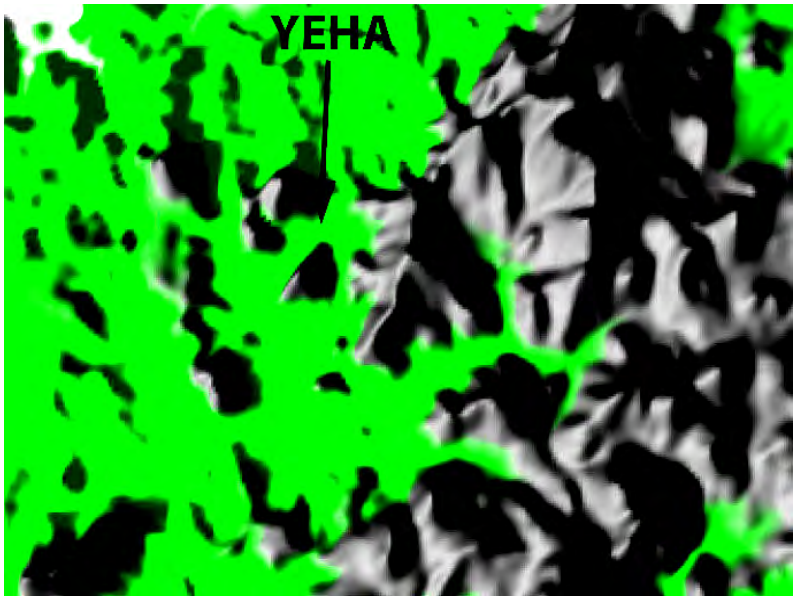


Figure 10. A closer view of the Yeha Temple site. The valley is narrow (less than 1 km across) and it is surrounded by mountain edifices whose elevation reaches upto 2800 m above sea level.

Good Preservation

Previous researchers attributed the good preservation of the Temple to the fact that it was subsequently (perhaps about a thousand years after its initial construction) converted into a Christian church (e.g. Phillipson, 1998). The presence of a modern church, which stands next to the Temple, may have contributed a lot to the conservation in recent times of the existing ruins of the Temple, as church precincts are generally safe from destruction even during times of war.

However, the construction materials used might have greatly contributed to the good preservation of the Temple. It has been found out that for sandstones, grain size distribution determines the pore structure and thus the durability of the material (Bourges, 2006; Nesperiera et al., 2006). Experimental studies on sandstones with various quartz proportions indicate that sandstones with the highest quartz percentage have the lowest porosity, the lowest water uptake capacity and water penetration coefficient, high drilling resistance and a very low degree of alteration (Bourges, 2006). Accordingly, the quartz arenite blocks of the Yeha Temple with their high percentage of quartz grains and further silicification can be considered as highly resistant against alteration irrespective of their exposure over a long period of time to strong weathering agents. The good preservation of the Temple should therefore be primarily attributed to the durability of the material used for construction. The good preservation of more modern rock-hewn churches into the same sandstone formation south of Yeha in Central and Eastern Tigrai (Asrat, 2002) further corroborates this argument.

References

Anfray, F. (1973) Les Fouilles de Yeha, Mai – Juin 1973. Documents pour servir à l'histoire des civilizations éthiopiennes **5**, 35-38.

Asrat, A. (2002) The rock-hewn churches of Tigrai, Northern Ethiopia: a geological perspective. Geoarchaeology **17**, 649-663.

Asrat, A., Demissie, M., Mogessie, A. (2005) Contribution of Geology to the Growth of Tourism Industry in Ethiopia, Phase I: Archaeological Cities, Religious and Cultural Centres (Yeha, Axum, Wukro, Lalibela), Addis Ababa, Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission Report, 193p.

Bosellini, A., Russo, A., Fantozzi, P. L., Assefa, G., & Tadesse, S. (1997). The Mesozoic succession of the Mekele Outlier (Tigrai Province, Ethiopia). Mem. Sci. Geol. **49**, 95-116.

Bourges, A. (2006) Holistic correlation of physical and mechanical properties of selected natural stones for assessing durability and weathering in the natural environment. Unpubl. PhD Thesis, University of Munich, Germany, 201p.

de Contenson, H. (1961) Les fouilles à Ouchatei Golo près d'Axoum en 1958. Annales d'Ethiopie **4**, 3-16.

Fattovich, R. (1989) Remarks on the later prehistory and early history of northern Ethiopia. Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 85-104.

Fattovich, R. (1990) Remarks on the Pre-Axumite period of northern Ethiopia. Journal of Ethiopian Studies **23**, 1-33.

Munro-Hay, S. C. (1991) Aksum: An African Civilization of Late Antiquity. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Nespereira, J., Blanco, J.A., Yenes, M., Pereira, D. (2006) Problems in the use of the Salamanca sandstone in historic monuments. Geophysical Research Abstracts, 8, 00940.

Phillipson, D. W. (1998) Ancient Ethiopia. London: the British Museum Press, 176p.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

The Archaeology of Islam in North East Shoa

Kassaye Begashaw[1]

Islam in Ethiopia is not only a religion but also the whole civilization within which indigenous traditions have achieved harmony, tolerance and co-existence that brought unity and integration to the country. This, paper, therefore, tries to discuss the contribution of Islamic heritages in shaping and molding the historical and cultural developments of modern Ethiopia from an archaeological perspective. It attempts to bring to light new issues that go beyond simpler culture description and tries to analyze how Islam is perceived in the society for the last one thousand and two hundred years. It seeks to discuss the role of Islam as a socializing force that has brought a new sense of religious identity and that promoted social, cultural and political values in the creation of modern Ethiopia.

General Presentation

Ethiopia is one of the countries in the world that provided a fertile ground for early Islamic expansion. This expansion was manifested particularly in present day Harar, Afar, Somali, Shoa and Wello regions. This is proved by the presence of the earliest Islamic cultural evidence in different parts of the study area among Semitic and Cushitic communities. The heritages of these communities are very rich both in terms of material and non-material cultures (Hussein, 1992).

However, Islamic studies in Ethiopia have not been recognized as an academic discipline within the broader framework of Ethiopian studies until recent times. Our limited knowledge has been viewed within the framework of Christian – Muslim conflicts of the medieval period.

Ethiopian and expatriate scholars began to be involved in this field of research only very recently[2]. The limited research focused more on religious and political issues than on contacts and interaction among the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The interdependence that facilitated the process of integration among the various communities has not been part of the study.

Italian and British scholars were the first who showed interest in Islamic studies in Ethiopia (Cerulli, 1941; Trimingham 1965). Their works were focused on the medieval history of Harar and Awsa. Trimingham's research was on the distribution of Muslim communities and viewed the history of Islam from the perspective of Muslim-Christian conflicts. Other writers presented Islam as a hostile religion and its struggle with Christianity as a purely religious one (Abir, 1978). Concerning the presentation of its studies at national and international conferences, Islam is almost absent. The number of papers presented at the International Conferences of Ethiopian Studies was very few.

[1] College of Social Sciences, Department of History, Archaeology Unit.
E-mail: Kassaye@hist.aau.edu.et

[2] Among the established Ethiopian scholars Tadesse and Merid recognized Islam not only from the religious point of view but also from cultural, economic and population pressure aspects (Tadesse, 1972 & 1977, Merid, 1974). On the other hand, from the Anthropological point of view one could say Islam is totally neglected except for Harar, Hadiya and Jimma (Waldron, 1974, Learis, 1964; Braukamper 1980).

Their themes were very limited and without a critical analysis of the contribution of Islam for the development of modern Ethiopian culture and history.

Though the history of Islam in Ethiopia spans more than 1200 years, research and conservation activities have been marginalized. On the other hand, Islamic faith has contributed to the enrichment of Ethiopian modern culture. The mosques, urban and trading settlements, shrine centers, commercial areas, cultural itineraries and graves have been considered as important depositories of the traditional cultures of many indigenous Muslim communities (Cerulli, 1941).

However, these impressive heritages are suffering due to pressures from both natural and man made activities. Unplanned modernization projects and tourism, poverty, drought, illicit traffic and clandestine excavation have dramatically accelerated the process of heritage destructions before any systematic documentation and research work can be done. Thus, the need for effective conservation and research activities has been felt strongly by many national and international institutions that have carried out a series of complementary activities classified as primary and supportive[3].

This is a big challenge for the government, heritage professional and communities to overcome this crucial problem, which is deep-rooted. The government has realized the magnitude of the need and has accordingly endorsed limited conservation and research activities and set up a legal framework and administrative organizational structures to address the problem from its own perspectives. However, the absence of effective heritage management backed by trained professionals, adequate funds and legal organizational structures has worsened the state of these heritages.

This research was undertaken in different seasons from Nov. 2003 to Dec. 2006[4]. These fieldworks were carried out under the title "Islamic Archaeology and History in Shoa". Many findings belonging to various periods ranging from the ancient to modern times were recorded. The research has also underscored the importance of the area for the future archeological research which was considered as the former center of the Christian state that witness a rich history of harmony, tolerance and co-existence among the many communities.

The principal objective of this research is, therefore, to study the richness and diversity of Islamic material culture in Shoa and to provide a comprehensive documentation that can be used by researchers, conservators and heritage promoters at national and international levels. This research seeks to bring about new issues that go beyond simple historical and cultural documentation and description.

Geographical and environmental setting of the study areas

The study area is located in the administrative zones of the Amhara and Oromia Regional states, traditionally known as Shoa. It stretches from the Southeastern part of

[3] The government's commitment to document, preserve and promote the country's heritage is clearly indicated in the cultural policy issued on Oct. 1997. The policy recognizes the importance of the country's heritages and the need for their proper management. At the international level, the 2nd global meeting of the world heritage center organized by the UNESCO from 29th July to 1st August in Addis Ababa and the Workshop sponsored by the British Institute in Eastern Africa and the National Museum of Kenya at Nairobi from25-28 Feb. 1999 endorsed the need to encourage research, documentation, conservation and promotion of African heritages. These recommendations reflect the concern of both national and international institutions.

[4] This research work was supported by minor grants obtained from the British Institute in Eastern Africa and Office for Research and Graduate program, Addis Ababa University. The team wishes to record its gratitude to Fikru and Girma, North Shoa Adminstrative Zone of the Amhara Federal State Cultural Bureau representatives.

the shoan mountain fringe and the Rift Valley to Southern Wello and the Afar desert plains. This escarpment forms and integral part of the Awash River Valley and the Rift Valley lakes drainage system that links the area with the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean.

Generally this region is surrounded by hilly and broken landscape with flat areas. The cliffs and escarpments are sources for many rivers that drain into the Jama River, Awash River and the Rift Valley lakes.

The broad ecological diversity of this area has created a favorable condition for the inhabitants of the area to get the necessary natural resources for their day-to-day life as well as for the production of their material culture. The archeological sites of this area consistently follow this ecological diversity characterized by scattered villages with ceremonial centers like churches and mosques on the top of the amba or along the slopes of the hills.

The Introduction of Islam

Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa is one of the regions to be influenced by early Islamic cultural activities. The geographical proximity of the region to the Middle East and the presence f Pre-Islamic contacts on both sides of the Red Sea has produced a symbiotic relationship characterized by interdependence. It is well known throughout history that all cultural, economic, social and political developments that occurred in the Arabian Peninsula and Middle East had a direct or indirect impact on Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa since the remote past.

The introduction of the Sabean language and writing as well as art and architecture from the Arabian Peninsula to northern Ethiopia around the first millennium BC could be cited as an example of this close interaction and relationship. Thus, what we observed during the expansion of Islam in the seventh century to and after was not a new development rather a successful fusion of old and new cultural element. Gradually, this fusion has created shared identity and values and promoted harmony and co-existence among the different communities.

The other factor that contributed for an easy expansion of Islam in the region was the decline of the Akumite Empire which controlled the trade activities along the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Since the beginning of the eighth century A.D the Aksumite kingdom was unable to influence any more the commercial activities in the region. The principal factor was the general change that occurred in the region due to the dramatic rise and rapid expansion of Islam throughout the Middle East and North East Africa. This decline began to pave the way for the emergence of Muslim communities and principalities along the trade routes. The rulers of these areas become the patrons of natural resource, trade routes and urban centers in Southeastern part of Ethiopia particularly in present day Afar, Harar and Shoa in Ethiopia and modern Somalia. Though relations between Christian and Muslim communities and rulers had fluctuated, political and economic contacts were frequently maintained. This mutual dependency was practiced through coastal and caravan traders in collaboration with the commercial agents of both Christian and Muslim rulers.

It is also very important to note that Islamic activities reached its peak in the Shoan highlands in the 16th century with the coming of the Portuguese and Ottoman Turks using local Christian and Muslim conflict as a pretext. It was at this time that the Portuguese and the Ottoman Turks were struggling for supremacy over the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in order to control the silk and spice trade. In this struggle the Portuguese

sided the Christian state while the Ottoman Turkish allied with the Muslims. The presence of these super powers in the region was marked not only by military activities but also brought a new social and cultural development. One example is the expansion of Islam deep in to the Christian highlands of Shoa and neighboring regions. However, many historians and archaeologists have viewed this development from the Portuguese point of view leaving out the Ottoman Turkish impact. It was also at this time that Islamic literature, art and architecture began to be disseminated deep in the highlands among different ethnic communities. Many important centers for Islamic teaching and learning proliferated. As a result of this, many mosques and settlement areas, Commercial and shrine centers were established in the region.

The Islamization process

The process of islamization and interactions was pacific. The principal cultivators were Muslim traders and missionaries who moved from the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden to central Ethiopia as far as Northeast Shoa. In due course, the Muslim traders produced the first urban Muslim communities and urban centers with in the Christian state (J. Markakis 1974). These Muslim merchants had the support of the Christians and their rulers. This is because the Muslim merchants controlled the principal long distance trade as well as the import and export commodities during the medieval period. The role of the Christian rulers, therefore, was to facilitate and promote the normal flow of trade and maintain peace and stability by introducing law and order in the entire area where trade was practiced. The principal ports for all these commercial activities were Zeila[5] and Berbera on the Gulf of Aden. These ports were very important not only for internal trade activities but also commercial shipping to the Persian Gulf, Far East and Southeast Asian countries.

The coastal areas were the first to be affected by Islamic activities. This was followed by Islam's rapid expansion from the coastal region into the pastoralist and agriculturalist communities where and finally into Northeastern shoa by Muslim traders and missionaries who moved from Zeila and Berbera to central Ethiopia along the principal trade routes.

It was within this general frame work that the Sultanates of Shoa and Ifat as well as other Muslim states like Dawaro, Fatagar, Bali, and Hadiya emerged and proliferated in the southeastern part of the country.

The Sultanates of Shoa (9^{th} – 13^{th} century) and Ifat (13^{th} – 15^{th}) were the principal core of Islamic activities during the medieval period in Ethiopia particularly in Northeast Shoa. It was from the sultanate of Ifat[6] in Shoa that Islam gradually spread into the near by areas and Wello particularly to Dawway and Qallu as well as into the rest of wello and neighboring provinces.

The region of Shoa has been an area of co-existence among diverse communities like Argoba, Agaw and Gafat classified the Cushitic and Semitic speaking groups.

---

[5] Zeila was an important commercial port on the Gulf of Aden. Yaqut mentioned it in his account It was an important port for trade in Southeastern Ethiopia. Gold, Ivory Slaves, Salt and Skins as well as incense were exported. Waepons, metal work, cloths glass, and glazed pottery were imported through this port. By the 14^{th} century Ibn Batuta has described the trade activities of Zeila (Harndun and king 1994)

[6] Ifat came to an end in the 1^{st} half of the 15^{th} century. The descendants of its Walasma Dynasty established a new state in Adal. Their capital was Dakar located Southeast of Harar near Fuganbiro. The nomadic of Afar and Somali dominated the state. However, the leaderships were controlled by Semitic Argoba and Harari ethnic groups.

The Argoba people are considered to be one of the oldest surviving inhabitants in the region. They were also the first to accept Islam and to establish the first Sultanate of Shoa in the Horn of Africa. As a result of this, the Argoba are considered to be the center for the origin and expansion of Islam in the surrounding area and deep into the interior part of the country. Mosques, tombs, urban and shrine centers, settlement remains, features, gravestones with Arabic inscriptions were discovered. These archaeological evidences prove the establishment of Islamic communities in Northeastern Shoa by the Argoba communities. These archeological sites are considered as the earliest Islamic evidence in the area that dates back to the early 9th century A.D. They are widely distributed along the Shoan, Wello and Afar escarpment within the strong hold of the Christian State. In addition to this, in the 14th Century, Muslim and Christian communities have inhabited some parts of Northern Shoa particularly in the distinct of Tegulet, Gedem and their surrounding areas.

Archeological Sites

Many archeological sites were recorded in Northeastern Shoa that signifies the presence of Muslim communities and strong traces of Islamic material culture in the region in its popular and Orthodox forms. These findings include Islamic architecture (mosques, tombs and domestic houses), settlement remains, shrine and urban centers, trade routes, gravestones, and Islamic inscriptions. The historical significance of these settlement remains is not studied. However, base on this research, these heritages are directly and indirectly linked with the Muslim states like the sultanates of Shoa, Ifat and Hadiya that flourished in the area. The sultanate of Shoa was the first inland Ethiopian Muslim polity which clashed with the Christian state in the 14th and 16th centuries for the control of the Zeila trade routes and the rich natural resources of Southeastern highlands and lowlands of Ethiopia. The presence of many archaeological sites in this area is connected with this development. These sites were emerged to serve the new religion as well as the new institutions. They served not only as scared centers but were also used to hold annual religious celebrations and festivals as well as meeting places for cultural, political and social interactions. The festivals and the celebrations were attended by Muslim Amhara, Argoba, Afar and Oromo communities (Ahmed 1994). According to our informant[7] there are many Muslim followers and holy men who came to the annual celebration from different parts of the country.

Based on the fieldworks carried out in the study area the representative and potential sites are located within and around Shoa-robit, Aliyu amba, Debre Zeit, Zway and Gamza district. These sites exhibit many similar cultural features that they share in common. This is because of the long standing symbiotic contacts and relationship that existed among them since the remote past. The archaeological fieldwork carried out in the study area revealed many archeological sites. However, for better discussion and presentation these sites are classified into six groups.

Eastern Shoa complex

This study area stretches along the Eastern escarpment of the Shoan plateau as far as Aliyu amba. It includes part of Mojo, Ada'a, Erer, Wonji and Minjar. This area was centre of interaction among Muslim and non Muslim communities during the medieval period. The famous battle field of Shimbra Kure is also found near Mojo. Generally, it

[7] Ato Mohammed Yimam, 67, civil servant, married, and has 6 children. He has lived in the area very long. His information was very important.

is considered as an important site for early Islamic activities: The most important and representative sites in this area as Garbica, Bishoftu, and Didimtou. From these sites many archeological data were discovered and recorded. The most important are gravestones with engraved Arabic inscriptions and settlement remains. The grave stones have similarities among themselves. However, they have different size that varies from 100 cm to 66 meters in height and 4 cm to 7.5 cm in thickness. These gravestones have geometric decoration with early Islamic architectural designs.

Shoa Robit complex

It is located in Northeastern Shoa about 180 km from Addis Ababa along the Desie road. The area is inhabited by the Argoba communities. In this area many Islamic sites that include mosques, settlement patterns, grave stones with Arabic inscriptions, grave yards, itineraries and many ruin structures were recorded. These archaeological sites are related with the Sultanate of Ifat. The most important site in this complex is the site of Goze. It is located 15 kms north of the town of Shoa Robit. This site is considered as the earliest religious and political center for the Argoba communities (Ahmed 1994, Trimmingham 1965). The Goze mosque is also considered as the most important sacred place in the area. The architecture of this mosque is similar to that of the Shonke mosque at Kemise. Though this mosque is dated to the medieval period, it is preserved better than other similar site.

The Rasa – Complex

This site is located about 30 km east of Shoa Robit town. It is a plateau area situated between the Easters part of the escarpment and the Awash River valley. The top of this plateau is known as Rasa Guba by the local inhabitants. There are many important archeological sites in this area. The most important are Asberi and Wessiso – Nora. The third site is found outside the area of the two sites on the southern end below the northern slope. These sites have revealed traces of ancient Islamic activities that provide valuable information about early Islamic influences in the area. Mosques, settlement ruins, grave stones with inscriptions and cemeteries were discovered among the many sites in the area, wessiso-Nora is considered as the largest structural remains. On the other hand, human made destruction on the site of Asberi is great. In this site, we also recorded grave yards, structural features and grave stones with Arabic inscriptions.

The Rifit Valley Complex

This site is generally located within and around the area of Lake Zway. It is generally known by its ancient traces of Islamic activities. The history of the area is connected with the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean trade network that dated between the 8^{th} and 16^{th} centuries. The region is also considered as one of the major centers for the emergence of a chain of Muslim states in the 13^{th} and 14^{th} centuries.

In this complex the Munessa site is the earliest where Islamic cultural activities had been identified. In this site we recorded cemeteries, gravestones with Kufic inscription, trade routes and settlement ruins that date back to the 10^{th} and 13^{th} centuries. (Schneider 1970). The majority of the gravestones were in Kufic script.

Gamza Complex

This complex is situated in the district of Gamza bordering Shoa, Wello and Afar. There are many traces of early Islamic sites like shrine centers, settlement remains, cemeteries, mosques etc. All these historical and archaeological sites are located on the frontier of

the Afar Depression and had been centre for the expansion of Islam in the region particularly in northern Shoa, Wello and afar communities. These sites were frequented and visited by the Argoba, Muslim Oromo and Amhara as well as the Afar. Among the many sites, some of them are Qutber Yusuf and Awgard Nurit, Salfa and Ogobdi shrine Centers. According to the oral tradition[8] these sites have been considered as the centers of early Islam Teaching and learning. There are many shrine centers and residential houses with medieval architecture. These monuments were used also for annual Muslim religious festivals and celebration.

5.6 Aliyu Amba and Abdul Rassul Complex

These sites are located along the foothills of the eastern escarpment of Shoa. It is located south of the historic town of Ankober bordering the valley and the central highlands of Ethiopia. The site of Aabdul Rassul is located about 7.8 Kms southeast of Aliyu Amba. The origin of these sites goes before the 14th century and connected with the long distance trade of the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. These two sites were natural gate way for the expansion of Islam to the heartland of Shoa and its neighbors. The Zeyla trade route was geographically very close to this part of Shoa.

These sites are known by the presence of mosques, ruin structures, tombs, Shrine centers, market area, burial sites and trade routes. Most of these sites had similarities among themselves. Most of them are located within and around urban areas and trade routes. In short Aliyu Amba was a prominent cultural, religious and political center in the area. Later on, it became a garrison city with three gates. It was dominated by Argoba Muslim communities. Its central position served as a meeting ground that enabled the different communities like the Harari, Oromo, Afar and Amhara to live together and co-exist.

This archaeological research has convinced the research team that the study area possessed various Islamic heritages. This research has revealed that Islamic architecture was not only limited to mosques and shrine centers but also extends to community buildings, palaces, ceremonial and festival constructions and religious buildings.

In the early stage of Islamic expansion, mosque constructions have showed different development in terms of style, forms and techniques. However, these differences disappeared and established a firm Islamic architecture later on.

The research on the settlement pattern has showed that they were widely distributed within and around mosques, cemeteries and trade routes. Their lay out had more or less similar organization throughout the study area.

Graves have showed difference in size and shape. Each grave contain single or double dead bodies covered by pieces of woods and stones. These burial graves were represented by standing stones. Some of these grave stone have geometric decorations and Arabic script.

It is hoped that these archaeological sites will contribute to a better understanding of the diversity and richness of the materials culture of the country and the characteristics of the local Muslim culture. It will also contribute to the promotion of transcultural education and for sustainable economic development. However, these heritages require an urgent systematic conservation and research activities

[8] Sheik Sultan Omer, 69, Imam, 2 children. He has lived in the area very long. His information is extremely important.

Impact and Characteristics

The Islamization process in Ethiopia has unique characteristics. The process was not followed by Arabization as in North Africa and else where. Although the Muslim communities in the region take pride in Islam and some of their languages, architecture and literature reflect Arabic influences, they have remained loyal to their traditional culture and ethnic identities. In addition, Islamic expansion in the region was not a result of holy wars that involved large -scale migration into the region as else where. As a result of this Islam in Ethiopia and the Horn did not establish a political power base like Islam in the Sudan, Egypt or in Maghrib.

Certainly, Islam is not only a religion in Ethiopia rather is it a whole civilization. Among the many aspects religious practices, art and architecture, language and writing as well as institutions are the most important heritages. It seems that Islam and indigenous culture have achieved more or less a compromising harmony in Ethiopia. This strategy has brought harmony, tolerance and coexistence among diverse communities. The integrative capacity and simplistic nature of Islam also facilitated its rapid expansion in the area.

Islam arose as a religious phenomenon in Ethiopia by integrating it self with local tradition and by leaving dominant imprints on modern Ethiopian cultural development. The new religion brought a new sense of identity not only to the Ethiopians but also too many communities in the Horn of Africa, that is, an identity based on syncretism. However, this new belief and practice was complicated at times by political issues tat contradict its mission.

Islam has brought not only various Muslim communities together but also other non-Muslim ethnic groups. Local and long distance trade has player an important role by creating interactions and interdependence among the diverse rural villages throughout the region. Its impacts was not only limited to the exchange of commodities and proseleytization Islamization but also facilitated the emergence of a new culture, politics and economy in the region.

This simple nature of interaction which started in the early days of Islam has continued smoothly until the present day in different parts of the country among the various ethic and cultural groups. The relationship was based on mutual understanding and interdependence. These communities have been sharing pattern of life despite the fact that they belong to different religious and ethnic groups. Because of this, they developed good mutual understanding and neighborliness in their day to day life. They work and live together and celebrate their annual festivals together. Generally, Muslims were not distinguished from their fellow non-Muslim Ethiopians by way of life. This shows the inter breeding of Islamic culture with existing traditions and practices as long as the letter were not directly opposed to the Islamic teaching.

Urbanization is another development which exhibit a strong linkage with the process of Islamic expansion and its attendant consequences. It has a long history in rthe country particularly in the northern part of Ethiopia. This tradition goes to the pre-Aksumite and Aksumitre periods. Yeha and Aksume could be cited as a good example. This development continued in the later periods and took new phase during the medieval time. The principal actor in this development was trade dominated by Muslim merchants. Because of this, many urban centers, towns and cities emerged in the Southeastern and central part of Ethiopia.

Rural villages initially created to support the immediate inhabitants grew into centers of commerce, religious practices and administration. This new development accelerated

the process of urbanization and Islamization in the region and paved the way for the rise of many Muslim towns and cities which were later transformed into Muslim states. These urban and administrative centers were characterized by a complex system of social, cultural, political and economic organization.

In this regard trade and urban centers were the principal promoters of this historical development. They contributed not only to the expansion of Islam but increased the process of interaction among different religious and ethnic groups and established a network of urban life in the country.

The other important Islamic influence is also manifested in art and architecture. Islamic art does not depict an ideal or imagination rather it focuses on fineness of lines, colour harmony and designs. Islamic art consists of a design of interlacing lines and figures that produce various combination of geometric patterns of intricate decoration.

Similar design lines are widely used in Ethiopian manuscript paintings. The principal painting in many manuscripts are encircled by the different designed lines locally known as *Hareg*. These lines are also used on the walls, doors, windows and roofs of churches and monasteries. The geometric pattern of these lines has a decorative character. The origin of these decoration can be connected with Arabic script and writing. The art of Islamic calligraphy developed because of the rule against portraying natural objects.

Metal objects which seem to show Islamic artistic influence with Arabic inscriptions are preserved today in the church of Galila-Iyyasus at Mannagasha near Addis Ababa. Similarly, there are other objects from the sabbata church decorated with Islamic characteristics and dated to the 14th and 15th centuries (Leroy, 1965). These evidence shows that Muslim communities were well established in Shoan in the middle of Christian communities at least from the beginning of the 9th century A.D.

Oriental exotic goods like carpets and luxurious silk fabrics were imported into the country from the Islamic world in the late medieval period through Muslim merchants. These prestigious materials were apparently limited to the elite class. However, some of these prestigious objects like fine carpets, umbrellas, and other silk materials were donated by the nobility to their favorite churches and monasteries.

At present some Islamic Luxurious carpets of Ottoman Turkish kelims origin have been discovered in some churches and monasteries in the northern and central part of Ethiopia. This discovery highlights not only the artistic value but also the oriental weaving technology in the late medieval period. This in turn has a valuable contribution to the study of oriental art and textile collections of Islamic origin in Ethiopian churches and monasteries[9].

Islamic architecture in Ethiopia is not just the architecture of mosques. It ranges from the ruins of structure of domestic settlements to mosques, tombs, fortresses and public buildings. Its Islamic characteristics are also manifested in building Its Islamic characteristics are also manifested in building structures, doors and windows by means of their carvings and decorations. Similarities between the different palaces in Gondar and Islamic architecture in Yemen and India have been observed

Islamic architecture and design are thus other important cultural aspects which influenced the decoration of medieval Christian architecture and art. Some of then

[9] The discovery of about 20 prestigious carpets was discussed by H.Henz during the 14th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. The fragile nature of these important heritages is another challenge that Ethiopia faces. Heritage Management institutions with practical training, documentation and conservation programs should be given a priority list to preserve these heritages of the country.

geometrical ornaments carved in rock and wood in Ethiopian churches during the medieval period can be compared with corresponding Islamic designs. Although Islamic architecture and designs in Ethiopia have not been studied, they do not seem to be different from those on other Islamic areas around the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden., The old mosques in and around Harara, the Arabic script on the seal of Abba jifar and the Massawa mosque have a long and important history of connections with Islamic culture across the Red Sea, Nile valley (Last and Pankhurst, 1969, Riviglio, 1966). In addition to this, the main faces of the Castle of Gonder as well as the wall niches have ornamental decoration, shapes and characteristic of their oriental counterparts like in the Islamic world (H. Atkins, 1968; Monti della corti 1938).

Islamic impact is also manifested in the political life of the people. Islamic institutions had influences in the court as well as in policy – making. The Shariah, for instance, is respected and operational even today in Ethiopia. The Shariah principles are core of Islamic religion. The use of Shariah by its believers is considered as an obligation to fulfill the Islamic faith to assure Islamic values and promote its destinies. The application of marriage, for example, is performed within the general framework of the Shariah law. Similarly, Shariah is in favor of marriage between relatives.

In addition, like Judaism and Christianity, the introduction of Islam has also brought new culinary tradition in the area. Diet restrictions become important criteria for many followers to be a good Muslim. Alcohol consumption was also one of the principal items of food stuff prohibited by Islam.

In general, diet and drinking restrictions might have created food stuff shortage and the appearance of new species of plants and animal products in the region. According to some informant[10] big circulation of new food stuff from the highland to the lowland and from the coastal areas to the highland were frequented during this time. So the appearance of new crops and change of agricultural and animal products might have changed and modified the natural and the way of life of the communities. For example, porridge and bread eating, chat chewing, tobacco smoking, tea and coffee drinking began to frequent among both Christian and Muslim communities in the region. This change of culinary habit not only reflects religious beliefs but also have social economic and political touch.

Islamic impacts in undermining traditional beliefs and practices as well as institutions were clearly marked from the beginning of Islamization in the region. This was because the new religious practices and institutions were created in service of the new faith. On the contrary, the old beliefs and institutions were exposed to condemnation as far as they were contrary to the new religion. Whatever the reactions to both practices, the effort made by Islam to replace the old religion by the new faith gradually resulted in the weakening and in some cases obliteration of many indigenous values and traditional institutions This is partly because people gradually began to change their proper names and the names of their gods for example *Waqa* and *Rabbi* in Oromo culture, in line with Quranic teaching. Their beliefs, music, proverbs, marriage system and dietary which occupy a center position in their day to day life were affected by the new religion and doctrine.

Traditional center of worship and celebration were transformed into shrines and mosques. The roles of traditional religious leaders were discredited. Traditional annual celebrations and ceremonies were made to decline claiming that they were contrary to

[10] Haji Nur Husen, 58, Head of the Shariah (Shoa-Robit) married to 4 wives, 16 children. He has lived in the area for 35 years.

Quranic teachings. In addition to this, although Islamic impacts on traditional religious practices and institutions were clearly manifested negatively. In the final analysis the new religion seem to have achieved a compromising strategy to live together and co-exist in a harmonious manner.

Conclusion

Islamic influences in Ethiopia are widely diffused in the country. It is represented in the society through its doctrine, institutions, architecture, art and language created in the service of this faith.

Synereticism has played an important role in the Islamization process and in the making of Islamic identity that has been recognized as an important notion to explain why people in the study area and elsewhere were converted to Islam.

The archaeological investigation of Islam in northeast Shoa is not recognized as the study of sacred places and cult practices; rather, it has helped to understand the socio-cultural, economic and political developments of the various communities in the area. The material cultures and social organizations of these communities have also contributed to comprehend how Islam has been perceived and described in the society.

Generally, Islam has been considered as one of the most important element in the community. However, the absence of a systematic archeological and historical research, analysis and interpretations has hampered the study of the history of Islam and its influence over the historical and cultural developments of the country. This is because Islam in Ethiopia has been framed within the perspective of medieval Muslim-Christian conflicts. This framework seems inadequate on a number of counts. It fails to reflect contacts and relationships existed among the various communities that brought the emergence of cultural complexities and new historical process in the area.

On the other hand, in medieval Ethiopia religious and political life at local, regional and national levels was more developed than it was in earlier times. The socio-economic and cultural changes that occurred in the country during this time were associated with the expansion and Islamization process of Islam. This, in return, has created many buffer communities responsible for the present day wide distribution of Islamic communities in the country.

The research team, therefore, was convinced that these archeological sites possessed various heritages of archaeological and historical nature that go back to the medieval period. These heritages have contributed also to shaping and molding the present day history and culture of the country as well as to transcultural and sustainable economic development. However, these archaeological resources are threatened both natural processes and rapid developmental projects. Federal and Regional Governments of Ethiopia have to race against time to recover these fragile sites by promoting their protection and conservation.

In this period of the surge for transformations, Ethiopian commitment to change should not be limited to economic and political issues but also should extend to cultural sectors as well. This is because culture addresses fundamental questions of national identity and values, unity and development. In view of this, for any modern society there is not more valuable treasure than to understand and promote its heritage in the process of attempting to assure its values and identities for a better future.

Bibliography

Atkins, H. 1968. A History of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Central Press.
Al-Ya'qubi, 1872, Kitab al- Buldan.
Braukamper, U. 1980. Geschichte Der Hadiya Sud – Athiopians, Wlesbaden
Cerulli, E. 1941. "Islam Nell" Africa Oriental" Aspettiee: problem attuali del mondo musulmano. Real Accademia d'Italia. Roma.
Cuoq, L. 1981. L'Islam en Ethiopie des origins au XVIe siecle. Paris.
Hussein Ahmed. 1992. "The Historiography of Islam in Ethiopia, "Journal of Islamic Studies, 3,1
—— (1991). "Two Muslim Shrines in South Wallo", Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Seminar of the Department of History, Addis Ababa.
Lewis, H.S. 1964. Jimma Abba Jifar: a depotic Galla kingdom, New York: Colombia University.
Lewis, I.M. 1967. A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa. London.
Leroy, J. 1965. "Notes d'archaeologie et d'iconographic Ethiopiennes", Annales d'Ethiopie, IV.
Moni della Carti, I Castelli de Gondar
Merid Wolde Aregay. 1974. "Political Geography of Ethiopia at the Beginning of The Sixteenth Century", in IV Congresso Internazionale di Studi Ethiopici. Roma.
Riviglio, P. 1966. "The Reconstruction of Massawa", Sestante., Asmara.
Schneider, Madeleine, S. 1967. "State Funerares Arabes De Quiha" Annales d. Ethiopie. Last, g and Pankhurst, R. 1969. A History of Ethiopia in Pictures. Addis Ababa and London.
Stitz, V. 1973. "The Western Argobba of Ifat, Central Ethiopia". In Proceedings of the First United states Conference on Ethiopia Studies. Ed. H.G Marcus, East Lansing.
Tadesse Tamrat. 1970. Islam and Trade in Ethiopia C. 900-1332 in his Miscellanea 1.
Traversi. L. 1893. "Li Antichita do Vorcamba nello Scioa". Bollettion della Societa Italia, Roma.
Trimingham, J.S. 1965. Islam in Ethiopia, London.
Triulzi, A. 1975. "Trde, Islam and Mahdia in North Westen wellega, Ethiopia". Journal of African History.
Waldron, S.R. 1974 "Social organization and social control in the walled City of Harar, Ethiopia". Unpublished Ph.D thesis
Waldron, S.R 1984. "Argoba" in weekes, R.ed. Muslim peoples – a world Ethnographic survey, 2nd ed. ,Westport.

In: *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009

A Miracle of the Archangel Uriel Worked for *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasəčča

Getatchew Haile[1]

To date, the history of Abba Giyorgis of Gasəčča or Sägla is known from two different compositions, the teacher's gädl and one of the miracles of the Archangel Uniel. The two sources complement each other as each contains pertinent pieces of information that the other does not. "The Miracle of Saint Uriel the Archangel" that I present here includes in the list of Abba Giyorgis' works certain works that have not previously been included. As such, the miracle challenges us to search more diligently for copies of the works to which scholars have not yet had access.

Introduction:

The miracle of the Archangel Uriel worked for *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasəčča (who died on Ḥamle 7, 1417 EC = July 1, 1425 A.D.) is preserved in five EMML manuscripts, all copied in the twentieth century. I present it here, with a translation, for two reasons. First, it is part of the history of *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasəčča or Sägla, the most prominent scholar of Gə'əz literature in the fifteenth century. Second, it might serve to kindle interest in the study of the other interesting texts in the *Dərsanä ʿUru'el* or Homiliary in Honor the Archangel Uriel from which the miracle story is taken.

The manuscripts in question are EMML 1942 (A), ff. 63b-67b; EMML 144 (B), ff. 62a-64a; 327 (C), ff. 32b-35b; EMML 7262 (D), ff. 99b-104b; and EMML 6772, ff. 20a-23a. I used the first four only, making EMML 1942 (A), ff. 63b-67b, the basis of my edition. I excluded EMML 6772 from the study because it is hopelessly badly copied[2]. EMML 7262 (D), by contrast, is very beautifully copied, but it is, unfortunately, an edited version rather than a direct copy from another manuscript. Its editor excluded most unintelligible expressions either by not copying them or by rephrasing them as he understood them.

EMML 1942 (A) and EMML 7262 call the Archangel *ʿUru'el* while EMML 144 (B) calls him *ʿUr'el*, and EMML 6772 and the manuscript that Caquot used for his edition of one of the homilies call him *ʿUra'el*[3]. For the English, I will use the name Uriel, and for the text, the form *ʿUru'el*, of A, as A is the basis of my edition.

Like the manuscripts, the texts in the *Dərsan* are also recent. They were, most probably, composed during the reign of *Aṣe* Menelik[4]. I note that the miracle calls Ḥamle 7--the day it claims *Abba* Giyorgis was born--a holy day of the Trinity. We know from other sources that this holy day was first declared as such by *Aṣe* Iyyasu (1682-1706) when his church of Däbrä Bərhan Śəllase, in Gondär, was consecrated on Ḥamle 7, 1686 EC (= July 11, 1694 AD). However, the author is knowledgeable of the

[1]Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John's University, Collegeville, MN, U.S.A.
[2]For the description of EMML 1942, see Getatchew Haile and William F. Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts, vol. V,* pp. 440-7; and for EMML 144 and EMML 327, Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts, Vol. I,* p. 146, and Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts, Vol. II,* p. 29, respectively. EMML 6772 and EMML 7262 are not yet catalogued.
[3]See Caquot, "L'Homélie en l'honneur de l'Archange Ouriel, pp. 61-88.
[4]See Caquot's introduction to his edition of the Homily.

tradition of *Abba* Giyorgis, as some of his pertinent facts are corroborated by the saint's *Gädl*[5]

It is possible, but unlikely, that the author of this miracle knew of the saint's *Gädl*. The *Gädl* is very rare: we know of only three copies, and Colin had access to only one, recent (eighteenth- or nineteenth-century) copy, EMML 1838, belonging to the Monastery of Däbrä Ḥayq, the monastery of the saint[6]. It seems that both authors drew their facts from oral tradition, rather than the one from the other, and embellished their composition with their explanations of events in the saint's life. It should, therefore, not be surprising that, occasionally, the authors report different spiritual aberrations experienced by the saint. Nevertheless, the two sources complement each other more than they do not.

As far as I know, this miracle story is the only source that clearly lists the works of *Abba* Giyorgis[7]. The Amharic introduction to the *Mäṣḥafä Sä'atat*, published in Gə'əz and Amharic, by *Aläqa* Mäk^{w}ännən Sälomon *et al*, is nothing more than a slightly modified translation of this miracle[8]. It is clear from their composition that they, too, had not seen the saint's *Gädl*.

Text:

(f. 63b) **ተአምሪሁ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል[9]፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት። ጸሎቱ፡ ወበረከቱ፡ የሃሉ፡ ምስለ[10]፡ ፍቁሩ፡ ገብረ፡ ሕይወት[11]፡ *ወምስለ፡ ጸሐፊሁ፡ ኃጥእ፡ ወአባሲ፡ ወልደ፡ ሥላሴ[12]፡

ወኮነ፡ *በመዋዕለ፡ ንገሥነ[13]፡ ዳግማዊ፡ ዳዊት፡ ወነበረ፡ ፀብእሲ፡ መኰንን፡ ሸግላ፡ መፍቀሬ[14]፡ ዑራኤል፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት። ወሤሞ፡ ንጉሥነ፡ ዳዊት፡ ርእሰ፡ መኳንንት፡ ቀዳማዊ፡ ዘሰብአ ትግሬ[15]፡ እስመ፡ አቡሁ፡ *ኮነ፡ ቀዲሙ[16]፡ መስፍነ[17]፡ ትግራውያን[18]። ወመላዱኒ፡ እምሀገረ፡ አኵስም፡ ውእቱ[19]፡ እምዘርዓ፡ ሌዋውያን[20]፡ እምሕዝብ[21]፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ዘኮኑ[22]፡ ዘርዓ፡ ዮፍታሔ፡ ወጌዴዎን፡ እለ፡ መጽኡ፡ ምስለ፡ ታቦተ፡ ጽዮን[23]፡ በመዋዕለ፡ ወልዱ፡ ለሰሎሞን፡ ንጉሥ፡ ከዊኖሙ፡ ርእሰ፡ ሠራዊት፡ ዘውእቱ፡ ወልደ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ሰሎሞን[24]።

---

[5]For example, both the miracle and the *gädl* speak of the enigmatic "5"--here, "five psalms of David," and in the *Gädl* (p. 12-13), "five words of mystery"--the saint authored after he drank from the chalice of perception or knowledge or life. See Colin, *Vie de Georges de Saglā*, pp. 12-13. Interestingly, both sources testify that *Ḫoḫätä Bərhan* was his first composition.

[6]Colin, *Vie*, p. V.

[7]For the list and more information on the saint, see Getatchew Haile and William F. Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts*, vol. V, p. 339-40; and Colin, *Vie de Georges de Saglā*, pp. VI-XIII.

[8]See Bibliography.

[9]B consistently **ዑርኤል፡**

[10]C ends this sentence with **ምስሌነ፡ አሜን።**

[11]B **ወልደ፡ ፋሲለደስ፡**

[12]*B **ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን። **D በስመ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ፀአምላክ፡ ንጽሕፍ፡ ዜና፡ ተአምሪሁ፡ ለሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡ ዑራኤል፡ ጸሎቱ፡ ወሀብተ፡ ረድኤቱ፡ የሃሉ፡ ምስለ፡ ንጉሥነ፡ ኃይለ፡ ሥላሴ፡ ወምስለ፡ ንግሥትነ፡ ወለተ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ወምስለ፡ ኮልነ፡ ውሉደ፡ ጥምቀት፡ ወምስለ፡ አብባቢሁ፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን።**

[13]For **በመዋዕለ፡ ንጉሥነ፡**; CD **በመዋዕለ፡ ንጉሥነ፡**; B **በመዋዕሊሁ፡ ለንጉሥነ፡**

[14]D adds **ቅዱስ፡**

[15]D **ትግራ፡**

[16]BD **ቀዲሙ፡ ኮነ፡**

[17]D **ምስፍነ፡**

[18]C **ትግሬውያን፡**

[19]D **ውእቱኒ፡**

[20]D **ሊዋውያን፡**

[21]BCD **ወእምሕዝብ፡**

[22]B omits.

[23]D adds **ዘእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡**

[24]B omits.

እስመ፡ ሰሎሞን[25]፡ ሶበ፡ አንገሦ፡ ለወልዱ፡ ውስተ፡ ሀገረ፡ እሙ[26]፡ ኢትዮጵያ[27]፡ ፈነዎሙ[28]፡ ምስለ፡ ወልዱ፡ ለደቂቀ፡ ፀኤል[29]፡ ውስተ፡ ሀገረ፡ ትግሬ። ወበእንተዝ፡ ሚሞ[30]፡ ዳዊት፡ ዳግማዊ[31]፡ ለውእቱ፡ መኰንን፡ ርእሰ[32]፡ መሳፍንት፡ ዘሀገረ፡ ትግሬ።

ወውእቱ፡ መኰንን፡ ኮነ፡ ዘአልቦቱ[33]፡ ውሉ(f. 64a)ድ። ወበእንተዝ፡ ነገር፡ ይበውዕ[34]፡ ቅድመ፡ ስእሉ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡ ውስተ[35]፡ ቤተ፡ *ክርስቲያን፡ ዘእግዝእትነ[36]፡ ማርያም፡ ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ ድንግል፡ በፀ[37] ዘሀገረ፡ ሽግላ፡ ዘትሰመይ[38]፡ ደብረ፡ ማኅው፡ ይጼሊ[39]፡ ውስቴታ፡ ወይሰግድ፡ እንዘ[40]፡ ይበኪ፡ ብዙኃ፡ መዋዕለ። ወይቤ፡ አአምላክ[41]፡ ዑራኤል፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡ ዘተኃሥሮ፡ ለዕቡይ፡ ወታሌዕሎ[42]፡ ለትሑት[43]፡ ዘፈጠርከ፡ ኵሎ፡ በጥበበ፡ ሥላሴከ፡ ቅድስት፡ እምኀበ፡ አልቦ[44]። ወአልቦ፡ ዘይሰዓነከ። ወኵሉ፡ ነገር[45]፡ ይትከሀለከ[46]። ለምንት፡ ትትሔየየኒ[47]፡ ለገብርከ፡ በእንተ፡ ኃጢአትየ፡ አላ[48]፡ ዳዕሙ፡ ተዘከር፡ ኪዳነ፡ አብርሃም፡ ፍቁርከ፡ ወይስሐቅ፡ ቁልዔከ፡ ወያዕቆብ፡ ቅዱስከ[49]፡ ዘተናገርኮሙ፡ እንዘ፡ ትብል፡ በኪዳነ፡ ቃልከ፡ ዘኢይትሔሰው፡ አነ፡ አበዝኅ፡ ዘርዓክሙ፡[50] እምኮከበ፡ ሰማይ፡ ወእምኖፃ፡ ባሕር[51]። *ቀዲሙኒ፡ ወዮምኒ፡ አንተ፡ አምላክ[52]፡ ኵሉ፡ ፍጥረት። ስምዓኒ፡ እግዚኦ፡ ጸሎትየ[53]፡ ወአጽምዓኒ፡ ቃለ፡ ስእለትየ፡ በእንተ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ *ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ ድንግል[54]፡ ወበእንተ[55]፡ ዑራኤል፡ መልአክ፡ ዓቃቤ፡ ትእዛዝከ። ሀበኒ፡ ወልደ፡ ዘያሠምረከ፡ ወዘይገብር፡ ፈቃደከ[56]፡ በከመ፡ ኀ(f. 64b)ብሩ[57]፡ አበውየ[58]፡ እስራኤላውያን[59]፡ እለ፡ ኢየአምሩ[60]፡ ባዕደ፡ አምላክ[61]፡ ዘእንበሌከ። ዘአልብየ[62]፡ ወልድ፡ ለመኑ[63]፡ ትሁቦ፡ *ሚመቱ፡ አበውየ[64]፡ ንጹሐን፡ እለ፡ ይገብሩ[65]፡ ፈቃደከ፡ ትካት[66]፡ በቃለ፡

[25]D adds ንጉሥ፡
[26]D omits.
[27]D adds ሀገረ፡ እሙ፡
[28]D ወፈነወ፡
[29]D እስራኤል፡ በበማዕርጊሆሙ፡
[30]For ሜሞ፡; BCD ሜሞ፡
[31]B omits.
[32]B adds መኳንንት
[33]D አልቦቱ፡
[34]B ቆመ፡
[35]D ወውስተ፡
[36]B ክርስቲያና፡ ለእግዝእትነ፡; D ክርስቲያን፡ ዘእግዝእትነ፡ ቅድስት፡
[37]D በፀኤ
[38]D ወትሰመይ፡
[39]B ዘይጼሊ፡
[40]C adds ይሰግድ፡
[41]D adds ቅዱስ፡
[42]C ወዘታሌዕሎ፡
[43]BCD ለነዳይ፡
[44]D adds ከሚተከ፡ ኀበ፡ ቦ፡
[45]D ግብር፡
[46]BD ዘይትከሃለከ፡
[47]B ትትየኒ፡; D ትትሐየየኒ፡
[48]B omits.
[49]C ቅዱስ፡
[50]C ዘርእከ፡
[51]D ዘባሕር፡
[52]D ወይእዜኒ፡ አንተ፡ ቀዲሙ፡ አንተ፡ ዮምኒ፡ አአምላክ፡
[53]B adds ወስእለትየ፡
[54]BCD ወላዲትከ፡
[55]CD add ቅዱስ፡
[56]B ትእዛዘከ፡
[57]B ገብረ፡; D ገበርከ፡; C omits.
[58]D ለአበውየ፡
[59]B ፀኤላውያን፡
[60]B ኢያአምሩ፡
[61]B አምላክ፡
[62]B ለዘአልብየ፡; D ወለእመ፡ አልብየ፡
[63]D ለእመ፡
[64]B ሚመቱመ፡ ለአበውየ፡

ትእዛዝከ፡ ሕገ፡ ሙሴ፡ ወበቃለ፡ ሐዋርያቲከ፡ ቅዱሳን[67]። እስመ፡ አነ፡ ባሕቲትየ፡ ተረፍኩ፡ ዮምኒ[68]፡ በዝ፡ ዓለም፡ እኩይ[69]፡ እምደቂቀ፡ ኵሉሙ፡ መሳፍንተ፡ ፀኤል[70]፡ አግብርቲከ፡ እለ፡ ይገብሩ፡ ፈቃደከ[71]፡ በሠናይ፡ አምልኮ፡ ኪያከ፡ ፈጣሬ፡ ዓለማት፡ ኵሉሙ[72]። ወብእሲትየኒ፡ ዓመትከ፡ እምዘርዓ፡ ካህናቲከ፡ ንጹሐን። ይእዜኒ፡ ጸግዋ[73] እግዚኦ፡ በብዝኃ፡ ኀሩትከ፡ ዘኢየኃልቅ[74]፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ ወልደ፡ ሠናየ[75]፡ ለቤተ፡ ክርስቲያንከ[76]፡ ዘያሠምር[77]፡ በሕገ፡ ወንጌልከ[78]።

እንዘ[79]፡ ይገብር[80]፡ ዘንተ፡ ነገረ[81]፡ ኵሎ፡ ጊዜ፡ ቅድመ፡ ስእሉ፡ ለዑራኤል[82]፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡ በጸሎት፡ ወበአንብዕ፡ ብዙኅ[83]፡ እንዘ፡ ይበኪ፡ ወይሰግድ፡ ውስተ፡ ደብረ፡ ማኅው፡ ዘሀገረ፡ ሸግላ[84]፡ *አፀደ፡ እግዝእትነ[85]፡ ማርያም፡ ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ ወአሐተ፡ ዕለተ፡ መጽአ[86]፡ ቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል[87]፡ እምላዕለ፡ ሰማይ[88]፡ ኀቤሁ[89]፡ እንዘ፡ ሀሎ፡ *ቅድመ፡ ስእሉ፡ ይጼሊ[90]። ወይቤሎ፡ ሰላም፡ ለከ፡ አፍቁርየ፡ ሕይወት፡ ብኒ፡ ገብሩ፡ ለወልደ፡ አምላክ፡ እግዚእነ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክ(f. 65a)ርስቶስ፡ እስመ፡ ተሰምዓ፡ ጸሎትከ፡ ወስእለትከ፡ ወምጽዋትከ፡ በሠናይ[91]፡ አምልኮ፡ ቅድመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አኀዜ፡ ኵሉ፡ ዓለም። ናሁ፡ ብእሲትከ፡ ትፀንስ፡ በዝንቱ፡ ሰሙን፡ ወትወልድ፡ ወልደ፡ ሠናየ፡ ዘይከውን[92]፡ መምሕረ[93]፡ ኵሉ[94]፡ ዓለም፡ ወበጸሎቱ፡ ዘያድኅን፡ እሞተ፡ ሲኦል። ፍቁረ፡ *ማርያም፡ ድንግል[95]፡ *ወላዲቱ፡ ለአማኑኤል[96]። መግሥያሙ[97]፡ ለነገሥት፡ ወፀሮሙ፡ ለዓላውያን[98]፡ ሃይማኖት፡ በሰይፈ[99]፡ ቃሉሙ፡ ለሐዋርያት፡ ዘያጠፍኦሙ[100]፡ እምብሔረ፡ ኢትዮጵያ። ወለካህናተ፡ ጽድቅ፡ ዘይመርሆሙ፡ እምጽልመተ፡ ኑፋቄ፡ መንገለ፡ ብርሃን[101]፡ ወንጌሉ፡ ለክርስቶስ፡ በትምህርተ[102]፡ ሕጎሙ፡

[65]B delets ይ.
[66]C omits.
[67]B ንጹሐን፡
[68]CD ዮም፡
[69]B omits.
[70]CD እስራኤል፡
[71]D ትእዛዘከ፡
[72]D ኵሎ፡
[73]BD ጸግወኒ፡
[74]CD add እስከ፡
[75]D adds ዘያሠምር፡
[76]BCD መቅደስከ፡
[77]D omits.
[78]D adds ቅዱስ፡
[79]B ወእንዘ፡
[80]D ይትመሐለል፡
[81]D እንዘ፡ ይብል፡
[82]CD ለቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል፡
[83]C ብዙኃ፡
[84]D ሰግላ፡
[85]D ዓቢይ፡ ዘእግዝእትነ፡
[86]D adds ኀቤሁ፡
[87]D adds ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡
[88]BCD ሰማያት፡
[89]D omits.
[90]D በጸሎት፡ ከመ፡ ቀዳሚ፡
[91]B በሠናየ፡
[92]D ወይከውን፡
[93]C adds ቅዱሳን፡
[94]C ኩሉ፡
[95]D ቅድስት፡ ድንግል፡ ማርያም፡
[96]B ወላዲተ፡ አማኑኤል፡; D ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ፡ ውእቱ፡
[97]CD ወመግሥያሙ፡
[98]D ለዕልዋነ፡
[99]D ወሰይፈ፡
[100]B ዘያጠፍዕ፡
[101]B ብርሃን፡ ቃለ፡; D ብርሃነ፡ ቃለ፡
[102]D ወትምህርተ፡

ለሐዋርያት፡ ወቃለ[103]፡ ትንቢቶሙ፡ ወበሥርዓቶሙ[104]፡ ለነቢያተ፡ ፀኤል[105]፡ ቅዱሳን፡ እለ፡ ከዓዉ፡ ደሞሙ፡ በእንተ[106]፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ እመዋዕለ[107]፡ ሙሴ፡ ወአሮን፡ እስከ፡ ደመ፡ ዘካርያስ፡ ወልደ፡ በራክዩ። ወበቃለ፡ ድርሳነ፡ ውዳሴሁ፡ ይሴብሕዎ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ እለ፡ *ውስተ፡ ኵሉ፡ ዓለም[108]፡ መዘምራን፡ ካህናት፡ ዘእግዚአብሔር[109]።

ወሶበ፡ ሰምዓ፡ ነገረ፡ ብስራት፡ ጥቀ፡ ደንገጸ። ወኃደረ፡ ፫ዕለተ[110]፡ በአንክሮ። እስመ፡ ርእየተ፡ ገጹ፡ መንክር፡ ወዕፁብ፡ ወግሩም፡ ወጣዕመ፡ ቃሉሂ[111]፡ ያስተፈሥሕ[112]፡ ጥቀ[113]፡ እምአስካለ፡ ወይን፡ ወሀሊብ። ወ(f. 65b)እምዝ፡ በውእቱ፡ ሰሙን፡ ፀንሰት፡ ብእሲቱ[114]፡ *አመ፡ ፫ለወርኃ[115]፡ ጥቅምት[116]፡ በዘመነ፡ ጽጌ፡ ወመዓዛ፡ ኵሉ፡ አፈዋት፡ ወወለዶት[117]፡ አመ፡ ፯ለሐምሌ[118]፡ በበዓለ፡ ቅድስት፡ ሥላሴ፡ ገባርያነ፡ ኵሉ[119]፡ ዓለማት።

ወበውእቱ፡ ዕለት፡ ጊዜ፡ ተወልደ፡ ዝ[120]፡ ሕፃን፡ መጽአ[121]፡ ውእቱ፡ ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡ ዑራኤል[122]፡ ኀበ፡ እሙ፡ ወቆመ፡ መልዕልተ፡ ቤታ። ወአስተርአያ፡ በሕልም[123]፡ ወይቤላ፡ ለዝንቱ[124]፡ *ሕፃንኪ[125]፡ ይኩን፡ ስሙ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ልሳነ፡ ዕፍረት[126]፡ ሐዲስ[127]፡ ሐዋርያ፡ ከመ፡ ጴጥሮስ፡ ወጳውሎስ። ይከውን[128]፡ ሃይማኖቱ[129]፡ ወክህነቱ[130]፡ ንጹሐ[131]፡ ከመ፡ አሮን፡ ወመልከ[132]፡ ጼዴቅ[133]፡ ወሳሙኤል፡ ካህናተ፡ ጽድቅ፡ ዘአሪት[134]። ወጊዮርጊስ[135]፡ ብሂል፡ መስተገብረ፡ ሃይማኖት[136]፡ ፍቁረ[137]፡ እግዝእትነ[138]፡ ማርያም፡ ድንግል[139]፡ *ወላዲተ፡ አምላክ[140]። ወይትጋደል፡ በሃይማኖት፡ ርትዕት፡ ከመ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ዘልዳ፡ ሰማዕተ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ በኀበ፡ ነገሥት። ወክቡር[141]፡ ውእቱ፡ *በኀበ፡ ጳጳሳት፡ ወኤጲስ፡ ቆጶሳት[142]።

---

[103]B በቃለ፡; C ወበቃለ፡; D ወለቃለ፡
[104]CD ወሥርዓቶሙ፡
[105]D እስራኤል፡
[106]C adds አንተ፡
[107]B alters to እምእለ፡
[108]D ዘውስተ፡ ዓለም፡ ኵሉ፡
[109]B ዘበእግዚአብሔር፡; C ዘለእግዚአብሔር፡
[110]D ፫ተ፡ ዕለተ፡
[111]D adds ባሕቱ፡
[112]For ያስተፈሥሕ፡; CD ያስተፈሥሕ፡
[113]D omits.
[114]B ብእሲተ፡
[115]B በ፫ አውራኀ፡; D አመ፡ ሰሉሱ፡ ለወርኃ፡
[116]B ዘጥቅምት፡
[117]For ወወለደት፡; BCD ወወለደት፡
[118]CD ፯ለወርኃ፡ ሐምሌ፡
[119]C ኩሉ፡
[120]B omits.
[121]C adds መጽአ፡
[122]D ዑራኤል፡
[123]D በሕልማ፡
[124]D ዝንቱ፡
[125]CD ወልድኪ፡
[126]*B ወልድኪ፡ ዕፍረተ፡
[127]D adds ሐዲስ፡
[128]D alters ይከውኑ to ይከውን፡
[129]D በሃይማኖቱ፡
[130]CD ወበክህነቱ፡
[131]BCD ንጹሕ፡
[132]B መልከ፡ D omits.
[133]D omits.
[134]B ወስሙ፡ ይኩን፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡
[135]BD ጊዮርጊስ፡
[136]D ጽድቅ፡ ወሃይማኖት
[137]D ወፍቁረ፡
[138]B omits.
[139]D omits.
[140]C omits.
[141]B ክቡር፡
[142]B ወበኀበ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ሊቀ፡ ጳጳሳት፡; D adds ወተሰወራ፡

ወእምድኅረዝ፡ ሰመይዎ፡ ስሞ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ወወሀብዎ[143]፡ ለአባ፡ ሥረቀ፡ ብርሃን፡ መምህረ፡ ሐይቅ[144]፡ *ጽባሐዊት፡ ገነት[145]፡ ወዓቃቤ፡ ሰዓት፡ ጻድቅ[146]፡ *ከመ፡ ይትመሐር፡ መጻሕፍተ፡ ቅዱሳተ[147]። ወወሶበ[148]፡ ወጠነ፡ *ከመ፡ ይትመሐር[149]፡ ዓበዮ፡ ወጸንዖ[150]፡ ፊደል። ወነበረ፡ እስከ፡ ፭ዓመት፡ *ወከመ[151]፡ ዘኢየአምር፡ (f. 66a) ነገረ፡ ቀለማት፡ አሐቲ፡ ቃለ። ወእምዝ፡ በ፮ዓመት[152]፡ ሜጦ፡ መምህሩ፡ ኀበ፡ አቡሁ። ወይቤሎ፡ ለዝንቱ[153]፡ ወልድከ[154]፡ አበዮ፡ ትምህርተ[155]፡ መጻሕፍት። ወበእንተዝ፡ ሜጥክዎ፡ ኀቤከ። ሐራዊ[156]፡ ዘንጉሥ፡ ረስዮ፡ ከመ[157]፡ ይኩን፡ መስፍነ፡ ከማከ[158]። ወአውሥአ፡ አቡሁ፡ ወይቤሎ፡ ለመምህሩ፡ አንሰ፡ ወሀብክዎ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር፡ ከመ፡ ይኩን፡ ካህነ፡ አሥራተ[159]፡ ለዓቂበ[160]፡ ሕጉ፡ ለእግዚአብሔር[161]። ለእመ፡ ኢፈቀደ፡ አምላኪየ፡ ትምህርቶ፡ ይረስዮ፡ ዘከመ[162]፡ ፈቀደ። አንሰ[163]፡ ኢይትዌከፈከ[164]። አንተሰ[165]፡ ረስዮ[166]፡ ወልደከ። እስመ፡ አነ[167]፡ ወሀብክዎ፡ *ለቤተ፡ እግዚአብሔር[168]፡ ይትለዓክ[169]። *ወኃደግዎ፡ ዕዳው[170]፡ በቅድሜየ[171]፡ ብዕዓተ፡ ይኩነኒ፡ በከመ፡ ቃልየ። ወበእንተዝ፡ ዓዲ[172]፡ ሜጦ፡ መምህሩ፡ እምኀበ፡ አቡሁ፡ ውስተ፡ ደሴተ፡ *ባሕረ፡ ሐይቅ[173]። ወረሰዮ፡ ረድኡ፡ መነኮሳት[174]።

ወእምዝ[175]፡ አኃዘ[176]፡ ውእቱ፡ ውልድ[177]፡ ከመ፡ ይትጋደል፡ ገድለ፡ ሠናየ[178]፡ ምስለ፡ መነኮሳት፡ ቅዱሳን። ወይሰግድ፡ እንዘ፡ ይሰግዱ፡ መነኮሳት[179]፡ ለአምላክነ፡ በበጊዜሁ[180]፡ ፪፻፸ወ፲፪ተ[181]፡ ስግደታተ[182]። ወየሐርፅ[183]፡ እንዘ፡ የሐርፁ፡ እክለ[184]፡ ፱አስፈሪዳተ[185]፡

[143]C adds ይትመሐር፡ መጻሕፍተ፡ ቅዱሳተ፡; D adds ለመምሕር፡ ከመ፡ ይትመሐር፡ መጻሕፍተ፡ ቅዱሳተ
[144]C ጽድቅ
[145]BCD omit.
[146]CD ጽድቅ
[147]CD omit.
[148]For ወሶበ፡; BCD ወሶበ፡
[149]BCD ትምሕርተ፡ መጻሕፍት፡
[150]D አጽንዖተ፡
[151]C ወኮነ፡
[152]*B omits; D ምንተኒ፡ አልቦ፡ ዘየአምሮ፡ ወኢኮነ፡ ነገረ፡ ቀለማት፡ አሐተኒ፡ ቃለ። ወእምድኅረ፡ ፭ ዓመት፡
[153]D ዝንቱ፡
[154]B ወልድ፡
[155]C ትዕምርተ፡
[156]C ሐራዌ፡
[157]D adds ከማከ፡
[158]D omits.
[159]D አሥራት፡
[160]C ለዓቃቤ፡
[161]BCD omit.
[162]B በከመ፡
[163]BC ወአንሰ፡
[164]D ኢይትወከፈከ፡
[165]C ወአንተሰ፡; D ወአንተ፡
[166]C omits.
[167]B omits.
[168]B omits.; EMML 6772, ለእግዚአብሔር፡
[169]D ይትለአከከ፡
[170]B ወወሀብዎ፡ ከመ፡ እደው፡; CD ወኃደግዎ፡ ከመ፡ ዕደው፡ EMML 6772 ከመ፡ እደው፡
[171]C በቅድሜሁ፡; D በቅድሜሁ፡ ለአምላኪየ፡; EMML 6772 በቅድሜከ፡
[172]D omits.
[173]B ባሕር፡ ዘሐይቅ፡
[174]B ለመነኮሳት፡
[175]CD ወእምድኅረዝ፡
[176]D ወጠነ፡
[177]For ወልድ፡; B omits; CD ወልድ፡
[178]D ሐዲሰ፡
[179]C adds ለመነኮሳት፡
[180]B በጊዜሁ፡
[181]B ፪፻፸ወ፲፪; D ፪፻፸ ፲፪
[182]C omits.
[183]D ምስሌሆሙ፡
[184]D adds መጠነ፡

እክል[186]። ወይሰግድ፡ ዘእንበለ፡ *ትምህርተ፡ መጻሕፍት[187]፡ በነገ(f. 66b)ረ፡ ብሔሩ። ወይቤላ[188]፡ ለእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ ቀዊሞ፡ ቅድመ፡ ስእላ፡ ቅድስት[189]፡ ኦእግዝእትየ[190]፡ እሙ፡ ለአምላኪየ፡ ለምንት፡ ትትሔይይኒ[191]፡ ለገብርኪ፡ ወልደ፡ ዓመትኪ። አቡየ፡ ወህበኒ፡ ለወልድኪ[192]፡ አሥራተ፡ ከመ፡ እኩን፡ ካህነ[193]፡ ለቤተ[194]፡ መቅደስኪ፡ ወእትለዓኮሙ፡ *ለመነኮሳተ፡ ዛቲ[195]፡ ደብር። ወአንሰ፡ ኮንኩ፡ ዘኢየምር፡ ነገረ፡ መጽሐፍ[196]፡ ወውዳሴ፡ ዚአኪ፡ ከመ፡ እሉ፡ ቅዱሳን፡ ምስሌሆሙ፡ ዘሀሎኩ፡ ውስተ፡ ዛቲ፡ ገዳም። አው፡ ኢኮንኩ፡ ሐራ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ዘምድራዊ[197]፡ ከመ[198]፡ አበውየ[199]፡ አው[200]፡ ከመ፡ እሉ፡ መነኮሳተ[201]፡ ባሕረ፡ ሐይቅ። ምንት[202]፡ *ፍጥረተ፡ ሰብእ፡ ይብሉኒ[203]፡ ሰብአ[204]፡ ዝንቱ[205]፡ ዓለም፡ ኃላፊ[206]፡ ከመ፡ ጽላሎት፡ ቅጽበተ። ኦእግዝእትየ፡ ንሥእኒ፡ *በሞተ፡ ሥጋ[207]፡ ወረስዩኒ[208]፡ እኩን፡ ምስሌኪ። እስመ፡ ተማኅፀንኩ፡ *በሞተ፡ ወልድኪ[209]፡ ሕያው[210]፡ ዘሞተ፡ *ለቤዛ፡ ብዙኃን፡ ዘኢይመውት[211]፡ በባሕርየ፡ መለኮቱ።

**ወእንዘ፡ ይገብር[212]፡ *ዘንተ[213]፡ ኮሎ፡ ጊዜ[214]፡ አሐተ[215]፡ ዕለተ[216]፡ መጽአት፡ ኀቤሁ፡ እግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ *ወትቤሎ፡ በሕልሙ[217]፡ ኦኅሩይየ[218]፡ ጊዮርጊስ[219]፡ ገብርየ፡ ተዓቀብ፡ *በዝንቱ፡ ሰሙን[220]፡ በንጽሐ፡ ሥጋ[221]። እስመ፡ ወልድየ፡ ይሁበከ፡ እምጸጋ፡ ኂሩቱ፡ መንፈሰ፡ ድርሰት፡ ዘመጻሕፍት፡ እስመ[222]፡ ዑራኤልኒ[223]፡ መልአክ[224]፡ ሰአለ፡ (f. 67a) በእንቲአከ፡ እምኀበ፡ ወልድየ፡ ከመ፡ ዕዝራ፡ ያስቲከ[225]፡ ጽዋዓ፡ ልቡና። ወዘንተ፡ ብሂላ[226]፡ ተሰወረት[227]። ወውእቱኒ፡ ነበረ፡ ፵ዕለተ[228]፡ እንዘ፡ ይሰግድ፡ ቅድመ፡ ስእላ፡ በበ፼፡ ፼ፈ[229]፡ ለለዕለቱ።

---

[185]C ፱ተ፡ አስፈሪዳተ፡; D ፱አ፡ አስፈሪዳት፡
[186]D omits.
[187]B ትምህርት፡ ዘመጻሕፍት፡; Cትእምርት፡ መጻሕፍት፡
[188]D ወይብላ፡
[189]B adds እንዘ ይብል፡; D ለቅድስት፡
[190]C ለእግዝእትየ፡
[191]B ትትሄይይኑ፡; D ትትኀይይኒ፡
[192]C adds ዓመትኪ፡
[193]D ላዕከ፡
[194]B ቤተ፡
[195]B ለመነኮሳት፡ ዘዛቲ፡; C ለመነኮሳት፡ በዛቲ፡ D ለመነኮሳተ፡
[196]D መጻሕፍት፡
[197]C ምድራዌ፡
[198]C adds ዕለ
[199]D አቡየ፡
[200]Amharicism; ወይ የንጉሥ አሽከር ወይ ... አልሆንኩ፡
[201]BC መነኮሳት፡
[202]D ምንተ፡
[203]B alters to ፍጥረቱ፡ ሰብእ፡ ኢይብሉኒ፡; D ይቤሉኒ፡
[204]C ሰብእ፡
[205]D ከንቱ፡
[206]D ዛቲ፡ ዘተኃልፍ፡
[207]B በሞት፡ ዘሥጋ፡; C በሞተ፡ ሥጋኪ፡
[208]CD ወረስይኒ፡
[209]D በሞቱ፡ ለወልድኪ፡
[210]C adds ወልድኪ፡
[211]D ለቤዝወ፡ ኮሉ፡ ፍጥረት፡ ዘአልቦቱ፡ ሞት፡
[212]D ይትመሐለል፡
[213]D adds ነገረ፡
[214]D ዕለተ፡ *C ኮሎ፡ ጊዜ፡ ዘንተ፡
[215]D ወአሐተ፡
[216]**B ወበአሐቲ፡ ዕለት፡
[217]C በሕልሙ፡ ወትቤሎ፡
[218]C ኅሩይየ፡ D ኦጊዮርጊስ፡ ኅሩይየ፡
[219]D omits.
[220]C ዕሙን፡
[221]C ሥ፡
[222]D omits.
[223]BC ዑርኤል፡; D ወዑራኤልኒ፡
[224]D እመልአክ፡
[225]C ያስትይከ፡

*ወበ፱ዕለት፡ እምድኅረ፡ ኮነ፡ ዝንቱ፡ ነገር[230]፡ መጽአ፡ ኀቤሁ፡ ወሪዶ[231]፡ እምሰማይ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል[232]፡ እኂዞ፡ ፭ጽዋዓተ[233]፡ ዘቢረሌ፡ ዘምሉዕ፡ ውስቴቶን፡ ስቴ፡ ሕይወት፡ ዘያጐሥዕ፡ ቃለ፡ መጻሕፍት፡፡ ወአስተዮ፡ ወደረሰ[234]፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ውዳሴሃ[235]፡ ዘይሰመይ፡ ኖኅተ፡ ብርሃን፡ ቀዲሙ፡፡ ወካዕበ፡ ተናገረ፡ ፍካሬ[236]፡ መዝሙረ፡ ዳዊት፡ *፭ወበቃለ[237]፡ ኀጒልቈ፡ መዝሙሩ[238]፡ *፻ወ፱ሰላመ፡ ውዳሴሃ፡ ለማርያም[239]፡፡ ወሰመይዎሙ[240]፡ ቅዱሳን፡ መዝሙረ፡ ኢየሱስ[241]፡፡ ወዓዲ፡ ሥልሰ[242]፡ ውዳሴሆሙ፡ ለመላእክት፡ ለነቢያት፡ ወለሐዋርያት፡ ለጻድቃን፡ ወለሰማዕት[243]፡ ደረሰ[244]፡፡ *ወነበበ፡ ካዕበ፡ ራብዓየ፡ በሃይማኖት[245]፡ ርትዕት[246]፡ ወተሰምየ፡ *መጽሐፈ ምሥጢር[247]፡፡ ወሐምሰ[248]፡ ደረሰ፡ ስባሔ፡ ጥዑመ፡ እመጻሕፍተ[249]፡ ብሉይ፡ ወሐዲስ፡ አስተዋጺኦ፡ ብዙኃ፡ ቃላተ[250]፡ ወሰመዮን፡ ጸሎተ፡ ሰዓታት፡፡ ወረሰዮን፡ ለኵላ[251]፡ ሰዓተ[252]፡ ፰ወ፪[253] ጊዜያት[254]፡ ዘመዓልት፡ ወዘሌሊት፡ በኀጒልቈ[255]፡ ፰ወ፪ጊዜያት[256]፡፡ ወእምድኅረ፡ ዝንቱ[257]፡ ደረሰ፡ *ብዙኃተ[258]፡ ውዳሴያተ[259]፡ ዘእግዝእትነ፡ ማርያም፡ በ፷ዕለት[260]፡ በ፴ወ፫ዕለተ[261]፡ በዓላቲሃ[262]፡ ቅዱሳት፡ ወሰመያ መጽሐፈ አርጋኖን፡፡

ወእምድኅረዝ[263]፡ ኮነ፡ መምህሮሙ፡ ለነገሥተ[264]፡ ደቂቀ፡ ዳዊት፡ ዳግማዊ፡ ፰ቴዎድሮስ፡ ይስሐቅ፡ ወቴዎፍሎስ[265]፡ እንድርያስኒ[266]፡ *ወሀብተ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ሕዝቅያስኒ[267]፡ ወኢዮስያስ[268]፡

---

[226]C ብሂለ፡
[227]D ተሰወረቶ፡
[228]D አርብዓ፡ ዕለተ፡
[229]C omits ፌ፡; D ዕልፌ፡
[230]D ወእምድኅረ፡ ፴ዕለት፡ እምዘ፡ አስተርአየቶ፡ እግዝእትነ፡
[231]C ወረደ፡
[232]D adds ሊቀ፡ መላእክት፡
[233]BD ፭ተ፡ ጽዋዓተ፡
[234]D ወሰሪቦ፡ ደረሰ፡
[235]BCD ውዳሴ፡
[236]B omits.
[237]B ፭ተ፡ ወበቃለ፡
[238]*D omits.
[239]C ፻ወ፱ ደረሰ፡ ውዳሴ፡ ማርያም፡; D ፻ወ፱ ደረሰ፡ ቅዳሴ፡ ዘማርያም፡
[240]BD ወሰመይዎ፡
[241]D omits.
[242]D adds ደረሰ፡ ወነበበ፡
[243]B ወሰማዕት፡; D ወለሰማዕታት፡
[244]Amharicism; D omits.
[245]D ወራብዕ፡ ደረሰ፡ መጻሕፍተ፡ ሃይማኖት፡
[246]C adds መጽሐፈ
[247]C ዘምሥጢር፡
[248]C ወ፭ሰ፡; D ወሐምስ፡
[249]B እመጻሕፍት፡
[250]D ኃይላተ፡
[251]B በከዋላ፡; CD በኵላ፡
[252]CD ሰዓት፡
[253]B ፰ወ፪ተ፡; D ፰ወ፪ቱ፡
[254]B ጊዜያተ፡
[255]B በኀልቈ፡
[256]B ፰ወ፪ቱ፡ ጊዜያት፡; C ፰ወ፪ቱ፡ ስነ፡ ፍጥረት፡; D ፰ወ፪፡ ስነ፡ ፍጥረት፡
[257]CD ወእምድኅረዝኒ፡
[258]C ብዙኃ፡
[259]C ቅዳሴያተ፡ *D ቅዳሴያተ፡ ብዙኃተ፡
[260]C ወ፷ዕለታት፡; D ዘ፷ዕለታት፡
[261]B ዘ፴ወ፫ዕለት፡; C ዘ፴ወ፫ዕለተ፡
[262]B በዓላታሃ፡
[263]D ወእምድኅረ፡ ዝንቱ፡
[264]Fot ለነገሥት፡; BCD ለነገሥት፡
[265]B ቴዎፍሎስ፡
[266]BD እንድርያስ፡
[267]D ሕዝቅያስ፡
[268]*B ወኢዮስያስ፡ ሕዝቅያስ፡

ወዘርዓ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ወእኅቱ፡ ብዕዕት፡ ዕሌኒ[269]**። ወመሐሮሙ፡ ፴ወ፩መጻሕፍተ፡ ነቢያት**[270]**፡ ወሐዋርያት፡ ምስለ**[271]**፡ ትርጓሜሆን**[272]**፡ ወርትዕተ**[273]**፡ ሃይማኖተ**[274]**፡ ምስለ**[275]**፡ ግብራተ**[276]**፡ ጽድቅ ሠናይ**[277]**። ወኮነ፡ ሰማዕተ፡ ጽድ**[278]**፡ በሃይማኖት**[279]**፡ ርትዕት። ወተገደለ**[280]**፡ ምስለ፡ ዓላዊያን። ተዋስአሙ፡ ወሞአሙ፡ በኃይለ፡ መለኮት፡ ወበቃለ፡ መጻሕፍት፡ በእንተ፡ ስመ፡ እግዚእነ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ። አዕረፈ፡ እምፃማ፡ ዝንቱ**[281]**፡ ዓለም። ፈለሰ፡ ወወረሰ፡ መንግሥተ፡ ሰማያት፡ በትንብልናሁ፡ ለሊቀ፡ መላእክት**[282]**፡ ዑራኤል። ጸሎቱ፡ ወበረከቱ**[283]**፡ የሃሉ፡ ምስለ**[284]**፡ *ፍቁሩ፡ ገብረ፡ ሕይወት**[285]**፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አሜን**[286]**።**

Translation:

(f. 63b) The miracle of Saint Uriel the Archangel. May his prayer and blessing be with his beloved *Gäbrä Ḥəywät and with its copyist, the sinner and transgressor Wäldä Śəllase[287]

It came to pass in the times of our King Dawit the Second (that) there was a man, a governor[288] of Šägla, lover of the Archangel Uriel. Our King Dawit appointed him the first Head of Governors[289] of the people of Təgre, because his father was formerly a prince[290] of the Təgreans; and his origin was the city of Aksum, from the seed of the Levites and from holy people, who descended from the seed of Jephthae and Gedeon who came (to Təgre) with the *tabot* of Zion in the times of the son of King Solomon[291], as heads of the entourage of the same son of Solomon. For when Solomon made his son king over Ethiopia, the country of his (the son's) mother, he had dispatched with his son the children of Israel to the land of Təgre[292]. For this reason, Dawit the Second appointed this governor Head of Princes[293] of the land of Təgre.

The said governor did not have children. **(f. 64a)** So, he used to enter[294] before the picture of the Archangel Saint Uriel in the church of Our Lady Mary, Virgin in two

[269]B adds **ንግሥት፡**
[270]D **፴ወ፩መጻሕፍት፡ ዘነቢያት፡**
[271]D **እስከ፡**
[272]B **ትርጓሜሁ፡**; C **ትርጓሜ፡** D **ተፍጻሜሆን፡**
[273]D **ወርትዕትኒ፡**
[274]BD **ሃይማኖት፡**
[275]B omits.
[276]CD **ምግባራተ፡**
[277]D **ወሠናይ፡**
[278]For **ጽድቅ፡**; BCD **ጽድቅ፡**
[279]D **ወሃይማኖት፡**
[280]For **ወተጋደለ፡**; BCD **ወተጋደለ፡**
[281]B **እምዝንቱ፡**
[282]D adds **ቅዱስ፡**
[283]B adds **ለዝንቱ፡ ጻድቅ፡ አባ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡**; C adds **ለጻድቅ፡ አባ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡**; D adds **ለዝንቱ፡ ጻድቅ፡ አባ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ወትንብልና፡ ረድኤቱ፡ ለቅዱስ፡ ዑራኤል፡**
[284]C ends with **ምስሌነ፡ አሜን።።**
[285]B **ገብሩ፡ ወልደ፡ ፋሲለደስ፡** D **ንጉሥነ፡ ኃይለ፡ ሥላሴ፡ ወምስለ፡ ንግሥትነ፡ ወለተ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡**
[286]D onits.
[287]B "Wäldä Fasilädäs forever and ever. Amen;" C "with us. Amen; D In the name of the Father…we write the miracle of…May his prayer and the gift of his help be with our King Haile Sellasie, our Queen Wälättä Giyorgis, with all of us, the children of baplism, and its reader, forever and ever. Amen."
[288]*Mäk^{w}ännən*.
[289]*Rə'əsä Mäk^{w}anənt*.
[290]*Mäsfən*.
[291]Menelik I or Bäynä Ləḥkəm.
[292]Carl Bezold, *Kebra Nagast:die Herrlichkeit der Könige*, Münchin, 1909, pp. 44-46.
[293]*Rə'əsä Mäsafənt*.
[294]B, "to stand."

ways, Mother of God, in the locality of Šägla, called Däbrä Maḫəw[295], (and) pray, weeping and repeatedly prostrating to the ground for many days. He said, "O God of the Archangel Uriel who dishonors the lofty and exalts the meek[296], who created all from nothing[297] by the wisdom of your Holy Trinity. There is nothing impossible for you; every thing is possible for you. Why do you neglect me, your servant, because of my sin? Rather, remember the covenant (you made with) Abraham, your beloved one; Isaac, your friend; and Jacob your saint, to whom you spoke, saying, in the covenant of your words that would not be belied, "I shall multiply your seed more than the stars of the sky and the sand of the sea."[298] Now as well as before you are the (same) God of all creatures. Hear my prayer[299], O Lord; and give ear to the words of my petition[300], for the sake of Our Lady Mary, your Bearer, and for the sake of Uriel, the angel of the keepers of your Commandments: give me a son who would please you and do your Commandments, as **(f. 64b)** my fathers the Israelites, who did not know a god other than you, have done. If I do not have a child, whom will you give the appointment of my pure fathers who used to do your will in ancient times according to the words of your Commandment, the law of Moses, and according to the words of your holy[301] Apostles. For I remained alone today in this cruel world of the children of all the princes of Israel, your servants who did your will in good worship of you, the Creator of all the worlds. And my wife, your maiden, too, is from the seed of your pure priests. Now, grant her[302], O Lord, by your enormous generosity, that would not be finished for ever and ever, a good son who will do good to your shrine according to the rules of your Gospel."

He continued doing this performance in prayer before the picture of the Archangel Uriel, crying with many tears and prostrating himself to the ground repeatedly in Däbrä Maḫəw[303] of the locality of Šägla, the courtyard of our Our Lady Mary, Bearer of God. One day Saint Uriel came to him from above the heaven, as he was praying before his picture, and said to him, "Peace be to you, O my beloved Ḥəywät Bənä[304], the servant of the Son of God, Our Lord Jesus **(f. 65a)** Christ, for your prayer, petition and almsgiving in good worship have been heard before the Almighty[305] God. Behold, your wife shall conceive this week and give birth to a good son who shall be a teacher of the whole world; savior (of others) by his prayer from the death of Hades; a lover of Virgin Mary, Bearer of Emmanuel; an admonisher of kings; fighter[306] of the heretics of faith with the sword of the words of the Apostles that would erase them from the country of Ethiopia; and leader of the priests of righteousness from the darkness of heresy toward the light of the words of the Gospel of Christ with the teaching of the law of the Apostles, the words of prophesy and preceps of the holy Prophets of Israel who spilled their blood for the sake of God from the time of Moses and Aaron to the blood of Zacharias son of

[295]Probably a confusion with Däbrä Baḥrəy.
[296]BCD, "the wretched."
[297]D "revealing to being
[298]Cf. Gen 22:17.
[299]B, adds "and petition."
[300]Cf. Ps 38:13/38:12, and Ps 101:2/102:1.
[301]B "pure."
[302]BD "me."
[303]Sic, probably, Däbrä Baḥrəy, the monastery of the saint.
[304]*Gädl*, "Ḥəzbä Ṣəyon," Colin, *Vie* p. 5; but the *Gädl* agrees that Giyorgis was an Israelite, *ibid*., pp. 25 and 27.
[305]Lit. "holder of the whole world.
[306]Lit. "enemy."

Barachias[307]. Singing priests of God that are in the whole world shall glorify God with the words of the homilies[308] of his praise."

When (Ḥəywät Bənä) heard the glad tidings, he was greatly startled. He spent three days in admiration because the appearance of (Uriel's) face was admirable, amazing and wonderful. And the taste of his words inspires pleasure, much more than a cluster of grapes[309] and milk. So, **(f. 65b)** his wife conceived in the same week, on the third of Ṭəqəmt, season of flower and fragrant odor of all perfumes, and gave birth on 7 Ḥamle[310], on the holy day of the Holy Trinity, Creator of all the worlds.

On the day the child was born, the Archangel Uriel came to his mother[311], stood on the top of her house, appeared to her in a dream, and said to her, "This child of yours, his name shall be Giyorgis of the perfume tongue; (he shall be) a new apostle whose faith will be like (that of) Peter and Paul; and his priesthood will be pure like (that of) Aaron, Melchisedec and Samuel priests of righteousness of the Old Testament. Giyorgis means practitioner of faith (and) beloved of Our Lady Virgin Mary, Bearer of God. He shall fight in the Orthodox faith, with kings, like George of Lydda, Martyr of Jesus Christ. He will be honored by metropolitans and bishops."

After that, they called his name Giyorgis, and gave him to *Abba* Śäräqä Bərhan, the teacher at Ḥayq, Paradise of the East, and a righteous *'Aqqabe Sä'at*, so that he might learn the holy scriptures. When he started learning, (memorizing) the alphabet became impossible and hard for him. He stayed seven years and still knew **(f. 66a)** not even a single letter of the alphabet. After seven years, his teacher returned him to his father, and said to him, "Learning the scriptures has become impossible for this child of yours. I am therefore returning him to you. Make him a king's soldier so that he may be a prince[312] like yourself." His father replied and said to the teacher, "But I have given him to God so that he may be a priest, a fief, to observe the law of God. If my God has not willed his education, let him make him as he wants. I will not receive (him) back from you. Make him your (errand) boy, for I have given him to the house of God so that he may serve (God). I have abandoned him (as) *'ədaw*[313] before me[314] to be a vow for me according to my words." So, the teacher took him back again from his father to the island of Lake Ḥayq, and made him an attendant of the monks.

From then on, he started his good combat together with the holy monks. He prostrated to the ground 2,300 prostrations when the monks repeatedly prostrated themselves to the ground before our God at each hour[315]. He ground nine baskets[316] of grain when they ground. He worshipped, without the knowledge of (what) the scriptures (say), in the language of his **(f. 66b)** region. He said to Our Lady Mary, standing before her holy icon, "O My Lady, Mother of my God, why do you neglect me, your servant, son of your maid. My father gave me to your Son a fief so that I may be a priest at your shrine and serve the monks of this monastery. But I do not know what the books and

[307]Lk 11: 51.
[308]"*Dərsan.*"
[309]I.e. "wine."
[310]According to the *Gädl*, this is the day on which he died, p. 53.
[311]*Gädl*, "Ǝmmənä Ṣəyon," Colin, *Vie*, p. 5.
[312]*Mäsfən*.
[313]? Not clear; all the manuscripts have problem with this expression. B **"**I have given him like men;" CD "I have abandoned him like men;" EMML 6772 "I have given him to God so that he may serve like men."
[314] C "before him;" D "before my God;" EMML 6772 "before you."
[315]These are the special hours (*Sä'atat*) of the daily preyers.
[316]"*Asfäridat*."

(the words of) your praise say, like these monks, though I live with them in this abbey. I am neither a soldier of the earthly king like my fathers nor (am serving) like these monks of Däbrä Ḥayq. "What (kind) of human creature (is he)?" say of me people of this world that passes in a moment like a shadow. O My Lady, take me by death of the body and make me live with you, for I take refuge at the death of your living Son who died for the redemption of many, while he does not die in his divine nature."

As he was doing this all the time, Our Lady Mary came to him one day, and said to him in his dream, "O my chosen Giyorgis, my servant, keep yourself this week in purity of the flesh[317], for my Son shall grant you, from the grace of his generosity, the spirit of composing books because the Archangel Uriel has asked **(f. 67a)** for your sake from my Son that he may make you drink a cup of perception like Ezra." She said this and disappeared. And he lived forty days prostrating himself to the ground repeatedly before her icon several thousand times a day.

Forty days after this incident took place, Saint Uriel[318] came to him descending from heaven, carrying five crystal chalices filled with a drink of life[319] that makes one pour forth words of books, and made him drink. So, first he authored the book of her praise, called *Ḫoḫətä Bərhan*[320]; then he uttered a commentary[321] on the five psalms of David[322]; and 150 greetings of praise of Mary, according to the number of his (David's) psalms, which the saints called *Mäzmurä Iyyäsus*[323]. Furthermore, he authored, thirdly, praises of the angels, prophets, saints, and martyrs[324]. He also uttered a fourth one, on the Orthodox faith, which was called *Mäṣḥafä Məsṭir*[325]. Fifth, he authored a sweet praise, taking many words from the scriptures of the Old and New (Testaments), and called it[326] *Ṣälotä Sä'atat*[327], and ordered them into each of the twenty-two hours of the day and night according to the twenty-two creations[328]. After this, he authored many praises of **(f. 67b)** of Our Lady Mary for the seven days and for the thirty-three days of her holy days, and called it *Mäṣḥafä Arganon*[329].

After that, he became the teacher of the princes[330] the children of King Dawit the Second: Tewodros, Yəsḥaq, Tewoflos, Ǝndəryas, Habtä Iyyäsus, Ḥəzqyas, Iyyosyas, Zär'a Ya'əqob and his sister the blessed 'Ǝlleni. He taught them the eighty-one (canonical) books of the Prophets and Apostles, with their commentary, and the Orthodox faith, accompanied with good righteous deeds. He became martyr of truth in

[317]*Gädl*, "purify yoursef and sancrify your soul," Colin, *Vie*, p. 8.
[318]*Gädl*, "Gabriel," Colin, *Vie*, p. 9.
[319]*Gädl*, "taken from the sea of life," Colin, *Vie*, p. 9.
[320]"Portal of Light," Marcus van den Oudenrijn, *Helenae Aethiopicum.*
[321]B omits.
[322]Not clear, *Gädl*, "five word of mystery," Colin, *Vie*, p. 12.
[323]"Psalms of Jesus," unidentified; it should not be cofused with *Mäzmurä Krəstos*--which I ascribe to *Abba Baḥrəy*--even though it is also called *Mäzmurä Iyyäsus*. There are internal evidence that tesify that the *Mäzmurä Krəstos* was composed over a century and half later, during the times of *Aṣe* Śärṣä Dəngəl (1563-97. Furthemore, the *Mäzmurä Krəstos* is not about Mary.
[324]This must be his *Ǝg'abḥer Nägśä*, Getatchew Haile, *The Different collections of Nägś hymns*, pp. 52-62.
[325]"Book of Mystery," Yacob Beyene, *Giyorgis di Saglā Il Libro del Mistero.*
[326]Lit. "them."
[327]Horologium, cf. EMML 4, Macomber, *A Catalogue*, p. 215.
[328]AB "hours." For the copy of his *Ṣätotä Sä'at*, see especially EMML 204, Macomber, *ibid*. EMML 204 was copied in 1959 from a fifteenth-century *Ṣätotä Sä'at* belonging to the monastery of its author.
[329]"Book of Organ," Leander, *'Argānona Ueddāsē.*
[330]The word is *nägäśt*, plural of *nəguś*, translated normally with "king/ kings." But one finds in the literature where the children of a *nəguś* are called *nänäśt*.

the Orthodox faith[331]. He fought the heretics; he debated them and defeated them by divine power and by the words of the scriptures, regarding the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He rested from the agony of this world; he departed and inherited the Kingdom of Heaven by the prayers of the Archangel Uriel. May his prayers and (the prayers) of this righteous *Abba* Giyorgis be with his beloved Gäbrä Ḥəywät[332] for ever and ever. Amen[333].

Bibliography

Caquot, A., "L'Homélie en l'honneur de l'Archange Ouriel (*Dersāna Urā'ēl),*" *AÉ* vol. I (1955), pp. 61-88.

Colin, Gérard, *Vie de Georges de Saglā*, CSCO, vol. 492, script. aeth. t. 81 (1987).

Leander, Pontus, '*Argānona Ueddāsē, (in Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift*, vol. XXVIII, no 3), Leipzig 1922.

Macomber, William F., *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and for the Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville, Vol. I: Project Numbers 1 - 300*, Collegeville, (Minnesota) 1975.

Getatchew Haile, *The Different collections of Nägś hymns in Ethiopic literature and their contributions*, Oikonomia, vol. 19, Erlangen (1983), pp. 56-62.

Getatchew Haile and William F. Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and for the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville, Vol. V: Project Numbers 1501-2000*, Collegeville, (Minnesota) 1981, pp. 440-7.

van den Oudenrijn, Marcus, *Helenae Aethiopicum Reginae quae Feruntur Preces et Carmina.* CSCO, vol. 208, script. Aeth. t. 39 (1960).

Wəddase Masqal, EMML 5041 (not yet catalogued).

Yacob Beyene, *Giyorgis di Saglā Il Libro del Mistero (Maṣḥafa Mesṭir)*, Part I, CSCO, vol. 515, script. aeth. t. 89 (1990), and Part II, CSCO, vol. 532, script. aeth. t. 97 (1993).

አለቃ አየለ ሰሎሞንና ሌሎች÷ መጽሐፈ ሰዓታት፡ በግዕዝና፡ በአማርኛ። ዘሌሊት፤ ወዘነግሠ÷ አዲስ፡ አባባ፡ ፲፱፻፶፫፡ ዓ. ም.

[331] According to his *Gädl*, *Aṣe* Dawit has him floged and banished to an isolated mountain top, Colin, *Vie*, p. 33.

[332] B Wäldä Fasilädäs.

[333] C "…his prayers be with us. Amen; D "…with our King Haile Sellasie and our Queen Wälättä Giyorgis."

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Ras Wäsän Säggäd, a Pre-Eminent Lord of Early 16th-Century Ethiopia

Michael Kleiner[1]

Drawing on all the relevant sources the article traces the biography of Wäsän Säggäd, until his battlefield death in 1531 a pre-eminent lord of early 16th-century Ethiopia, and in the process assesses his political role as well as his personality.

At least with regard to pre-nineteenth century times, the political historiography of Christian Ethiopia has to a large extent focused on the persons and politics of emperors, sometimes supplemented by evaluations of the roles played by paramount ecclesiastical figures. This seems natural enough, not only because these personalities indeed were crucial actors, but also because the most important Ethiopian historical sources themselves – the royal chronicles and, to a lesser extent, the hagiographies – place such figures at the center of their narratives and thus invite such an approach.

However, for the historian trying to reach as full as possible an understanding of Ethiopian political history and its dynamics in each of its phases it is ultimately unsatisfactory to look almost exclusively at the very top of the political pyramid. Inevitably even the most renowned emperors, though in theory all-powerful, in practice in their decision-making and in the running of their realm had to take into account a multitude of other actors and influences. Therefore it appears worthwhile to try to establish, for every period of the country's history, at least the most important figures in the Ethiopian political arena active around and behind (and sometimes against) the emperor, study their political as well as personal profiles, and assess the role they played in their times.

Yet does not the nature of the extant sources, according to what we said a moment ago about their foci on the emperor and the saint, effectively preclude any such undertaking, at least for the times up to, roughly, 1800? Well, not quite. Firstly, upon closer inspection it turns out that many Ethiopian sources, mainly the various chronicles, contain a wealth of data on actors other than the emperor in the Ethiopian political arena, even if this information is often imparted *en passant* and frequently widely dispersed throughout a given text. Secondly, for some stretches even of pre-19th century Ethiopia we are not limited to indigenous sources with their particular biases and perspectives, but can supplement them with valuable outsiders' accounts. The first period for which this holds true on a less-than-trivial scale is Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign from 1508-40. In terms of Ethiopian sources highly relevant for its political prosopography,

[1] Am Hohlen Weg 1, D-37574 Einbeck; mail: mkleiner@gmx.de. The research for this paper was conducted within the framework of a larger project at Marburg University, funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation (Cologne), which aimed at establishing a prosopographical inventory of Christian Ethiopia for Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign.

we possess (a) close on 40 *gult*-charters from the so-called *Mäṣḥafä Aksum*,[2] documenting land grants made by this monarch and invoking numerous state and court dignitaries as witnesses; (b) the so-called "Storia di Ləbnä Dəngəl" (henceforth: *Storia*), one of three preface chapters to the big chronicle of his grandson and third successor Śärṣä Dəngəl (r. 1563-97);[3] each of these three preface chapters more or less briefly recapitalutes the rule of one of Śärṣä Dəngəl's three predecessors, namely his grandfather Ləbnä Dəngəl, his uncle Gälawdewos, and his father Minas; (c) the *Short Chronicle* in which Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign is the first one which is covered *in extenso*; in particular it is the years of Grañ's *ǧihād* which are dealt with in this source.[4] As Grañ in earnest began his assault on Christian Ethiopia in 1529, this dovetails almost perfectly with the first of two supremely important non-Ethiopian sources for Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign, namely Francisco Alvares's *Prester John*, the famous account of his 1520-26 stay in Ethiopia.[5] The second highly relevant non-Ethiopian source is the Arabic *Futūḥ al-ḥabaša* or "Conquest of Ethiopia" (henceforth: *Futūḥ* [6]) whose Yemenite author is generally known as ᶜArabfaqīh. In his account he provides an extremely detailed description, from the Muslim invaders' perspective, of the rise of Grañ and his *ǧihād* against the Christian Kingdom up to 1537.

These are the most important sources for research into the political prosopography of early 16th-century Ethiopia, and more particularly Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign. Together they preserve a wealth of data on leading figures of Christian Ethiopia at the time, data which, if carefully collected and pieced together, in a number of cases allow us to sketch political and sometimes even personal profiles of some of that era's leading actors. In the following we will attempt to do so for *ras*, and temporarily *ras bəḥtwäddäd*, Wäsän Säggäd, until his violent death in Grañ's *ǧihād* on 29 July 1531 A.D./5 Näḥase 1523 A.M. (*Short Chronicle* = Kropp 1988: I 13/II 13; see also *Futūḥ* = Basset 1897-1901: I 170 / II 262) one of the most important and influential figures in early 16th-century Ethiopia.[7, 8]

---

[2] CARLO CONTI ROSSINI (ed.), *Documenta ad illustrandam historiam. I: Liber Axumae*, 2 vols. [text and translation], Parisiis et Lipsiae 1909-10 (CSCO, script. aeth., ser. alt., tom. 8; Reprint 1961-62 = CSCO 54, 58 = script. aeth. 24, 27). An English translation of all the land grants contained in this publication, supplemented by copious analytical tables and indices, was published by G.W.B. HUNTINGFORD as *The Land Charters of Northern Ethiopia. Translated with an introduction and notes*, Addis Ababa and Nairobi 1965.

[3] MANFRED KROPP (ed.), *Die Geschichte des Lebna-Dengel, Claudius und Minās*, 2 vols. [text and translation], Lovanii 1988 (CSCO 503, 504 = script. aeth. 83, 84).

[4] There are many partial and complete editions of the *Short Chronicle*. I have chosen KROPP's partial edition for reference in this article because it is the most recent and best annotated one for the period that interests us here. This partial edition is contained, under the artificial title of *Mäṣḥafä səddät* coined by the editor, in his *Geschichte des Lebna-Dengel, Claudius und Minās* (I 12-24 / II 11-28) referenced in the previous footnote. It comprises those *Short Chronicle* passages which pertain (a) to the reign of Ləbnä Dəngəl and (b) to that of Gälawdewos up to Grañ's death (and therefore the end of his *ǧihād*) in February 1543.

[5] C.F. BECKINGHAM and G.W.B. HUNTINGFORD (eds.), *The Prester John of the Indies. A true relation of the lands of the Prester John, being the narrative of the Portuguese Embassy to Ethiopia in 1520 written by Father Francisco Alvares. The translation of Lord Stanley of Alderley (1881) revised and edited with additional material*, 2 vols., Cambridge 1961.

[6] RENE BASSET (ed.), *Historie de la conquête de l'Abyssinie (XVIᵉ siècle), par Chihab ed-Din Aḥmed ben ᶜAbd el-Qâder surnommé Arab-Faqih*, 2 vols. I: Texte arabe, II: Traduction française et notes, Paris 1897-1901.

[7] This was already noted by GETATCHEW HAILE in his "Who is Who in Ethiopia's Past, Part I: At the Court of Aṣē Ləbna Dəngəl (1508-1540)", in: *Northeast African Studies* 6, 3 (1984), pp. 47-53. However, Getatchew in the course of this brief contribution did not yet thoroughly explore Wäsän Säggäd's biography, but limited himself to some concise and mostly bibliographical remarks (cp. his p.51, note 8).

The bulk of the available data on Wäsän Säggäd – whose name, incidentally, tells us that "The border[lands] submitted [to him]"[9] – refers to his role and activities under Ləbnä Dəngəl, during whose reign he reached the apogee of his influence. It is clear, however, that Wäsän Säggäd already played a highly important role under Ləbnä Dəngəl's father and predecessor Na'od (1494-1508), at least in the second half of the latter's reign. This can already be inferred with sufficient certainty from a passage in the *Storia*. In it the anonymous Ethiopian author tells us that during Ləbnä Dəngəl's minority years on the throne, from 1508 to approximately 1516, Wäsän Säggäd plus the two matriarchs ∃leni and Na'od Mogäsa (step-grandmother and mother of the young monarch, respectively) were the central decision-making figures at the court and thus effectively governed the kingdom for the underage monarch.[10] This same source in the same context also explicitly calls Wäsän Säggäd the second in rank in the kingdom (*bäᶜalä dagəm mäᶜarägä mängəśt*[11]) – second after Ləbnä Dəngəl, that is. It is inconceivable that Wäsän Säggäd rose to such a position of authority during Ləbnä Dəngəl's minority from previous obscurity, without having been a great lord already under Na'od.

Nonetheless it is fortunate that another source, the *Futūḥ*, explicitly confirms our *Storia*-based inference about Wäsän Säggäd's eminence already under Na'od. The *Futūḥ* characterizes Wäsän Säggäd as a *wazīr* of Na'od and adds that he enjoyed the emperor's "high respect" (*huwa* [viz. W.S.] *kaṯīr al-ḥurma ᶜindahū* [viz. *ᶜinda* / with Na'od]: Basset 1897: 92). This affirmation is further underpinned when the *Futūḥ* relates how Wäsän Säggäd once saved his traitorous brother Wänag Žan from severe punishment, possibly death, by pleading on his behalf before Na'od. Wänag Žan for unclear reasons had defected to the Adalite Muslims, converted to Islam and then led a Muslim army against Bale. This army though was defeated and Wänag Žan captured. Yet thanks to Wäsän Säggäd's intercession he was not punished for his treason and eventually even fully rehabilitated, to the extent that he was given (or re-given?) the governorship of Bale. However, this still did not reconcile him with the Christian Kingdom, as he soon again defected and tried to hand over Bale to the Muslims a

---

8 The listed major sources are at the same time the only ones which provide data on Wäsän Säggäd. In the cases of other contemporary actors however there may also be other sources to consult, such as, e.g., the *gädlat* of the *əṣägewočč* ᶜ∃nbaqom and Yoḥannəs (cf. LANFRANCO RICCI, „Le *Vite* di Ēnbāqom e di Yoḥannēs, abbati di Dabra Libānos di Scioa", in: *RSE* 13 [1954], 91-120; *RSE* 14 [1955-58], 69-107; *RSE* 22 [1966], 75-102; *RSE* 23 [1967-68], 79-219; *RSE* 24 [1969-70], 134-241); the accounts of Castanhoso and Bermudez, Portuguese in contemporary Ethiopia (cf. R.S. WHITEWAY [ed.], *The Portuguese Expedition to Abyssinia in 1541-1543, as Narrated by Castanhoso. With some contemporary letters, the short account of Bermudez, and certain extracts from Correa*, Nendeln / Liechtenstein 1967 [Reprint of the original edition, London 1902]); the chapters dealing with the reigns of Gälawdewos and Minas in the preface to the chronicle of Śärṣä Dəngəl (see above p.38, item [b], with footnote 3); the Śärṣä Dəngəl chronicle itself (CARLO CONTI ROSSINI [ed.], *Historia regis Sarṣa Dengel (Malak Sagad)*. Accedit *Historia gentis Galla,* curante IGNAZIO GUIDI, 2 vols. [text and translation], Parisiis et Lipsiae 1907 [CSCO, script. aeth., series altera, tom. 3] [Reprint Louvain 1961-62 = CSCO 20, 21 = Script. aeth. 3, 4]); or the genealogies collected around the famous chronicle compilation commissioned by *däğğazmač* Haylu (1753-1801) (cf. MANFRED KROPP, *Die äthiopischen Königschroniken in der Sammlung des Däğğazmač Haylu. Entstehung und handschriftliche Überlieferung des Werks*, Frankfurt am Main et alibi 1989 [Heidelberger orientalistische Studien 13]).

9 Wäsän Säggäd thus clearly is a secular name, perhaps even a honorific *nom de guerre* only adopted by its bearer after some outstanding military feat. Certainly Wäsän Säggäd, a Christian, also had a baptismal Christian name of which, however, we remain ignorant.

10 *wä-ameha tətmeggäb mängəśt bä-taʾzazä wäladitu nəgəśt Naʾod Mogäsa wä-bä-məkrä kalə'ta nəgəśt ∃leni … wä-bä-məkrä kʷəllomu ᶜabäytä beta mängəśt maʾməran wä-ṭäbiban, wä-fädfadä-ssä bä-məkrä ṭäbib wä-läbbawi Wäsän Säggäd … konä yətmeggäb ameha mänbär nəguśawi*: Kropp 1988: I 3.

11 *Ibid*.

second time. But that second treason likely only occurred during Ləbnä Dəngəl's minority, and is a separate story anyway.[12] What interests us here is the fact that Wäsän Säggäd's intercession before Na'od on behalf of Wänag Žan after his first treason was successful. Given the gravity of the latter's crime, this is a clear indication of the esteem in which already Ləbnä Dəngəl's father held Wäsän Säggäd.

Wäsän Säggäd's elevated status already in the 16th century's first decade can also serve as a first piece of evidence for determining, at least approximately, the date of his birth about which, unlike the date of his death (cf. *supra*), we possess no direct and precise information. It is hardly conceivable that Wäsän Säggäd gained his position of influence with Na'od before he had reached the age of 25 at a minimum. This hypothesis leads to the conclusion that he was born before 1480. Additional relevant evidence comes from Alvares's *Prester John*. The Portuguese priest in his account of an episode datable to late 1524 / early 1525 mentions five sons of Wäsän Säggäd who at the time were all "grown men and great gentlemen, and good knights" (Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 431).[13] In light of such a description it seems reasonable, indeed conservative to assume that the oldest one of those five sons at the time counted at least 28 years, which in turn would seem to require that Wäsän Säggäd in late 1524 was not younger than 45. Thus Alvares's evidence further supports the view that Wäsän Säggäd was born before 1480. How much before though can only be vaguely determined. It appears that the only meaningful evidence for establishing a *terminus post quem* comes from the *Futūḥ* and its 1531 portrayal of Wäsän Säggäd as a still physically fit man travelling considerable distances on horseback in short time, and as a general fully capable of leading his troops into battle as well as fighting himself. After all it was precisely in this manner, while taking part, on horseback, in a battle against a contingent of *muǧāhidūn*, that he met his death (Basset 1897-1901: I 169f., 174 / II 261f., 266). This degree of physical fitness suggests that Wäsän Säggäd at the time of his death in mid-1531 was not beyond his mid-sixties, which would lead to 1465 as the sought-for *terminus post quem*. The corridor thus established for Wäsän Säggäd's birth extends from 1465 and 1480. However, since the assumptions through which we arrived at these *termini* are in both cases rather generous, it seems most likely that he was born in the early 1470's.

About the family that he was born into the sources furnish no data. The identities neither of his father nor of his mother are known. This silence, coupled with the relative openness of traditional Ethiopian highland society to merit-based social rise, could have one think that Wäsän Säggäd was of humble origins. Yet this possibility, while it cannot

[12] The complete account can be found in the *Futūḥ* (Basset 1897-1901: I 92-94/II 164-68).

[13] Incidentally, Alvares never once mentions Wäsän Säggäd by name, but only speaks of him as "Betudeti … on the left hand" (= *gra bəḥtwäddäd*; cf. Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 270, 377). We can, however, with Beckingham/Huntingford (*ibid*. 377, note 4), reliably identify this "Betudeti … on the left hand" as Wäsän Säggäd thanks to charters no. 26 and 27 of the *Mäṣḥafä Aksum*. These two documents are datable to 1519/20 and 1520/21 A.D., resp., and give Wäsän Säggäd as the *gra bəḥtwäddäd* (cp. Conti Rossini 1909-10: I 29-31/II 34-35; Conti Rossini, however, erroneously dates these documents to 1518 and 1519, resp., and, strangely, renders their *gra bəḥtwäddäd* as „*beḥt wadad* de droite": cp. II 34-35). The identification of Alvares's "Betudeti … on the left hand" with Wäsän Säggäd is further corroborated when the Portuguese chronicler once characterizes the *gra bəḥtwäddäd* as the "great Betudete" (Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 377), a description that fully tallies with what we otherwise know about Wäsän Säggäd's status and standing at the time. Lastly, it must be pointed out that Wäsän Säggäd is by far not the only supremely important individual whom Alvares met, but to whom he nonetheless never refers by name but only descriptively, most often with their title. The same holds true, e.g., for Ləbnä Dəngəl's mother Na'od Mogäsa, for the *ʿaqabe säʿat* Nägädä Iyäsus, and even for ambassador Ṣäggä Zä-Ab who in 1526 was to accompany the Portuguese to their native country.

categorically be ruled out, seems unlikely. Firstly, despite the meritocratic streak in the traditional Ethiopian social fabric, the country's social model was a far cry from a pure meritocracy. Particularly in the higher echelons of society descent and kinship were major factors of social organisation as well as social barriers, and the meteoric ascent of complete outsiders to the highest ranks of society was, while it occasionally happened, much more of an exception than the rule. If Wäsän Säggäd had risen to his position of prominence from complete obscurity, one would therefore expect to find references to this, and to a humble background, in the sources. Conversely, the absence of any such references can be taken as an indication of his descent from a well-established family. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that Wäsän Säggäd's brother Wänag Žan – the traitor mentioned above – was also appointed to high office in the Christian Kingdom. The rise of one brother from obscurity to the state's leadership elite is conceivable, but when two brothers, especially two antagonistic ones, arrive at such positions it becomes highly likely that their family background facilitated their careers. Moreover, the *Futūḥ* registers the battlefield deaths of a certain Gərma, another brother of Wäsän Säggäd (his name is reconstructed from the *Futūḥ*'s جرمه / *Ǧ-r-m-h*; Basset, however, rendered this as "Garimâ": cp. Basset 1897-1901: I 169 / II 261), and of one Zämän Žan (reconstructed from Arabic زمنجان / *z-m-n-ǧān*: Basset 1897: 63), a paternal cousin of his (*ibn ᶜamm*: *ibid.*).[14] About the lives of these two relatives we know next to nothing, but apparently they too were figures of sufficient renown to make it appear worthwhile to include their names in the *Futūḥ*. This further corroborates the thesis that Wäsän Säggäd descended from a well-established and influential family.

This family apparently had its roots in what was then Ethiopia's southeast, in the historical provinces of Däwaro and Bale. While the latter comprised the northern part of 20th-century imperial Bale, historical Däwaro, located in essence between the lower courses of the Awaš and Wabi Šebelle rivers, was largely co-extensive with what until recently was the province of Arssi. Both territories in the east bordered on Islamic Adal and since at least the early 14th century had been contested between this polity and Ethiopia, with the Christians over time ever more gaining the upper hand politically as well as religiously. However, Wänag Žan's double defection to the Muslims, his conversion to Islam and betrayal of Bale suggest that the Islamic heritage in this province at least (unlike Däwaro, it appears) even in the early 16th century could still on occasion exert its pull and gain, or re-gain, the loyalties of some local notables. More importantly in our context though, Wänag Žan's governorship over Bale suggests that his and Wäsän Säggäd's family of origin was well entrenched in that province too, and not only in Däwaro with which the sources, as will be discussed immediately, strongly associate Wäsän Säggäd. Yet even he seems to have played a certain role in Bale, too, and retained some influence there. This is indicated by the *Futūḥ*'s report (Basset 1897-1901: I 294/II 390) that the Muslims after their definitive conquest of Bale in mid-1532 (and thus about a year after Wäsän Säggäd's death) there discovered and plundered a treasure depot (*hizāna*) of his.[15] Even if the Muslims' ascription of this hideaway of riches to Wäsän Säggäd were erroneous, it would be a testimony to his influence throughout the region which extended beyond Däwaro into Bale.

[14] Basset erroneously rendered this Arabic phrase as "neveu" (1901: 127).

[15] Or are we to assume that these treasures had only been transferred to Bale the year before from a depot ascribed to Wäsän Säggäd in Gatur, Däwaro, which the Muslims had found partially emptied when they had arrived to loot it (Basset 1897-1901: I 118/II 195)?

Alvares's intermittent personal encounters with Wäsän Säggäd were limited to court settings in Šäwa and Wäğ. Yet his *Prester John* leaves no doubt, through references to missions of Wäsän Säggäd to Goğğam and the Gafat-lands of Damot and beyond (Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 425 and 458, resp.), that the *ras*'s radius of action was by no means limited to the court and the central-southern parts of the kingdom. Däwaro, however, Alvares surprisingly mentions nowhere in his narrative, be it in connection with Wäsän Säggäd or in any other context. (Unsurprisingly he never went there either.)

Yet the evidence of the *Futūḥ* suffices to make it abundantly clear that Däwaro was the center of gravity of Wäsän Säggäd's own family and his power base. According to the *Futūḥ* (Basset 1897-1901: I 100/II 175) it was from Däwaro that Wäsän Säggäd in 1530 went to Damot on a mission of unclear purpose, leaving behind his son Baḥər Säggäd to lead the province in his absence. Also the second son of Wäsän Säggäd whom we know by name, Saf Säggäd or Safo, is portrayed in the *Futūḥ* for the early 1530's as a lord in Däwaro, with considerable estates and an extended family in that province (*ibid*. I 270-74 / II 367-70). Furthermore the *Futūḥ* has the leading Christian lords remaining in Däwaro in early 1531, after their devastating defeats in the battles of Anṣokiya and Zarī/Ayfärs, speak of the still absent Wäsän Säggäd as their *sayyid*, their "master" or "lord" (*ibid*. I 132/II 209). Thus he evidently enjoyed a position of supreme authority in that province.

The strongest and most irrefutable evidence of Wäsän Säggäd's roots in Däwaro, however, is provided by the fact that he, at his own expense and in his own name, there had commissioned the construction of two magnificent churches which he then lavishly endowed. One was situated in a locality whose name the *Futūḥ* transcribes as عندورة / *ᶜ-n-d-w-ra* (Basset 1897: 118; vocalized by Basset [1901: 194f.] as "ᶜAndourah"), the other one in the region (*arḍ*) of جان زجرة / *Ğān z-ğ-ra* (Basset 1897: 131, 271f.; he transcribes: Jân Zedjra [1901: 208], Djân-Zadjora [1901: 368f.]). Of the church at *ᶜ-n-d-w-ra* the *Futūḥ* reports that its construction fully took eleven years, while with regard to the "big church" (*kanīsa kabīra*: Basset 1897: 271) of *Ğān z-ğ-ra* ᶜArabfaqīh relates that Wäsän Säggäd once on a single day had 500 cattle slaughtered for its benefit (Basset 1897-1901: I 272/II 369). All this attests not only to Wäsän Säggäd's roots in Däwaro, but also to his great wealth, his piety, and above all to his elevated status, because otherwise we only know of emperors and their nearest kin – e.g. wives and mothers such as, for our time, ∃leni and Na'od Mogäsa – as founding and endowing churches in this manner.[16] Are we even to suppose that Wäsän Säggäd, be it through his unknown wife or through his ancestors, was related to the Solomonic dynasty, as otherwise it might have been considered inappropriate or even a sign of hubris to commission the building of not just one, but two awe-inspiring churches?

Incidentally it might be a worthwhile undertaking to try to find remnants of these churches, either above ground as is the case in Goğğam with ∃leni's Märṭulä Maryam, or below ground through a combination of oral tradition investigation, aerial exploration and ultimately archaeological excavations. Lastly, it needs to be pointed out that the roots of Wäsän Säggäd's family in Däwaro and / or Bale raise the possibility that he, while thoroughly identifying with the Christian Kingdom, came from a Cushitic cultural and linguistic background, and that thus Amharic, which we can assume he fully mastered, was not his mother tongue.

[16] Cp. MARIE-LAURE DERAT, *Le domaine des rois éthiopiens (1270-1527). Espace, pouvoir et monachisme*, Paris 2003, with instructive tables on pp. 260, 328.

In passing we have already provided quite a few data about members of Wäsän Säggäd's family. We shall now recapitulate them in order to establish where there are blank spots and whether they can be filled in.

We have heard of two brothers of Wäsän Säggäd, the traitorous Wänag Žan and the loyal Gərma. About the latter we only know that he fought at his famous brother's side in that battle in Fäṭägar, near Mount Būsāt, which on 29 July 1531 A.D./5 Näḥase 1523 A.M. cost Wäsän Säggäd his life. Presumably Gərma, who was badly wounded in the fight, died alongside him, even if the *Futūḥ* does not explicitly say so (Basset 1897-1901: I 169f./II 261f.; see also Kropp 1988: I 13/II 13). Likely there were more siblings of Wäsän Säggäd, brothers and/or half-brothers as well as sisters and/or half-sisters, about which however the sources offer no data. The only additional relative of his own generation that we know of was his paternal cousin (*ibn ᶜamm*) Zämän Žan – he, too, already mentioned above – whom Grañ's *wazīr* ᶜAdali or ᶜAdale (underlying Arabic عدلي allows both reconstructions) killed in the battle of Šəmbəra Kure (Fäṭägar) in early March 1529, the Muslims' first major success in their *ǧihād* (see Basset 1897-1901: I 63/II 127, I 54-64/II 113-31 for a comprehensive account of this battle from the Muslim perspective; see also Kropp 1988: I 13/II 12). With regard to Wäsän Säggäd's offspring we have heard about the five adult sons mentioned by Alvares for the mid-1520's. From the *Futūḥ* we for 1531/32 then learned about two grown sons of Wäsän Säggäd going by the names of Baḥər Säggäd and Saf Säggäd/Safo (Basset 1897-1901: I 100f./II 175 and I 243, 270-74/II 342, 367-70, resp.). One is inclined to assume that those two counted among the five adult sons that Alvares speaks of, but this is not assured. In addition to those five to seven, one more male child of Wäsän Säggäd is documented, but it almost certainly was considerably younger than the others, it was illegitimate, and in the mid-1520's it was to get him into serious trouble. We will come back to that issue in a moment. Before, however, we should point out that Wäsän Säggäd likely also had a number of daughters, even if the sources are silent with regard to such putative female offspring. Likewise, but perhaps more surprisingly, there is no mention anywhere of his wife or wives.

As to Wäsän Säggäd's son Baḥər Säggäd, the *Futūḥ* tells us (Basset 1897-1901: I 100f./II 175) that he died in Däwaro in late 1530 or early 1531, hence roughly half a year before his father and apparently of natural causes, while preparing to confront an advancing Muslim army. Saf Säggäd on the other hand survived his father, but ultimately bowed to the mounting Muslim pressure on his native Däwaro. He left it in the fall of 1532 with his complete extended family, his retainers and as much of his possessions as feasible, being chased for a while by a Muslim contingent under Grañ's close companion Abū Bakr *qäčīn*, "the Thin One" (Harari, arabized in the *Futūḥ* as قطين /*qaṭīn*; cp. also Amharic *qäčča*). Yet ultimately he safely reached the imperial court in Angot (Basset 1897-1901: I 243, 270-74/II 342, 367-70), at the time still under Christian control, and a land grant retrieved from a Gospel manuscript of Betä Mädhane ᶜAläm in Lalibäla informs us that Ləbnä Dəngəl some time thereafter even awarded him a fief in Lasta (cp. Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 538-40 and Huntingford 1965: 43). According to the document's text this grant was made in commemoration of the deceased Wäsän Säggäd and thus is further evidence of the latter's status and reputation, as well as an indication of Ləbnä Dəngəl's gratitude toward him beyond his death. To complete our overview of Wäsän Säggäd's known relatives, mention must finally be made of a nephew of his, a son of his traitorous brother Wänag Žan. The *Futūḥ* transcribes his name as سيموا /*s-y-m-w(-ā)*, a sequence of graphemes which allows for a

multitude of different vocalisations and reconstructions (e.g. Simu, Semo, Säyyämo, Simäwa, to provide just a few). In any case this individual followed in the footsteps of his father by eventually, after having lived for many years as a Christian dignitary, defecting to Grañ's *muǧāhidūn* around May 1532 and facilitating their conquest of his ancestral Bale in July of the same year (Basset 1897-1901: I 282-95/II 379-90). He died of an epidemic in 1534 during the Muslim campaign against Tigre (*ibid*. I 338/II 449).

In registering Wäsän Säggäd's 1531 death, the *Short Chronicle* gives as his title only *ras*, not (*ras*) *bəḥtwäddäd* (Kropp 1988: I 13 / II 13). Yet from four *Mäṣḥafä Aksum* documents, namely charters 21 and 26-28, we know that Wäsän Säggäd before and over a number of years had held the latter title and office (Conti Rossini 1909-10: I 27, 29-31 / II 30f., 34-35; see also Huntingford 1965: 38, 41-43). More specifically from the datable land grants no. 26 and 27, originating from 1519/20 A.D. (1512 A.M.) und 1520/21 A.D. (1513 A.M.) respectively, we learn that he was the *gra bəḥtwäddäd* at the time of Alvares's arrival at the royal court in Šäwa in late 1520. He was thus the "Betudeti … on the left hand" (Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 270, 377) and the "great Betudete" (*ibid*. 377) the Portuguese chronicler there met on a number of occasions. If we further accept the generally held hypothesis that the *Mäṣḥafä Aksum* documents are at least by and large ordered chronologically, the fact that the undated and undatable grant no. 21 also mentions Wäsän Säggäd as *gra bəḥtwäddäd* suggests that he had come into that office quite a few years before 1520. It is tempting to speculate that he might even have held this position already under Na'od, with the *Futūḥ*'s characterization of him as Na'od's *wazīr* (Basset 1897: 92; cf. also p.39 above) reflecting an indigenous *bəḥtwäddäd*. Yet while the possibility is there, the evidence is insufficient to allow us to assert this with confidence.

If we thus do not know when exactly Wäsän Säggäd became *bəḥtwäddäd*, can we at least determine when he lost this dignity, and perhaps even why? That indeed at some time during the 1520's he was demoted, that, in other words, the *Short Chronicle* is not simply lax in its language use when it terms him *ras* only (well, some "only") at the time of his death in 1531, is confirmed by other *Mäṣḥafä Aksum* documents. Grants no. 40-43 (Conti Rossini 1909-10: I 36-39 / II 42-46; see also Huntingford 1965: 47-51 = documents no. 39-42 in his counting) inform us that in the late 1520's/early 1530's two lords named Śärṣe and Bä-Dəle held the offices of *qäñ* and *gra bəḥtwäddäd*, respectively. Again therefore: Is it possible to determine when and why Wäsän Säggäd, despite his distinguished career, had to cede his dignity as *bəḥtwäddäd*?

Thanks to Alvares, it indeed is. In his *Prester John* the Portuguese cleric reports that Ləbnä Dəngəl toward the end of 1524 to everyone's surprise launched a broad *revirement* in some of the highest state offices. Availing himself of the occasion of the annual tribute presentation which had brought most of the state's highest dignitaries to the court in Šäwa, the monarch in a sweeping leadership reshuffle first deposed the *Təgre mäk^{w}ännən* (whose name we do not know; was he perhaps the ^{c}Āmir Qälṣäḥay mentioned in the *Mäṣḥafä Aksum* grant no. 28 [Conti Rossini 1909-10: I 30/II 35; see also Huntingford 1965: 42f.]?) as well as both *bəḥtwäddädočč*, namely Wäsän Säggäd and his right-hand counterpart ∃slam Säggäd (Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 425-33). A few weeks later Ləbnä Dəngəl went on to also depose his *blatten geta* Abdänago whose case, however, had its particulars (Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 421-25, 434). As to the three earlier depositions, they apparently were mainly motivated by the still young monarch's desire to rid himself of an "old guard" which had risen to their

positions of power under, and likely to an extent also through, his famous step-grandmother ∃leni, in any case shared her overall political outlook, and were generally seen by Ləbnä Dəngəl as a suffocating presence (Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 434). Now that ∃leni was dead – she had died in the spring of 1524[17] – the young monarch finally found the courage and seized the first good opportunity to assert himself, depose an older generation of dignitaries and fill their positions with his own favorites. As the new *Təgre mäkʷännən* Ləbnä Dəngəl named Robel, hitherto *balgada* of ∃ndärta (*ibid*. 179f.), who before had skillfully maneuvered to win the emperor's favor (*ibid*. 428f.), while he only appointed one new *bəḥtwäddäd* right away, namely Rosä Näbiyat who enjoyed his particular sympathies.

However, Ləbnä Dəngəl was not moved to his reshuffle by exclusively political considerations, as his different treatment of the demoted lords shows. The *qäñ bəḥtwäddäd* ∃slam Säggäd was relieved of his office and title, but otherwise suffered no major adversity. The anonymous former *Təgre mäkʷännən* and Wäsän Säggäd on the other hand were severely punished by the monarch. Ləbnä Dəngəl had them both exiled to remote and inhospitable *ambas* where the former *Təgre mäkʷännən*, as likely was intended, soon died (Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 433f.). The same fate might ultimately have struck Wäsän Säggäd too, had not widespread discontent in the country and especially at court about his treatment, as well as the monarch's realization how much Wäsän Säggäd's expertise was needed for governing the kingdom, in due course moved Ləbnä Dəngəl to repeal his decision and rehabilitate him (*ibid*. 430-33) – though not quite fully, since, as we have seen, Wäsän Säggäd never again became *bəḥtwäddäd* but had to content himself with the title of *ras*. Yet this did not diminish his loyalty to the Christian state, as the *Futūḥ*'s reports about his conduct during Grañ's *ǧihād* make abundantly clear.

What, though, had initially brought down Ləbnä Dəngəl's wrath on Wäsän Säggäd, his long-time loyal supporter, a widely respected lord, and indeed a pillar of the state? What had roused the monarch's anger to a point where he pronounced a virtual delayed death sentence against him? Unlike in the case of the deposed *Təgre mäkʷännən* where the cause for Ləbnä Dəngəl's extreme resentment remains unclear, Alvares with regard to Wäsän Säggäd enlightens us about this. Generalized court chatter had it, he reports, that Wäsän Säggäd over many years had entertained an amorous affair with Na'od's widow and Ləbnä Dəngəl's mother Na'od Mogäsa, and that from this relationship even had sprung a son, hence a half-brother of Ləbnä Dəngəl (whose name, however, the Portuguese author does not provide; Beckingham / Huntingford 1961: 432). While it seems almost certain that the relationship of Wäsän Säggäd and Na'od Mogäsa had only begun after Na'od's death, when Na'od Mogäsa was widowed – everything else would have been too risky and, moreover, would be difficult to reconcile with Wäsän Säggäd's otherwise complete loyalty to the crown – Ləbnä Dəngəl obviously nonetheless over many years had harboured a strong resentment against the man who, as he apparently saw it, had dishonored his father, even if only posthumously. Yet he had only felt free to act on this resentment after the death not only of ∃leni, but also of Na'od Mogäsa who had died between late January 1521 and April 1523 (most likely in March or April of

[17] Not in the spring of 1522, as Beckingham / Huntingford argue in their note 1 to *Prester John* 425. The events narrated on the preceding pages 419-22 clearly took place early in 1524, and the *ṭəmqät* referred to on p. 434 can only be that of 1525. The year towards whose end ∃leni's death lay "eight or nine months" in the past (*Prester John* 425) must therefore be 1524.

the latter year[18]). In the presence of those two matriarchs he had not dared to move against Wäsän Säggäd: indirect evidence of their political clout, but certainly also, and perhaps even more so, an indication of their psychological sway over Ləbnä Dəngəl.

We noted that Ləbnä Dəngəl after some time – three years at most, but perhaps only a few months – pardoned Wäsän Säggäd and largely rehabilitated him, moved to this by a mixture of public and court opinion as well as a renewed appreciation of his political experience and the services rendered. On a personal level though Wäsän Säggäd's non-reinstatement as *bəḥtwäddäd* suggests that Ləbnä Dəngəl never fully forgave him. However, this did not affect the *ras*'s loyalty to the state, as his comportment until his death during the *ǧihād* amply demonstrates. More surprisingly perhaps, he also apparently bore the emperor no personal grudge on account of the received ill treatment, or if so did not let it guide his actions. In any case the *Futūḥ* on several occasions shows us Wäsän Säggäd hurrying to relieve the emperor from the advancing Muslims' threat and investing great effort into trying to secure Ləbnä Dəngəl's personal safety and well-being (Basset 1897-1901: I 134-37, 142f., 153-55 / II 211-15, 221, 240-42). In fact he went on that campaign which turned out to be his last because he did not want Ləbnä Dəngəl, furious at the Muslims' destruction of his residence at Bärara and hot-headedly demanding retaliatory action at almost any cost, to lead that march himself (*ibid*. I 159f. / II 251f.). While part of his motivation may have been worry about insufficient military skills in the monarch, and another part fear about the domestic turmoil that would almost inevitably arise if Ləbnä Dəngəl were harmed or killed in action, cumulatively the diverse *Futūḥ* episodes suggest that Wäsän Säggäd felt personally attached to the emperor. Perhaps he even harbored avuncular or stepfatherly feelings towards him. This would not be all that surprising, given that he had watched over Ləbnä Dəngəl since the latter's boyhood, and certainly to an extent also had tutored him. In addition his relationship with Na'od Mogäsa could very well have furthered feelings of personal attachment to her son, even if those feelings were evidently not fully reciprocated.

Due to space constraints, it is not here possible to fully recount all the *Futūḥ*'s notes and stories about Wäsän Säggäd's actions during the roughly two years that he lived to take part in the Christian defense against the *ǧihād*. Fortunately this is not necessary either, as the focus on some salient features of his conduct suffices to complement the *ras*'s portrait.

While Wäsän Säggäd, as described, always was particularly quick in trying to protect the person of the emperor, his commitment clearly was to the Christian Kingdom as such. After all he had already faithfully served it under Na'od, and in Grañ's *ǧihād* he also ultimately fought for its defense and preservation, independent of the person of the emperor. This is shown, if any additional proof were needed, by his constant readiness

[18] The *terminus post quem* follows from Alvares's note that Na'od Mogäsa on 18 January 1521 took part in a church service (Beckingham/Huntingford 1961: 365f.), the *terminus ante quem* can be established from the commemorative mass Alvares read in mid-April of 1523 for the deceased dowager queen (*ibid.* 404). Depending on the time gap one thinks likely between Na'od Mogäsa's actual death and this commemorative mass one can arrive at very different estimates for the *ətege*'s passing away. However, the fact the Ləbnä Dəngəl in September/October 1523 (immediately after the termination of that year's *kərämt*, that is) proceeded to divide Na'od Mogäsa's considerable estates in southern Šäwa between himself and his two full sisters (and hence Na'od Mogäsa's daughters) Romanä Wärq and Wälättä Qälämsis (*ibid*. 407, 409f.) suggests that their mother had died only a few months earlier. If Na'od Mogäsa had passed away already in 1522 or even in 1521, why should Ləbnä Dəngəl have waited for anything between 10 months and close on three years to go to nearby southern Šäwa to distribute the motherly inheritance?

to actively engage the Muslim enemies and not only passively protect Ləbnä Dəngəl against them (Basset 1897-1901: I 148f., 160/II 234f., 252). Unfortunately many other leading figures of the Christian Kingdom, at least in its central parts, lacked his dedication and courage, were not ready to put their lives on the line in its defense.[19] This lack of fighting spirit, if not outright cowardice, on several occasions made numerically superior and/or better positioned Christian troops unnecessarily cede the ground before inferior, but extremely motivated Muslim contingents, and the *Futūḥ* reports two instances at which Wäsän Säggäd harshly scolded cowardly or complacent Christian leaders (*ibid*. I 142f., 154f./II 221, 241). Even if they later hardly acted on them, the chastised Christian dignitaries and troops on both occasions meekly accepted Wäsän Säggäd's reprimands: another indication of the respect he commanded. The *Futūḥ* even claims that the Christian lords and military chiefs esteemed and feared Wäsän Säggäd more than the monarch (*kāna muᶜaẓẓaman ᶜindahum wa-yaḫāfūna minhū ašadda min maḫāfatihim al-malik*: *ibid*. I 143). Be that as it may, Wäsän Säggäd's authority among the troops indubitably was immense, and certainly furthered by his reputation that he exercised it justly (*kāna ᶜādilan fī ḥukmihim*: *ibid*.). Against this backdrop it comes as no surprise that the *Futūḥ* has Christian commanders address Wäsän Säggäd as "our leader" (*ra'īsunā*: *ibid*. I 155) and implore him not to risk his own life in battle, because "if you should die, our religion also dies" (*iḏā mutta anta māta dīnunā*: *ibid*.). This request is later reiterated, with increased urgency, by Wäsän Säggäd's sub-commanders and troops before the battle in Fäṭägar in mid-1531 in which, in fact, he was to lose his life: "You are the leader of our religious community, and if you should perish, our religion would perish too" (*anta ra'īs dīninā, wa-iḏā halakta halaka dīnunā*: *ibid*. I 167), and "If you were killed, our religion would vanish" (*iḏā qutilta anta, baṭala dīnunā*: *ibid.*). The troops thus displayed more or less the same attitude toward Wäsän Säggäd that he displayed vis-à-vis Ləbnä Dəngəl.

That they were essentially correct in their assessment of Wäsän Säggäd's importance for the morale of central Ethiopia's Christian population is demonstrated by the massive morale breakdown in those parts after the news of Wäsän Säggäd's battlefield death on 29 July 1531 spread. The situation is aptly summarized in the *Futūḥ* when ᶜArabfaqīh, before proceeding to a more detailed account of central Ethiopia's submission, laconically states: "When Wäsän Säggäd was dead, the provinces [of central Ethiopia] lay open [for Islam], with the armies of the infidels humbly surrendering. Most of the population [lit.: of them] converted, as we will tell in detail" (*fa-lammā qutila Wasan Sağğad iftataḥat al-bilād wa-ḏallat ğuyūš al-kafara, wa-akṯaruhum aslama kamā sa-ya'tī ḏikruhū*: Basset 1897: 175). The population in Šäwa largely reasoned: "Our lord Wäsän Säggäd is dead. Let's [therefore] now convert to Islam" in order to live in safety (*sayyidunā Wasan Sağğad qutila, wa-l-'ān nuslim* – in order to obtain an *amān*: *ibid*. 176). This defeatist attitude was certainly furthered by Ləbnä Dəngəl's own reaction to Wäsän Säggäd's death. When news of it reached the emperor in his *məkram* in Wäğ, he immediately broke camp there and hurriedly marched to Amhara which he considered protected from a Muslim onslaught, erroneously as it turned out, by the mountain chains surrounding it. The emperor's panicky mood after Wäsän Säggäd's death is further illustrated by the fact that he undertook his exodus from Wäğ to Amhara while the rainy

[19] The *Futūḥ* reports one episode of moral weakness, of trying to appease the enemy, for Wäsän Säggäd too (Basset 1897-1901: I 145f./II 229). It is not entirely certain though that ᶜArabfaqīh here can be taken at his word. Even if he can, however, it was a passing moment for Wäsän Säggäd, since he later again unwaveringly fought the Muslims.

season, in which normally not even much shorter distances were travelled, was still in full swing (Basset 1897-1901: I 188f. / II 281-84). Effectively and arguably irresponsibly, in a failure of leadership, Ləbnä Dəngəl thus abandoned the whole of central and southern Ethiopia to the Muslims, even if it took another year until Bale as the last remaining regional domino fell to them.

Given Wäsän Säggäd's decades-long prominence at two emperors' courts and his role in the government of central Ethiopia, it is hardly surprising that his reputation had also reached Muslim Adal. So famous was he there too that Grañ even scolded the *muǧāhid* who had killed him for not bringing the great *ras* before him alive, as a prisoner (Basset 1897-1901: I 174 / II 266). Grañ obviously had been curious to meet the aged lord, apparently one of the rather few of his Christian enemies whom he respected, and this despite the fact that – or perhaps to an extent even because – Wäsän Säggäd once, at a time and under circumstances unknown to us, had killed an older brother of Grañ, the *garaad* Aboñ (*ibid*. I 144/II 227).[20]

However, from the *Futūḥ* we learn that Wäsän Säggäd's fame in the Muslim sphere rested not only on his political and martial qualities, but also on his humanity. In the Christian Kingdom his generosity and kind-heartedness, in addition to his other virtues, had allegedly earned Wäsän Säggäd the popular epithet of "Father of the Poor" (*abā* [acc.] *al-masākīn*: Basset 1897: 143). A truly astounding episode from the *Futūḥ* though demonstrates that Wäsän Säggäd did not limit his compassion to his co-religionists. A *muǧāhid* once told ᶜArabfaqīh a story from a confrontation in Bale, more than a decade before Grañ's *ǧihād*, with troops led by Wäsän Säggäd. In the course of the action the narrating Muslim fighter had been badly woundly, his belly had been slit open, and in this sorry condition he had fallen into Christian captivity. Wäsän Säggäd, however, had not then left the wounded enemy to his fate, let alone had him killed. Rather he saw to it that the captive received what little elementary treatment was available, that his gashing wound was sown together – and amazingly the Muslim prisoner survived to later tell the tale (Basset 1897-1901: I 94/II 167f.).

All in all Wäsän Säggäd emerges from the sources as an impressive personality: as a circumspect and experienced statesman of considerable intellect; as a determined, courageous and able military leader; and as a warm, loyal and humane character. Through his manifold qualities he apparently stood head and shoulders above most of his contemporaries in central and southern Ethiopia, not only among the people but also, even particularly, among that area's leadership class. Yet while his qualities and virtues were unhesitatingly acknowledged by the people and the elites alike, too many from both groups showed too little inclination to emulate him in times of hardship, but rather wanted to passively rely on people of his stature to defend their safety and well-being. While Wäsän Säggäd was obviously aware of the shortcomings of many of his contemporaries, up to and including the emperor, and suffered adversity from it, he nonetheless stoically, but perhaps at times with a sense of exasperation or melancholy, continued to serve the Christian Kingdom with all his energies until his very death.

[20] That Grañ's wish to meet Wäsän Säggäd was not motivated by a desire to take vengeance personally can be inferred from the fact that he previously had once promised Wäsän Säggäd his life should he fall into Muslim captivity (Basset 1897-1901: I 146/II 229).

References

Sources

BASSET, RENE (ed.). 1897-1901. Historie de la conquête de l'Abyssinie (XVI^e siècle), par Chihab ed-Din Aḥmed ben ᶜAbd el-Qâder surnommé Arab-Faqih. 2 vols. I: Texte arabe, II: Traduction française et notes. Paris.

BECKINGHAM, C.F. and G.W.B. HUNTINGFORD (eds.). 1961. The Prester John of the Indies. A true relation of the lands of the Prester John, being the narrative of the Portuguese Embassy to Ethiopia in 1520 written by Father Francisco Alvares. The translation of Lord Stanley of Alderley (1881) revised and edited with additional material. 2 vols. Cambridge.

CONTI ROSSINI, CARLO (ed.). 1909-10. Documenta ad illustrandam historiam. I: Liber Axumae. 2 vols. [text and translation]. Parisiis et Lipsiae. (CSCO, scriptores aethiopici, series altera, tomus 8; Reprint 1961-62: CSCO 54, 58 = scriptores aethiopici 24, 27).

HUNTINGFORD, G.W.B. 1965. The Land Charters of Northern Ethiopia. Translated with an introduction and notes. Addis Ababa and Nairobi.

KROPP, MANFRED (ed.). 1988. Die Geschichte des Lebna-Dengel, Claudius und Minās. 2 vols. [text and translation]. Lovanii. (CSCO 503, 504 = scriptores aethiopici 83, 84).

Literature

DERAT, MARIE-LAURE. 2003. Le domaine des rois éthiopiens (1270-1527). Espace, pouvoir et monachisme. Paris.

GETATCHEW HAILE. 1984. "Who is Who in Ethiopia's Past, Part I: At the Court of Aṣē Ləbna Dəngəl (1508-1540)." In: Northeast African Studies 6, 3, pp. 47-53.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

T.aytu's Foremothers
Queen Əleni, Queen Säblä Wängel and Bati Dəl Wämbära

Rita Pankhurst[1]

This paper considers three Ethiopian medieval noblewomen who, like Empress T.aytu, were skilled diplomats, strategists, and protagonists of their faith: Queen Əleni, a Hadəyya noblewoman, became an influential Ethiopian queen. The widowed Queen Säblä Wängel conducted state affairs and fought successfully for the Kingdom's survival. Bati Dəl Wämbära, wife of Ah.mäd Grañ, was with him in battle, and, together with Säblä Wängel, obtained the exchange of their captured sons.

Introduction

*Ite*ge[2] T.aytu Bət.ul, distinguished wife of Emperor Mənilək II, is admired for the strong part she played in the diplomatic negotiations between her husband and Italian envoys, preceding the Battle of 'Adwa in 1896. Equally she is admired for bringing her own troops to the battlefield and looking after the wounded. She was also considered a pillar of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Echoes of these qualities in powerful women go far back in Ethiopian history – and legend. Could we consider the legendary Queen of Sheba as a ruler going on a diplomatic/commercial mission, seeking, not only knowledge, but also an alliance with a powerful neighbour? The dreaded Queen Gudit, alleged destroyer of Aksum, may well have commanded armies larger than T.aytu's. And Mäsqäl Kəbra, wife of King Lalibäla, was so influential that she had her brother, Hirun, ordained bishop. A monastery bearing her name exists in Šəre . When her husband died, she reportedly had Abba Libanos Church excavated in his memory. The Ethiopian Church considered her a saint. Two Gə'əz hagiographies survive.[3] Kinefe-Rigb (1975: 84).

In the 18th century there arose yet another powerful woman: Queen Məntəwwab. She exerted great political influence during three reigns; organized the defence of the Gondär palace compound when it was besieged; and was a generous supporter of the Ethiopian Church.

Chronologically the first of the women whose contribution to history is the subject of this paper is the Muslim Princess who became Queen Əleni and influenced state policy during three long reigns – and three shorter ones; of later generations are the brave Queen Säblä Wängel, who, as a widow, conducted affairs of state and took part in the successful struggle for the Christian Kingdom's survival; and her contemporary, Bati[4] Dəl Wämbära, (or Wänbära), wife of *Imām* Ah.mäd ibn Ibrāhīm al-Gāzī, also known as

---

1 POB 1896, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, pankhurst@ethionet.et

2 *Itege* became T.aytu's title at her coronation in 1889. Until then her title was *Wäyzäro.* Guèbrè Sellassié (1930: 274, n. 3). For the title's implications see note 5.

3 In Gännätä Maryam, Lasta, and in Aqäbä Särabt, Aksum.

4 *Bati or Ba'tya* (from a Cushitic word meaning 'lady') came to be considered an integral part of her name.

Grañ, the left-handed. She was beside him in battle, negotiated with the Queen an exchange of their captured sons, and agreed to re-marry only on condition that her prospective husband avenge her first husband's death.

The primary sources used are: firstly, the Ethiopian chronicles. These, though sometimes unreliable and not unbiased, are an important, and often the only, source. Of particular interest is the chronicle of Ah.mäd Grañ, *Futūh. al-H.abaša*, written by a Yemeni scribe, known as 'Arab Faqīh, the "Arab doctor", who was apparently present at some of the engagements described. No less valuable are the accounts of two Portuguese eye witnesses: Alvares, chaplain of the mission of Rodrigo da Lima, 1520-27, and Castanhoso, a participant in the military mission of Christovão da Gama, 1541-43. Lastly, there are accounts from Jesuit writers of subsequent decades.

Empress Əleni. was married in 1445 and died, probably in her eighties, in 1522. Earlier called *Ite*[5] Žan Zela, she came from southern Ethiopia and was the daughter of the Muslim tributary King Mähmad, who was *Gärad*[6] of Hadəyya.[7] Her brother was Mähmad's rebellious son Mahiko, who later held the same position as his father. She was given in marriage, probably at a very early age[8], to the Orthodox Christian, but nevertheless polygamous.[9] King Zär'a Ya'əqob (1434-1468).[10] The marriage was an attempt to improve relations with Hadəyya, whose *gärad* had at times sided with Zär'a Ya'əqob's Muslim enemies. Perruchon (1893: 50, 59). The marriage was perhaps prompted by services rendered to the King by the Hadəyya *gärad* against the Muslim ruler of Adäl, and by the increasing importance of the southern regions. Taddesse (1972: 288, n. 2).[11]

Ite Žan Zela was baptized and given the name of Əleni. She turned out to be far from simply a chattel in a dynastic arrangement. Zär'a Ya'əqob must have recognized her

---

5 *Ite*, abbreviation of *Itege,* was a title given, in the 15th and early 16th centuries, to those of the King's wives he wished particularly to honour, after a public ceremony comparable to a coronation. Ludolf (1681: Book 2, Ch.1, 66-69); Basset (1881: Aug.-Sept: 152, n. 178); Perruchon (1894: 173-5). *Ite* was also used for noble ladies. Béguinot (1901: 28, n. 2).

6 A title given to the rulers of Muslim or animist territories to the south of the Christian Empire. Perruchon (1893:16, n. 2; Trimingham (1952:84, n. 2).

7 It is uncertain which area Mähmad governed. Zär'a Ya'əqob's chronicle refers to Mähmad as Gärad of Hadəyya. (Peruchon (1893:16, 69). Ludolf (1682: 15) thought that Hadəyya was the name of the inhabitants of Kämbata: 'The seventh kingdom is Cambata, the inhabitants thereof are called *Hadja or Hadiens*'. Beckingham and Huntingford name him Governor of Hadəyya on p.14 but of Däwaro on p.525, n.1; however, Cuoq (1981; 171) and Trimingham (1952:82) believe he was Governor of Däwaro.

8 It was not unusual to arrange marriage contracts between ruling families in which the girl was in, or not even in, her early teens. As late as 1882, a betrothal was celebrated between the eight-year old Zäwditu, daughter of the then King Mənilək, and Emperor Yoh.annəs IV's 15-year old son Ar'aya. For dynastic marriages, see Pankhurst.(1990:26). Ending military confrontations by arranging marriages between the male of the stronger party and the young daughter of the weaker one was practised also by Muslims. *Imām* Ah.mäd suggested to Ləbnä Dəngəl that he give his daughter to Ah.mäd in marriage as a sign of friendship. Basset (1881: Aug.-Sept.: 100) but the offer was refused. On another occasion Ah.mäd s soldiers captured the King's niece. He made the girl his concubine and had a child by her, but there were no political consequences. Stonehouse (2003: 347).

9 Polygamy was customary among kings until the end of the 15th century. The Church tolerated it, perhaps not daring to challenge the king. Tekle-Tsadik (1966: 165).

10 King Zär'a Ya'əqob had three queens: 1. Žan -Hayla, (her royal name), better known as *Gra Bä'altih.at* (Queen of the Left), and also as Fəre Maryam, probably her baptismal name. She was his favourite, and mother of his eldest daughters. Tekle-Tsadik (1966: 164-6); Perruchon (1893: 54-5*);* 2. Žan Zela, or Əleni. Perruchon (1893:16, 59); and 3. S.əyon, also known as Admas-Mogäsa (her royal name). Tekle-Tsadik (1966: 166); Perruchon (1893: 87); Taddesse (1972: 243, n. 2).

11 Taddesse (1972: 288, n. 2) considers it ' probable that less notable princesses may have followed Əleni to the Christian Court'. A complaint of the Hadəyya Muslims to Ah.mäd Grañ was that these marriages were forced on them'. Pankhurst (1997: 206-20**).**

qualities, as she is mentioned as his senior queen, *Qäññ Bä'altih.at*, (Queen of the Right) in his chronicle. Perruchon (1893: 59). When his son, Bä'edä Maryam (1468-1478), came to the throne, he confirmed her in the title, apparently in deference to his father[12]. In a ceremony following Bä'edä Maryam's coronation, his wife Žan Säyfa, received the title of *Gra Bä'altih.at*, (Queen of the Left), reserved for the king's favourite queen. At that ceremony Əleni was given the additional name of Admas Mogäsa, Perruchon (1893:125), though she was usually referred to as *Qäññ Bä'altih.at.* Perruchon (1893:175). Ethiopian Queen Mothers were then held in great respect. The Jesuit Balthazar Tellez affirms: 'As long as the Emperor's mother lives, if she was Empress and wife to the Emperor deceas'd, the wife of the Emperor actually reigning is not called *Ethié,* but that Honour is always given to the Old One; insomuch that not only the wife of the new Emperor, but he himself, tho' he be not her son, calls her Mother, and Honours her as if she were really so'. Tellez (1710:52).

Empress Əleni

Əleni was, by all accounts, exceptionally gifted. Bä'edä Maryam's chronicle, albeit written later, during her ascendancy, devotes many lines to her praise. The scribe observes that the King was deeply fond of her, for 'she was accomplished in everything: in front of God by practising righteousness and having strong faith, by praying and receiving Holy Communion; in worldly terms, she was accomplished in preparing food [for the royal table], in familiarity with the books, in knowledge of the law, and in understanding the affairs of state. For these qualities, the King greatly loved our Queen Eléni. He considered her like his own mother'. Perruchon (1893: 175-6). Əleni was married to Zär'a Ya'əqob some years before Bä'edä Maryam's birth. This, and the fact that he had lost his mother, would account for the chronicle's report that he loved Əleni. like his own mother. Taddesse (1972: 288).

Əleni. became well-versed in Christian theology. She wrote two religious works: one on the Laws of God, and the other on the Holy Trinity and the Purity of St Mary. She also sponsored the translation of Greek and Arabic religious texts into Gə'əz. In daily life she was kind and pious, keeping the fasts prescribed for monks and nuns. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 394-5). During her regency for her step-grandson, Ləbnä Dəngəl (1508-1540), many churches were repaired or built.. The most magnificent was Märt.ulä Maryam in Goğğam, where she held very large estates. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961:425 and n.2). In the late 15th and early 16th centuries this province was being converted to Christianity. Building a church and endowing a monastery in Goğğam were the innovations of two queens vying for power: Əleni., and Na'od Mogäsa, Ləbnä Dəngəl's mother. Whereas Na'od Mogäsa affiliated the monastery she endowed, with the dominant religious movement headed by the Täklä Haymanot Monastery, Əleni, having quarreled with the monks of that monastery, affiliated Märt.ulä Maryam with the Ewostatewos movement, which was more traditional, and observed the Sabbath. Derat (2003: 268-72).

[12] It was traditionally assumed that Əleni had become Bä'edä Maryam's wife. However, Taddesse argues, to my mind conclusively, that Əleni was never married to Bä'edä Maryam, her husband's son, even though she bore the title of Queen of the Right during his (Bä'edä Maryam's) reign. Taddesse considers that this title was purely ceremonial. Taddesse (1972: 288 and n. 5). That she was given an additional name, at the ceremony at which the King's favourite wife, Žan Säyfa, received the title of *Gra Bä'altih.at*, Queen of the Left, (Perruchon (1983: 125) can be considered merely a further ceremonial gesture and would not seem to invalidate Taddesse's argument.

Əleni's edifice was built in great style, in stone and wood, with two *tabotat*, or altar stones, of gold. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 459, n. 2),[13] Alvares reported that he had heard from Pero da Covilha, a long-time Portuguese resident at court, who, in 1487, had been sent to Asia to investigate trade possibilities in the East, and had arrived in Ethiopia around 1507. 'I quote what he told me and I think he would tell the truth: that he had gone by order of Queen Elena to show how an altar should be made in this kingdom … and they made this altar of wood and crammed it all full of [solid] gold, and also the altar stone was of solid gold'. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 459). Märt.ulä Maryam was the church where Əleni chose to be buried. Alvares reports: 'there was a big guard at that church, who guarded it on account of the great amount of gold that was in it'. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 459). It was, however. looted shortly after her death, before Ah.mäd's wars. Guidi (1905: 70-1). The French historian Marie-Laure Derat suggests that one reason why Märt.ulä Maryam was soon pillaged was that it was endowed only with *gult* lands (held by lords or monasteries, who received the produce of the land, cultivated by others), which depended on the good-will of later rulers, whereas, had it been endowed with *rest* lands (inheritable, or held by priests themselves cultivating the land) looting would not have arisen so soon. It did not happen when kings endowed monasteries with *rəst* land. Derat (2003: 250-1).

Märt.ulä Maryam was sacked and burnt by *Imām* Ah.mäd's troops in the 1530s, and again during Oromo incursions in the 1560s, so that nothing remained above ground. The Jesuit missionary, Manoel d'Almeida, who arrived a century after Əleni's death, left a detailed description. 'The ornaments were very rich. There were some chalices and patens of gold of great weight, and two altar stones of solid gold…I am a witness of this for they were saved… and came into the hands of Emperor Seltan Cegued [Susnəyos], who kept them in our house, spending them on restoring this church'. Beckingham and Huntingford (1954:103-7). According to Almeida, it was subsequently reconstructed on the same foundations by order of Emperor Susnəyos (1607-1632) in the last years of his reign. The church is mentioned in his chronicle. Esteves Pereira (1900: Vol. 2, 46). Bell (1988: 126), based on Almeida and another Jesuit, Balthazar Tellez, suggests a possible reason why Susnəyos was particularly interested in restoring Märt.ulä Maryam: he was the great-grandson of Ləbnä Dəngəl, whom Əleni had brought up, and may have wished to restore that church to perpetuate her memory.

Əleni had no children of her own, but this seemed not to have reduced her importance. She was so widely respected for her character and intelligence that, far from retiring after her husband's death, she continued to exert political influence and patronage during the ensuing period of political conflict. Tadesse (1972: 289). She was at court during the reign of Bä'edä Maryam's eldest son, Əskəndər (1478-1494). The palace was at first dominated by his own mother, Romna Wärq (one of Bä'edä Maryam's four wives, and the mother of his children). But Əleni began to come into her own as a major influence in state affairs around 1486, and was an important figure during the reign of her husband's youngest son, Na'od (1494-1508). At his death she played a decisive role in choosing twelve-year old Ləbnä Dəngəl (1508-1540) as his successor, and guided the affairs of state as the most influential of the regents, until he came of age. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 243).

Beckingham and Huntingford, who take a less effusive view of Əleni's personality, describe her as 'forceful' and 'imperious', and suggest that she was responsible for the

[13] For the history of this church see Bell (1988: 125-9).

omission, in the abbreviated chronicle covering Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign, (Bodleian Bruce MS 88) of references to him until 1527, when he would have been well into his majority. They suggest, not altogether convincingly, that 'She was having no history written in which she did not play a major part.' Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 13-16).

During her regency Əleni is best remembered for having foreseen the Christian State's growing difficulties with its strategically important Muslim coastal neighbours to the East, and for trying, unsuccessfully, to maintain peaceful relations with them. The Ottoman Turks were making their appearance, and the chiefs at the coast were acquiring far more fire-arms than those possessed by the rulers of the interior. She therefore sought an alliance with the rivals of the Ottomans, namely Christian Portugal, then a major power in the Indian Ocean. She made enquiries about that country from Pero da Covilha. He claimed to Alvares that it was he who had suggested to Əleni that she should send her own embassy to Portugal. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: Vol. 2, 307). Kleiner (2003: Vol 1, 811-2).

When three Portuguese messengers reached the Ethiopian court in Šäwa in 1508, they found that Emperor Na'od had just died. As the new monarch was only eleven or twelve years old the administration of the country came into the capable hands of the Dowager Queen. The messengers explained the Portuguese difficulties with food supplies at their base on Socotra Island, and the threat they faced from Egyptian fleets. Əleni was well aware of Christian Ethiopia's increasing isolation, and the country's poor relations with neighbouring Muslim states. She dispatched a letter to the Portuguese King Manuel, via Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese commander in India, proposing Ethiopian-Portuguese military co-operation against the Muslims. (Góis (1949-1955: Vol.3, 221, quoted in Girma and Merid 1964: 23); Tellez (1710:113) She sent it with an Armenian trader, Mateus, who, after many vicissitudes, eventually reached Portugal, and delivered the letter to the Portuguese King. Mateus left Portugal in 1517 with the Rodrigo da Lima Embassy to Ləbnä Dəngəl. It offered the Emperor some assistance against the incursions of the Muslim Adäl warriors.

However, in that same year the self-confident young Emperor, barely 16 years old, ignoring Əleni's advice, had gone into battle against the Adäl forces, and had been victorious, defeating Mah.fūz., Ahmäd's chief minister. Basset (1881: 142). Continuing to ignore Əleni, Ləbnä Dəngəl showed little interest in obtaining Portuguese help, and distanced himself from da Lima's mission. In the early part of the Emperor's reign help was in fact not needed.

Thereafter, Əleni's influence declined. She is present, Alvares is told, together with Ləbnä Dəngəl's wife, Säblä Wängel, and his mother, Na'od Mogäsa, at a Mass celebrated at Christmas 1520, and at a subsequent questioning of the Portuguese chaplain on religious matters. He reports that the questions came not only from the Emperor, but also from the three Queens. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 327, 330). The following year, by now into her eighties, Əleni is present, described as 'Mother of the Prester' [Ləbnä Dəngəl], together with the other two Queens, at the consecration and re-burial of Emperor Na'od's bones, 'each of them [the Queens] with her black canopy for mourning'. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 361), On January 18, 1521, she takes part in the *T.əmqät* celebrations, under a white canopy. Beckingham

and Huntingford (1961: 366). She subsequently retires to her estates in Goğğam, and dies there in 1522.[14].

The news of her death reached Alvares, who was at the Court. He reports: 'They said that since she had died all of them had died, great and small, and that while she lived, all lived and were defended and protected; and she was the father and mother of all' Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 434). That she was still honoured after her death is evident from Alvares's remark that 'It might be eight or nine months after the death of Queen Elena, who reigned over the greater part of Goiame (Goğğam), that still as many as came to the Court went to weep at her tent, which was still pitched in its place.' Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 425).

Queen Säblä Wängel

After Əleni's death Emperor Ləbnä Dəngəl's wife, Säblä Wängel, began to assume a significant role in Ethiopian history. The chronicle of Gälawdewos (1540-1559) proclaims that 'God inspired in him [in his father, Ləbnä Dəngəl] the love of holy marriage, which consists in marrying only one wife, in conformity with the canons of the Christian Church' Conzelman (1895: 122). This was apparently the case. There is no record of his having Queens of the Right or of the Left.

During the turbulent latter part of Ləbnä Dəngəl's reign, the young military genius, *Imām* Ah.mäd led a revolt against the Emperor from the Adäl lowlands. At times with the help of fire-arms, and of Turkish musketeers, the determined Muslim leader launched a *ğihād,* conquering more and more of the Christian highlands. The royal family had constantly to be on the move. Ləbnä Dəngəl belatedly saw Əleni's wisdom, and attempted to obtain Portuguese military aid, most urgently in 1535, but this was delayed, while the Adäl advance continued.

In 1539 Fiqtor, Säblä Wängel's eldest son was killed in battle, and her fourth and youngest son, Minas, as well as two of his cousins, were taken prisoner by one of Ah.mäd's captains. Basset (1881 Aug.-Sept.:100-1); Girma and Merid (1964: 61).

Säblä Wängel shared in Ləbnä Dəngəl 's attempts to stem the Adäl tide until he was forced to find refuge on the impregnable top of Mount Däbrä Damo in Təgray, where he died in September 1540. Säblä Wängel's second son, Gälawdewos, then assumed the throne at a very young age, Basset (1881 Aug.- Sept.: 103), and the war continued..

News of the Muslim ascendancy in Ethiopia had reached Dom João III in Portugal. He instructed his Governor of India to send military aid to Ləbnä Dəngəl as soon as possible. While Gälawdewos was fighting in the south of the country, the long-promised help from Portugal finally arrived. The Portuguese fleet entered Məs.əwwā in February 1541, five months after Ləbnä Dəngəl's death.

The Governor of India, Dom Estevão da Gama, who had arrived in the area, chose four hundred Portuguese soldiers from among readily available volunteers. They were accompanied by 150 male servants and attendants. Their weaponry included 600 muskets, some artillery and several barrels of gun-powder. There was in addition a fife and drum band. Whiteway (1902: xliv-xlv). Dom Estevão gave the expedition's command to his 23-year-old younger brother, Christovão da Gama. Both were sons of the explorer Vasco da Gama. Girma and Merid (1964: 47-48).

[14] Some sources state that she died in 1525 (Girma and Merid (1964: 172). It is, possible that Alvares saw the mourning tents 'eight or nine months after her death' on his last court visit, if Ləbnä Dəngəl was in the area early in 1526.

A Portuguese messenger, Aire Dias, who had been in Ethiopia with Rodrigo da Lima's mission, was sent to the interior with the news of the arrival of the Experition. He reached Däbrä Damo, where the widowed Queen Säblä Wängel had remained with her family and retinue, and with *Bahr nägaš Azmač* Yəsh.aq. Dias took her urgent plea for help back to Məs.əwwā. Her son, Gälawdewos, the new Emperor fighting in Šäwa, had been cut off from her dwindling forces in the north. As the situation worsened she sent two of her own envoys, *Abbethun* Kum and *Bahr nägaš* Yəsh.aq to urge the Portuguese to come quickly to the aid of her kingdom. Girma and Merid (1964: 47). Whether prompted by her, or on their own initiative, they advised *Dom* Christovão to ensure that the Queen joined the expedition. Her presence, they pointed out, would raise the morale of the impoverished and demoralized local people, and would encourage them to provide food and other support. Christovão sent back a warm message inviting the Queen to join the expedition, which, he assured her, was there to serve her and her son. He sent one hundred soldiers to escort her to the camp. Whiteway (1902: 10).

After these negotiations, the Empress, accompanied by some thirty women and fifty male servants, descended from the top of Däbrä Damo. Escorted by the officers Dom Christovão had sent to fetch her, she proceeded on mule-back to the Portuguese camp at Dəbarwa, over 100 km nearer the coast, to review the troops and meet him in person. An unadorned, accurate account of this meeting was left to posterity by one of its members, Miguel da Castanhoso.[15]

'She was received by him very nobly, for by his order all were in full dress and in ranks, the captains with their soldiers, all matchlockmen, with their banners of blue and white damask with red crosses, and the royal standard of crimson and white damask, with the cross of Christ heading the rest of the troops. The commander [was]…clothed in hose and vest of red satin and gold brocade with many plaits, and a French cape of fine black cloth all quilted with gold, and a black cap with a very rich medal…We saluted her twice with all the artillery and matchlocks.[16] The queen…was all covered to the ground with silk, with a large flowing cloak, and some men bore a silk canopy that covered her and the mule to the ground, with an opening in front of her to see through. She was clothed in very thin white Indian cloth and a burnouse of black satin, with flowers and fringes of very fine gold, her head dressed in the Portuguese manner, and so muffled…that only her eyes could be seen…The queen rode on a saddle with a low pommel, with a stirrup for the left foot, and the right leg doubled over the pommel, but so covered with her garments that no one could see the manner of her sitting, and the ladies all riding properly on mules, muffled in their cloaks'. Whiteway (1902: 17-19).

There followed speeches by the Commander and the Queen, before discussions began in earnest. Säblä Wängel's presence rallied support for the Portuguese whom she advised, encouraging local farmers to supply them with provisions. Perruchon (1894:264). Many joined the Portuguese to drive out the invader, whose soldiers had burnt numerous settlements and churches.

Throughout the campaign, until the Commander's death, *Dom* Christovão and Säblä Wängel worked closely together, the Queen being consulted frequently. Castanhoso describes a discussion on strategy held in 1542: 'When the Queen heard of D. Christovão's intention she sent for him, and told him that he should not think of daring

[15] Descendant of a noble Spanish family, Castanhoso participated in the campaign of 1541-3. His important testimony was first published in Lisbon in 1564. It was translated into English and edited by R. S. Whiteway in 1902. Cohen (2003: 694-5).

[16] For Fusillades in Ethiopia see Pankhurst 1990:292-3

such a great deed with so small an army…that it was less difficult to fight twelve thousand men in a plain than to capture that hill. To this D. Christovão replied that she should fear nothing, as they were Portuguese and they hoped to be able … to capture it with very little loss…With these words she and hers were somewhat pacified and agreed that D. Christovão should act in the matter as he pleased.' Whiteway (1902: 32). Even when morale was low decisions were made jointly: 'As the grass on this plain was destroyed, D. Christovão and the Queen agreed to advance to camp by a stream that was near, where there was more refreshment for the wounded, of whom there were more than sixty'. Whiteway (1902: 51). She was present during a number of battles, tending the wounded and mourning the dead. Castanhoso reports: 'While we were in pursuit, the Queen had had a tent pitched and placed the wounded in it; she and her women went about binding up the wounded with their own head-gear'. Whiteway (1902: 47).

In 1542, some six months after the beginning of the campaign, *Imām* Ah.mäd, badly in need of reinforcements, received over 500 Turkish musketeers, and ten field guns - military support he had requested earlier, from the Pasha of Zabīd in exchange for Minas, the Emperor's younger brother, who had been taken prisoner by Ah.mäd in 1539. At the battle of Wäfla the Portuguese Commander was captured and killed. Säblä Wängel, *Bahr nägaš* Yəsh.aq and some 120 Portuguese narrowly escaped. Girma and Merid (1964; 51). Her role continued to be important after the Commander's death: 'She with her women felt the greatest grief…The following day she sent for us all, and made a speech consoling us for our great loss… and this in very discreet and virtuous words'. Whiteway (1902: 72-3).

In 1543 the remnants of Christovão's force helped Gälawdewos defeat the Muslim army at the battle of Wäyna Däga, in Bägemder. Esteves Pereira (1888: 61); Tellez (1710: 128-9). Ah.mäd was killed. His widow, Bati Dəl Wämbära, escaped, but her son, Muh.ammäd, was taken prisoner. Esteves Pereira (1888: 10). A remarkable exchange of prisoners then took place. The part played by Dəl Wämbära will be described later. Säblä Wängel[17] was a driving force in the negotiations that let to the exchange of her son Minas, for Dəl Wämbära's son, plus a ransom of 1,000 ounces of gold. Esteves Pereira (1888: 41-3).[18]

The exchange succeeded, thanks to the joint efforts of the two women, Säblä Wängel and Dəl Wämbära, despite opposition on both sides. Minas's chronicle describes the subsequent festivities the Queen organized to celebrate Minas's return, and those that were held when his brother, the Emperor, joined them. Esteves Pereira (1888: 42-3).

After a period of consolidation Gälawdewos reigned over a more peaceful kingdom. There was no Muslim attempt to attack the Christians again for seventeen years. Huntingford (1989: 135). However, in an effort to conquer Harär, Gälawdewos invaded Adäl territory and, in 1559, was killed in battle. Minas, who had been living with his mother, came to the throne. He shared her conservative religious outlook, but was of a more severe disposition. During his four-year reign Säblä Wängel continued to be influential in court and religious affairs.

In the controversy engendered by the Jesuits, who had entered the country during Gälawdewos 's reign, and were aiming to bring Ethiopia into the Roman Catholic fold,

[17] Though Minas's chronicle describes how the exchange was arranged by Säblä Wängel and Dəl Wämbära, that of Galawdewos merely states that it took place, which led the editor, Conzelman, to assume that the initiative was the Emperor's. Conzelman (1895:xxiv, 142 and n.3).

[18] I am indebted to H.E. Mr. Renato Xavier, Ambassador of Brazil to Ethiopia, for very kindly translating passages from Esteves Pereira's Portuguese edition of the Minas chronicle.

Säblä Wängel was a steadfast supporter of the traditionalists who wished Christian Ethiopia to remain Orthodox. This did not prevent her from interceding on behalf of foreign Roman Catholics who had fallen foul of the Emperor. Her intervention saved from execution both the Portuguese adventurer Bermudes, who had angered Gälawdewos by pressing him to give allegiance to the Pope, and the Spanish Jesuit Patriarch Oviedo, who had irritated Emperor Minas by siding with the rebellious Yəsh.aq. Girma and Merid (1964: 62-4).

Säblä Wängel's last achievement was to ensure that her grandson Särs.ä Dəngel (1563-1597), one of several rival contenders, came to the throne. He was thirteen years old. Her choice was wise, as he succeeded in defending the integrity of the realm throughout his thirty-four year reign. In 1579, about half way through it, Säblä Wängél died. Conti Rossini (1907: 103 n.) She had been an active participant in the state affairs of her husband, Lebnä Dəngəl, of her sons, Gälawdewos and Minas, and of her grandson, Särs.ä Dəngəl. The chronicles mentioning her, extol her piety. Castanhoso reported that, at Christmas: 'There were several [friars] in the Queen's trains, some priests and some friars, for they said Mass wherever she happened to be' Whiteway (1902: 25); and Särs.ä Dəngəl's chronicle refers to her as 'the great Queen who loved fasting and prayer'. Conti Rossini (1907: 103).

Säblä Wängel conformed to the model of wise, deeply religious Ethiopian queens who were involved in state affairs, while retaining the qualities of gentleness and mercy often attributed to women. It fell to her to live in dangerous times, during which she exhibited not only diplomatic talents, but also courage and fortitude in battle and defeat.

Bati Dəl Wämbära

Bati Dəl Wämbära,[19] a contemporary of Säblä Wängel's, was the youngest daughter of the famous *Amīr*, later *Imām,* Mah.fūz. ibn Muh.ammäd, governor of Zäyla. He was also the *de facto* ruler of Adäl. Mah.fūz., a zealous Muslim, who had adopted the title of *Imām* because it carried the connotation of spiritual, as well as temporal leadership, had been conducting raids into the interior that had only temporarily been halted by his losing one battle. Mah.fūz was able to acquire much booty, including gold and slaves. He was encouraged by Arab emissaries who proclaimed a *ğihād* against the Christian empire, and assisted him with arms and trained soldiers. However, in 1518, Ləbnä Dəngəl, as we have seen, successfully defeated Mah.fūz.who was then killed in a man-to-man engagement with a Christian soldier turned monk. Beckingham and Huntingford (1961: 410-15); Trimingham (1952: 83-4); Cuoq (1981: 165-7). Dəl Wämbära grew up under the shadow of a passionate Muslim father, who led annual looting expeditions against the Christians.

Probably at an early age she married young Ah.mäd ibn.Ibrāhīm al-Gāzī (ca 1506-43), a captain in the cavalry guards of the Sultan of Adäl. At eighteen or nineteen, Ah.mäd had already shown bravery and intelligence. He had restored order within Adäl, and subdued the Somali nomads. It is not unlikely that Dəl Wämbära saw in him the hope of avenging her father's death. As for Ah.mäd, the marriage ensured him the loyalty of Mah.fūz.'s followers,[20] especially as she 'became a symbol of succession in the holy war'. Trimingham (1952: 85-6); Girma and Merid (1964: 37-8); Muth (2003: 155-158).

[19] The Arabist, René Basset, in his translation of the *Futūh*, states that the name *Dəl Wämbära* means 'Victory is her seat' 'en éthiopien'. Basset (1897:51).

[20] Probably for similar reasons, Ah.mäd married the daughter of the Muslim chief Makatter, ruler of Mazäga in the west, who asked for assistance against Ləbnä Dəngəl in 1535. The chief controlled a

Dəl Wämbära was determined to accompany her husband on the *ğihād*. He intended to replace the Christian kingdom by a theocratic Muslim state. Ah.mäd, like Mah.fūz. before him, had adopted the religious title of *Imām* in preference to the secular one of *Amīr*. At first, Dəl Wämbära's presence on campaign led to discontent among the soldiers. On the fourth raid into the highlands Ah.mäd's chronicler, 'Arab Faqīh, records: 'When the army reached Kub, they said to the *Imām*: 'We will not accompany you to Abyssinia unless your wife Dəl Wämbära returns to the country of the Muslims. She shall not come with us to the country of the infidels. Not one of the *Imām*s ever took his wife with him [on campaign], only you.' Ignoring the protests of Ah.mäd's soldiers, Dəl Wämbära imperiously replied: "I will not go back".' So her husband took her as far as Ifat in the land of the infidels.' Ifat was at this time held by Christians. Ah.mäd seems for once to have arrived at a compromise: she was not returned to the safety of Muslim-held territory, but neither did she remain with her husband. Stenhouse (2003: 32).

After this confrontation the soldiers seem to have accepted her presence on the *Imām*'s expeditions. They even tried to present her with some gold, given to them by the people of Gendebelo, but Ah.mäd would not hear of it, and declared that it was to be used for the *ğihād.* Stenhouse (2003: 38-9). She was with him at Ant.okyā [site of one of Ləbnä Dəngəl's palaces]. The chronicler reports: 'In Ant.okyā there was a Christian church, which the great emirs among the Muslims entered… The Imām entered, as did his wife Del Wämbära…When they could not find any treasure in it, they set fire to it, and destroyed it'. Stenhouse (2003: 36).

At times Dəl Wämbära had to be carried on the soldiers' shoulders Stenhouse (2003:37), up and down steep and rocky mountain slopes, twice in a state of pregnancy. In 1531[21], while, for six days the army camped at Zifah, near Harär, Dəl Wämbära gave birth to Muh.ammäd, the first of several sons. 'She deferred going on the expedition on account of this, and stayed with the *Imām*'s sister, Munisah'. Stenhouse (2003: 45). In 1532 or 1533, her second son, Ah.mäd an-Nägaši[22], was born during a campaign in Təgre, but died shortly afterwards in Särayə. Basset (1897: 51, n. 2); Stonehouse (2003: 350, 373); Huntingford (1989: 122). (Another son, Nas.raddīn, mentioned only in Christian sources, was governor of Däwaro in 1540 and died after a battle, (by poison or disease). Muth (2003: 155).

In 1539, when his empire was collapsing, Ləbnä Dəngəl was defeated by Ah.mäd in a battle in which, as mentioned earlier, the king's eldest son Fiqtor, was killed and his youngest, Minas, was captured and taken to Adäl. He was neither castrated nor killed, as was customary, though he was converted to Islam. According to Minas's chronicle, Ah'mad's counselors advised him to kill Minas, but the *Imām* went to his wife and told her what they had said. The two of them decided that the young Minas had not committed any crime for which he should perish, and that they would treat him well – so well that 'they would give him their daughter in marriage according to their law'. Some scholars have suggested that Dəl Wämbära 'tried to create here some sort of transition of power' and that the marriage was part of this plan. Chernetsov (2003: 505). After the celebrations Ah.mäd's counselors pointed out the political folly of allowing his daughter to be Minas's wife. Some time later, when Ah.mäd was in need of reinforcements, they persuaded him

force of some 15,000 Nubians.

[21] According to Muth (2003: 155) Muh.ammäd was born in 15 27.

[22] Ah.mäd an-Nägaši was the name of one of the first Ethiopian followers of Islam, whose grave is in Təgre. Trimingham (1952: 152). It is significant that the *Imām*, and/or Dəl Wämbära, chose this name for their second child, born in Təgre. Basset (1897: 51.n. 2).

to send the Emperor's son and cousins as a gift to the Turkish Pasha of Zabīd [in Yemen], asking in return for soldiers to fight the *Färäng* [Roman Catholics, i.e. Portuguese] who had disembarked at the coast. Dəl Wämbära must have regretted this decision, for Minas's chronicle records that 'on the day he left the camp there was much lamentation and sadness in the house of Dəl Wämbära'. Esteves Pereira (1888: 38-39).

It is indicative of Dəl Wämbära's status that, when there was a plot against the *Imām,* and the plotters were trying to exile him, they declared, according to 'Arab Faqīh, that they must 'leave the country to us and go away, he and his wife Dəl Wämbära'. Stenhouse (2003: 103). Subsequently Dəl Wämbära obeyed her husband when, at the height of his conquests, he commanded his followers to settle their families in the conquered areas. The *Futūh. al-H.abaša* mentions that she 'made preparations for the journey up', at a time when not all his soldiers showed similar willingness. Stenhouse (2003: 331).

As mentioned earlier, in 1543 the *Imām*'s army was routed, by the combined forces of Emperor Gälawdewos and the remnants of the Portuguese expedition. Ah.mäd was killed and Dəl Wämbära's eldest son, Muh.ammäd, was captured. Dəl Wämbära fled to the north-west of Lake T.ana together with Nūr ibn al-Muğāhid, son of Ah.mäd's sister. Eventually Dəl Wämbära succeeded in returning to Harär, then at the centre of Adäl power. Her first task was to make arrangements for the exchange, as we have seen, of her son, then some twelve years old, for Emperor Gälawdewos's brother, Minas. Conzelman (1895: 142). Dəl Wämbära was in a good position to achieve this ambition because Minas's life had earlier been spared through her intervention. It was no easy task, however, as his captors feared, rightly, as it turned out, that if released, he would come to the throne, and be a powerful enemy.

The exchange took place the following year, 1544.[23] Minas's chronicler wrote that the Lord inspired Dəl Wämbära to consider the return of Minas and to send a message to the Queen suggesting the exchange of their sons. They agreed with much good will for they were both overjoyed as mothers. Dəl Wämbära dispatched a message to the Pasha of Zabīd urging him to support the exchange, which he did, after consulting the Sultan and asking for 1,000 ounces of gold in addition. Säblä Wängel then ordered much gold to be piled up, with the assistance of the princes and noblemen of Təgre, and sent Dəl Wämbära's son with the gold. Then the Pasha sent back Minas and his two cousins, 'because he was compelled by his faith and his greed for gold'. 'The ships carrying the sons to be exchanged met in the middle of the [Red] sea: the messengers of the Basha were in one ship and the messengers of the Queen were in another. The agreement was concluded by oath. The release was simultaneous, and there was neither first nor last, for fear of treachery'. Esteves Pereira (1888: 41-2).

Soon after Ah.mäd's death, his nephew, *Amīr* Nūr, who, with Dəl Wämbära, had succeeded in returning to Harär, asked her to marry him, as was expected of a Muslim whose close male relative had died leaving a widow. She replied: 'If you want to marry me, go and kill that Christian king, the murderer of my husband.' Basset (1894: 107). Nūr was eventually to fulfil her demand in a battle in 1559, Basset (1881 Aug.-Sept.:103); Burton (1894: Vol. 2, 11-12) whereupon the marriage took place. Thereafter no more is heard of Dəl Wämbära.

One may speculate, given Dəl Wämbära's dynamic character, that she was involved in her second husband's achievement, when as *Amīr* of Harär, he built the wall around the

[23] Chernetsov (2003: 505) gives the date of the exchange as 1547.

city that is still visible in places today. Leaving aside all speculation, Bati Dəl Wämbära was one of the most famous women of the Horn of Africa in the 16th century. She emerges from the *Futūh.*, and from the royal chronicles, as a strong-willed woman, working in tandem with her husband. She was capable of mercy in cruel times, but her great achievement was her successful diplomacy that resulted in the unprecedented exchange of important prisoners, negotiated by two noble and brave ladies.

Conclusion

Enough has been said to demonstrate that Empress T.aytu's undeniable achievements were by no means unique among consorts of Ethiopian kings (and prominent chiefs). All three women who figure in this account were skilled diplomats; all three were strong supporters of their faith. At least two of them were no strangers to the battlefield. They show that, long before the great T.aytu came to the fore, Ethiopians accepted the notion that women, whether they bore children or not, could be strong, independent decision-makers, accepted and respected as leaders.

References

Basset, René. 1881. 'Études sur l'histoire d'Éthiopie.' *Journal Asiatique,* Vol. 17, Aug-Sept. 93-389.

—— 1897. *Histoire de la conquête de l'Abyissinie.* Paris: Leroux.

Beckingham, Charles Fraser, and George Wynn Brereton Huntingford. 1954. *Some Records of Ethiopia.* London: Hakluyt *Society.*

—— 1961. *The Prester John of the Indies,* tr., rev. Cambridge: University Press.

Béguinot, Francesco. 1901. *La cronaca abbreviata d'Abissinia*. Roma: Casa Edit. Italiana.

Bell, Stephen. 1988. 'The Ruins of Mertola Maryam'. In: *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol.1. Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies.

Burton, Richard Francis. 1894. *First Footsteps in East Africa.* London: Tylston and Edwards.

Chernetsov, Sevir. 2003. 'Bati Del Wämbära'. In: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol. 1. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz.

Cohen, Leonardo. 2003.'Castanhoso, Miguel de'. In: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol.1. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz.

Conti Rossini, Carlo. 1907. *Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel (Malak Sagad)*. Louvain: CSCO.

Conzelman, William Elliot. 1895. *Chronique de Galâwdêwos*. Paris: Bouillon.

Cuoq, Joseph. 1981. *L'Islam en Êthiopie*. Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines.

Derat, Marie-Laure. 2003. *Le domaine des rois éthiopiens (1270-1527)*. Paris: Sorbonne.

Esteves Pereira, Francisco Maria. 1888. *Historia de Minas*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional.

Girma Beshah and Merid Wolde Aregay.1964. *The Union of the Churches in Luso-Ethiopian Relations (1500-1632).* Lisbon: Junta de Investigações do Ultramar.

Góis, Damião de. 1945-55. *Crónica do Felicissimo Rei D. Manuel.* Coimbra: Gráfica de Coimbra, Vol.3

Guèbrè Sellassié [Wäldä Arägay]. 1930. *Chronique du règne de Ménélik II.*. Paris: Maisonneuve.
Guidi, Ignazio. 1955. *Annales Johannis I, Iyasu I et Bakaffa*. Louvain: CSCO.
Huntingford, George Wynn Brereton.1989. *Historical Geography of Ethiopia.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kinefe-Rigb Zelleke.1975. 'Bibliography of the Ethiopic Hagiographic Traditions.' *Journal of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol. 13(2), pp.57-102.
Kleiner, Michael. 2003.'Covilha, Pero da'.In *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica,*Vol.1. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz.
Ludolf, Hiob. 1681. *Historia Aethiopica*. Frankfurt am Main: Zunner.
—— 1682. *A New History of Ethiopia*. London: Samuel Smith.
Muth, Franz-Christoph. 2003. 'Ah.mad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ġāzī'. In: *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica,* Vol. 1. Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz..
Pankhurst, Richard. 1990. *A Social History of Ethiopia.* Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies.
—— 1997. 'Dynastic inter-marriage in medieval and post-medieval Ethiopia.' In: K. Fukui *et al. Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of 13th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol.1. Kyoto: Shokado Book Sellers.
Perruchon, Jules. 1884. *Le règne de Galâwdêwos.* Paris: Leroux.
—— 1893. *Les chroniques de Zar'a Yâ'eqôb et de Ba'eda Mâryâm.* Paris: Bouillon.
Stenhouse, Paul Lester, tr., and Richard Pankhurst, annot. 2003. *Futūh. al- H.abaša: The Conquest of Abyssinia,* by 'Arab Faqīh. Hollywood CA: Tsehai Publishers.
Taddesse Tamrat. 1972. *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527.* Oxford: Clarendon.
Tekle-Tsadik Mekouria. 1966. Les noms propres, Les noms de baptême et l'étude généalogique des rois d'Éthiopie (XIII-XX siècles). Belgrade. Mimeo.
Tellez, Balthazar. 1710. *The Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia.* London: Knapton.
Trimingham, John Spencer. 1952. *Islam in Ethiopia.* London: Oxford University Press.
Whiteway, Richard Stephen. 1902. *The Portuguese Expedition to Abyssinia*. London: Hakluyt Society.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Aṣe Iyasu I (1682-1706) and the synod of Yəbaba

Verena Böll[1]

Several conflicts caused by church affairs took place within the Ethiopia history. By analysing the policy of aṣe Iyasu I (r. 1682-1706) one can discover distinguishing marks from the other rulers. Aṣe Iyasu I regarded the ecclesiastical controversies between the Unctionists (Qəbat) and the Unionists (Täwahədo) as the decisive factor of the riots and decided to pacify the believers in strengthens his imperial leadership on the church. He convened again a synod at Yəbaba in 17 gənbot (2 May 1699) and tried to utilize his royal power but contrary to his expectations both factions intrigue with the Episcopal authority and the powers. My paper investigates this synod intensively and offers another aspect of the cultural history.

Aṣe Iyasu I, the Great, with throne name Adyam Sägäd, ruled twenty-four years, from 1682-1706. Aṣe Iyasu's reign is an important time for the Ethiopian kingdom. He was a very effective monarch and the people could more or less live a quarter century in a quite and peaceful environment. Nevertheless different internal theological disputes caused by monks and others were a danger for the authority of the king.

Aṣe Iyasu I was born ca. 1658/59, he died on 13 October 1706. He was the son of ətege Säblä Wängel and aṣe Yoḥännəs I. He married 1683 Wälättä Ṣəyon of Ḫamasen. Continuing the policy of his father, aṣe Yoḥännəs I (1667-82), and his grandfather, aṣe Fasilädäs (1632-1667), he concentrated on bringing peace and order to the country. Iyasu I tried to reform the society in an economically and culturally sense. Besides, he also wanted to reduce the wars against the Oromo and other inhabitants, unfortunately this concern was not so successful and he had to continue the civil wars.[2] The political affairs have been only one side of his reign; he was also strongly involved in harmonizing the relation between the court and the church. He wanted to strengthen the position of the court church by monopolizing the theological doctrine. Iyasu I made several pilgrimages to Aksum, to Däbrä Libanos, to Tädbaba Maryam and to other holy places or monasteries. The establishment of the Däbrä Bərhan Śəllase Church in Gondär 1694 can not only be regarded as an expression of his piety but also as a symbol for his support of the orthodox party of the Ethiopian church.

The theological debates

The so-called Gondärine era is characterised by internal religious debates. The theological and religious disputes are recorded in the royal chronicles. The relationship between church and royalty was very variable. Church and court were mutual, and each party have had strong possibilities to manipulate the other side. The Ethiopian history

[1] Dr. Verena Böll, Abteilung für Afrikanistik und Äthiopistik, Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, 20146 Hamburg, Germany, 040/ 428384440, E-Mail: verena.boell@uni-hamburg.de .

[2] Crummey (2000:83). He also imposed his power over the Gibe area.

knows innumerable theological arguments and controversies, but focussing on the 16th and 17th century, one can discover distinguishing marks. Especially the history of the synods and councils arranged by Iyasu I is informative, one can say that the whole reign of Iyasu I was marked by synods or assemblies about theological questions and the right orthodox doctrine. Iyasu I was strongly preoccupied with the imperial leadership on the Orthodox Church, therefore the doctrinal unity was a main concern for him.

Iyasu I regarded the ecclesiastical and theological controversies as a deep source of conflicts. He wanted to conclude the problems between the monasteries and to terminate the theological discussions. In the Ethiopian history at least three vividly disputes about the right doctrine appeared. Three issues have been always discussed: the Trinity, the Union, and the Unction. Beside the Ewosṭateans the Esṭifanosites[3] (Stephanites) and the Unionists (Täwaḥədo) the Unctionists (Qəbat) were a very strong party and had many followers. The Unctionists teach that there is the anointer (the Father), the anointed (the Son) and the unction (the Holy Spirit).[4] The faction of the Qəbat has existed already in the 15th century and has been very active during the time of aṣe Susənyos (1607-1632).[5] The debates have been very intensively, not only because of the Jesuits and their catholic influence and there was a great synod in 1621-1622. Several other synods followed, most of them at Aringo, Gondär.

The theological discussion still continued, and there was a second synod in 1654, during the reign of aṣe Fasilädäs (1632-1667). This time, the Unctionists were successful and their doctrine was announced as the right doctrine.[6] But the theological debates continued, and royal councils on Unction and Union took place in 1669-70, 1677, 1679, and 1680 under the auspices of Yoḥännəs I. He also arranged one in 1682. Abba Akalä Krəstos, the main representative of the Unctionists, said there: "በቅብዓት፡ ወልደ፡በሕርይ።"[7] "Through the unction was the son of nature". But this time the faction of Däbrä Libanos could win the quarrel and the Unctionists were excommunicated.

The first synod of Iyasu I took place already in November 1682, shortly after his accession to the throne. The theological discussions about the nature of Jesus Christ, which started already in the 14th century, were still continuing. The monks and scholars from Goğğam quarrelled against the monks from Gondär and Däbrä Libanos of Šäwa, the house of abunä Täklä Haymanot. Aṣe Iyasu I made use of his good relationship with the monks of Däbrä Libanos and asked them to develop an agreement in the debate about the nature of Christ, especially about the contradicting views about the doctrine of the Unction, concerning the anointment of Christ.

In September/October 1684 Iyasu I called all monks of his empire together, as reported by his chronicle.[8] The chronicle reports further that the king again endeavoured to finish the discussions about the right doctrine, and he said to abunä Sinoda, the Coptic metropolitan and to əčča̮ge abba Hərəyaqos from Däbrä Libanos:

> ወይቤሎሙ፡ናሁ፡ንሕነ፡አሰተጋባእናሆሙ፡ለኵሎሙ፡መነኮሳት፡እምሥራቅ፡ ወእምዕራብ፡በእንተ፡ነገረ፡ሃይማኖት፡ዘቅድስት፡ሥላሴ፡ወነገረ፡ተዋሕዶ፡ ወቅብዓት።

[3] Getatchew Haile (1981:110).
[4] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:92).
[5] Getatchew Haile (1986:111).
[6] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:99). In 1665 another synod was held.
[7] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:99); Guidi (1961:60, 63).
[8] The date was 2. Təqəmt, Guidi (1961:81).

> "And he said to them: Here we have assembled all monks from the West and from the Orient concerning the question of the faith in view of the Holy Trinity and concerning the question of the Union and the Unction."[9]

The king asked the monks to discuss these questions intensively, but that they should always rely on the bible and the books of the Church fathers:

> "ወይኅበሩ፡ኵሎሙ፡ቃል፡ዘአሐቲ፡ሃይማኖት፡ርትዕት፡ነሢአሙ፡ስምዓ፡እምቃለ፡ቅዱሳት፡መጻሕፍት፡ዘብሉይ፡ወሐዲስ፡ወሊቃውንት።"
>
> "And that they all agree about the word of the unique orthodox faith by taking witness from the words of the Holy Books of the Old and the New (Testament) and the Church fathers".[10]

In this short statement two aspects are important. The first one is the construction **ቃል፡ዘአሐቲ፡ሃይማኖት፡ርትዕት**. It shows clearly that the construction of the "unique orthodox faith" existed already and that it was possible for the scholars to compare the different doctrines of the monks and consequently to determine the right orthodox faith. On the other hand it explains the method how to win the right doctrine. The only way to get there is by reading and analysing the Bible and the books of the Church fathers. This indicates a hint to the tərg^{w}ame and andəmta, the theological commentaries of the Ethiopian scholars.[11] In the commentaries the right orthodox faith is proved sentence by sentence. Each statement can at least cite three quotations from the Bible to prove its truth. The king asked the monks and the scholars to do this. The king referred explicitly to the books. For him the books have the highest authority. It is not the Coptic Metropolitan from Egypt nor is the əčč̣äge who could decide by their authority what the truth orthodox faith is; only the Bible and the scriptures of the church fathers can do so. The chronicle also indicates here the high value of theological knowledge, especially the knowledge by heart.

At this point the chronicle of Iyasu I mention another interesting issue.[12] It is the question about peace, mainly the peace in the whole kingdom. The chronicle reads that the Metropolitan and the əčč̣äge argue that first of all the people have to make peace among them, and only after that they can start to discuss matters of the faith. The monks from Gažge answer here that they wanted to have first of all Zä-Iyasus.[13] Due to this, they quarrelled and split into two different parties again. It is not described here what the different parties are, but it becomes clear that the different monasteries stand for different doctrines.

Again the Metropolitan and the əčč̣äge have no authority to decide how they can force the monks to come together and they have to return to the king and to rapport him everything what happened among the monks. The chronicle explains here the love of the king for the Orthodox faith "**ወመፍቀሬ፡ሃይማኖት፡ርትዕት**" "and love for the orthodox faith"[14] and that he therefore decided in a very wise way. Now the chronicle start to describe how the king even can not go into war against the **ጋላ**, the Galla (Oromo) due to the quarrels of the monks and that they finally have to find a solution for them all.

---

[9] Guidi (1961:81).
[10] Guidi (1961:81).
[11] Cowley (1988:267 ff.).
[12] The author of the Chronicle of Iyasus I was *Sähafe tə'əzaz* Hawarya Krést̄os, Bosc-Tiessé (2007:249).
[13] Guidi (1961:81).
[14] Guidi (1961:82).

The əčč̣äge abba Hərəyaqos from Däbrä Libanos stood up together with his monks and declare once again that they only belief that what is written in the scriptures:

> “እስመ፡ንብል፡ንሕነ፡ኵሉ፡ነገረ፡ሃይማኖት፡ይቁም፡በስምዓ፡መጻሕፍት፡ ቅዱሳት፡እንበለ፡ናትርፍ፡ወናሕፅፅ፡እምኔሆን።”
>
> “Because we say that all things of the faith has to stand by the witness of the Holy books, without omitting or adding from them”.[15]

The names of the monks, who declared their obedience to the scriptures, are given in the chronicle: abba Ǝdä Krəstos, abba Mənet zäMägwina, abba Niqolawos, abba Ewosṭatewos, abba Betä Kəssos, abba Wäldä Kəssos, abba Rəsuy, abba Hərəqanos and Känafəro. The king then continued to interrogate the other monks if they have the same belief, their names are also given and they are probably from Gažge: abba Ṭäbdän, abba Śəlṭan Krəstos, abba Sawiros and abba Atnatewos and all from the order of abba Ewosṭatewos.[16]

The answer of the monks is very interesting in our context. They are saying:

> “ወይቤሉ፡ኢይዳንየን፡ንጉሥ፡ዘእንበለ፡ባሕቲቱ፡ጳጳስ፡ወኢይስምዑ፡ነገረነ፡ ሊቃውንት፡ወመኳንንት።”
>
> “And they say: It is not the king who judge over us but only the p̣ap̣pas and the liqawənt and nobles will not hear our speech”.[17]

The chronicle gives here in only one sentence a deep view into the double structure of the Ethiopian kingdom. The monks are arguing that their case is a religious one, or better, a theological one, and therefore it is not the king who can judge over them. It is not the king who can be the judge in theological affairs; it must be the one who has the highest office of the Church in Ethiopia, the **ጳጳስ** p̣ap̣pas, the Coptic metropolitan.

The monks are apparently offending here the king, but the chronicle continues by reading that the king is wise again and that he let the monks go home. It is not entirely clear if the writer of the chronicle did agree here with the monks. He knows all about state affairs and its content, but in this case it seems that he was not sure if it would not have been better if the king had spoken a definitive decision to calm down the regional uprisings. Nevertheless, the fact that the chronicle mentions here both possibilities, that the king or the metropolitan can be the one who has the power and authority to judge, indicates the judicial uncertainty of church affairs during this time.

The monks rely on the Fəṭ̣a nägäśt and the Coptic law which in this case of theological controversies is to apply. If they had e.g. a dispute about the possession of a monastery, the king was the final arbitrator and he would have the right to a fair trial.[18] The theological discussions are a potential for unrest and the monks, being conscious about it had therefore an instrument to maintain control. They can refuse to accept any decision made by the king. This struggle for power between the secular/royal and the ecclesiastical power is the most typical power struggle of the Ethiopian kingdom in the 17th century.

The chronicle reads further:

---

15 Guidi (1961:82).
16 Guidi (1961:82).
17 Guidi (1961:83).
18 A comparison of this passage with the other manuscripts containing the chronicle of Ase Iyasu I will take place in my book about the history of the 17th /18th centuries.

“…ነዓ፡ውስተ፡ከተማ፡አኣቡየ፡ከመ፡ንግበር፡መባጀ፡ኀቡረ፡ወንትማክር፡ምክረ፡ዘክህነት፡ወመንግሥት።”

“…O my Father, come into my royal city so that we spend together the dry season and that we can have discussions about the priesthood and the kingdom”.[19]

Aṣe Iyasu I commanded therefore to call the Coptic metropolitan Abba Sinoda. He had have disputes with him before and the metropolitan had refused to come to the royal camp. The metropolitan had enough power to refuse the order of the kings, but the king could always done one thing what until today is a kind of governmental control: to call for a new metropolitan (or Patriarch).[20] The chronicle reports that Iyasu I had written to Egypt to send a new metropolitan to replace abunä Sinoda.[21] The main reason for the demand was that abunä Sinoda was involved into these inner Ethiopian theological disputes. It was forbidden by the canonical law to replace the metropolitan still alive, but Aṣe Iyasu I explained that they are going to wait until the death of abunä Sinoda before inaugurating the new metropolitan.[22] This happened already in 1684 but the new abunä Marqos IV arrived in Gondär only in 1689 (26 September) and was inaugurated in 1693. Therefore two Coptic metropolitans have been present at the court during the reign of Iyasu I, abunä Sinoda (1672-93) and abunä Marqos IV (1689-1716).[23]

The report of the synods and councils has an important place within the chronicle of Iyasu I and they are mentioned consistently. In 1686 a synod identified and recorded again the right doctrine: “The son of God was created by the power of the Holy Spirit”.[24] Nevertheless, the discussions and disputes continued and influenced the attitude of the believers. There occurred an important quarrel between the monks of Däbrä Libanos themselves, in the time from the 8-13th October 1696. After the quarrel the əṭṭäge Ṣäga Krəstos was disposed.[25] In 1697 and 1698 two synods concerning the true faith followed and the discussion about the unction was never brought to a termination. In 1697 another synod about the Christological disputes took place and the Unctionists tried again to win the arguments. There have been two brothers, abba Wäldä Tensa’e and abba Tamarta, and they said: “በቅብዓት፡ተዋሕዶ።” “Through the Unction (was) the Union”.[26] But the Däbrä Libanos monks had better arguments and could win the quarrel once again. Their doctrine of the Täwaḥədo reads: “One nature by the union of two natures”. The Union doctrine was proclaimed and the Unctionists doctrine condemned. The dissension continued, and although their doctrine was condemned by the king, the Unctionists tried to persuade the king and the noble Amhara people. The so called Goğğam party was very active and this was dangerous for the king because of rebellions and uprisings. The regional rivalries and the theological rivalries coincided nearly entire. The followers of the Qəbat doctrine lived in Goğğam and the troublemakers of Goğğam were therefore identified with Qəbat.

[19] Guidi (1961:84).
[20] Aṣe Iyasu I was the one who appointed the Ethiopian əṭṭäge and the ᶜAqqabe säᶜat, Crummey (2000:84).
[21] The Coptic Patriarch in Alexandria during his reign was Yohannes XVI (18 March 1676 – 15 June 1718).
[22] Guidi (1961:85).
[23] Munro-Hay (2005:91ff.).
[24] Dombrowski (1983:214).
[25] Dombrowski (1983:223).
[26] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:100).

The synod at Yebaba

Religious debates had occurred before Iyasu I. The kings have regarded always the theological controversies as source of regional conflicts and were therefore eager to solve all theological and ecclesiastical conflicts. The Orthodox party followers and the Qəbat party forces intrigue with the Episcopal authority and the royal power. During the reign of Iyasu I Gondär was the well-known capital. Established by aṣe Fasilädäs, it grew up rapidly. The different religious schools, the Christian art but also the secular art, were presented here. Pope Innocentius XII presented by a letter the Franciscan monk Francesco Maria da Salemi to Iyasu I, who arrived in 1700 in Gondär.[27] Shortly afterwards arrived the Franciscan Giuseppe Maria da Gerusaleme and Iyasu I wrote therefore an Arabic letter to pope Clemente XI.[28] Nevertheless, Iyasu I lived like his predecessors in Aringo. In 1698 he gave instructions that his crown were kept in Aringo while he was absent on an expedition.[29] But he also resided several times during the dry season in Yəbaba, a stopping place for the court. Yəbaba was a lovely place and well known to the king.[30] And here in Yəbaba one of the most important theological council took place.[31]

Aṣe Iyasu I convened hence the synod at Yəbaba on 2 May 1699 (8 Genbot 1692). He convened "all monks from Waldəbba, Mägwina, Qoraṣa, Qänṭäfä and all who are exiled in Goğğam and everywhere".[32] It was therefore a huge assembly, and the king arranged for all monks houses where they could stay during the synod. Iyasu I ordered all inhabitants of Yəbaba to take care of the food for the participants. On this synod the doctrinal conflicts of the two principal factions, the Unctionists (Qəbat) and the Unionists (Täwaḥədo) were discussed intensively. Iyasu I approved again the Täwahədo side to win this theological dispute. He was closed related to the monastery Däbrä Libanos and thus to the followers of the house of Täklä Haymanot which can also be named the Orthodox party.[33] The synod was represented on the Täwaḥədo side by abunä Marqos, the metropolitan, and əčč̣äge abba Hərəyaqos from Däbrä Libanos. The əčč̣äge and the ᶜaqqabe säᶜat Cəbaba Krəstos were the main authorities in the quarrel.

By the monks the Unionists were represented by abba Betä Krəstos and the Unctionists by abba ᶜArka Dəngəl.[34] Abba Betä Krəstos is named by the chronicle as ማዕምረ፡መጻሕፍት፡ወጥዑመ፡ንባብ (doctor of the books and of sweet language).[35] Abba Betä Krəstos and abba ᶜArka Dəngəl discussed mainly if the three persons are the divinity of the Trinity, but on the other side the Godfather created by creation the son and so continued the divinity. "The power over sky and earth und creation was and will be always in the hands of God and indivisible".[36] As said before, the main theme of the

[27] Raineri (2003:145).
[28] Raineri (2003:147).
[29] Aringo is 45 km east of Lake Ṭana, and Iyasu liked the place according to his chronicles very much and resided there several times, Pankhurst (2003:335).
[30] Dombrowski (1983:215).
[31] There had been trouble among the monks and their teaching before at Yəbaba, it could be that a Franciscan influence was still there, Munro Hay (2005:92).
[32] Guidi (1961:202).
[33] Interestingly the famous Mälkəʾä śəllase (Mälkəʾä of the Trinity) was composed during the time of Iyasu I. It is said that the Mälkəʾä was composed by abba Səbḥat Läʾab, a friend of the king, Habtemichael-Kidane (1998:203).
[34] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:100). Abba Akala Krəstos, a monk from the Unctionist side, had presented their view before in several councils, also during the reign of aṣe Yoḥannəs.
[35] Guidi (1961:203).
[36] Dombrowski (1983:294).

debate was the significance of the Qəbat.[37] The Unctionists (Qəbatočč) said: "The Father is the anointer, the Son the anointed and the Holy Spirit the ointment".[38] The Unionists (Täwahədo) said by abba Betä Krəstos: "For the humanity, the union of the divinity (with it) replaces unction for it". Each side had to prove the rightness of their arguments by the Holy books, the citation by heard was honoured with respect.

Finally, they all agreed in the sentences of abba Betä Krəstos about the Trinity and the Incarnation. The liqawənt, the ṗaṗṗas, the əčč̣age, the king and all priests agreed. The metropolitan and the əčč̣äge declared the excommunication against everybody who would speak against the words of abba Betä Krəstos and the monks followed up.[39]

In Yəbaba Iyasu I executed subsequently his royal power in a different way to solve these theological disputes. It was the aim of him to solve all ecclesiastical problems for ever. As soon as the right doctrine was defined and had been announced officially by the church, the king placed his own public announcement. He announced that he will assent to the statement of the church dignitaries. Furthermore he declared that he will take care that this doctrine will be accepted right away by all believers.

Afterwards he said:

"እስመ፡አኮ፡ለከንቱ፡ዘአኰነነኒ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ወአንገረ፡አዋጅ።"

"Because it is not in vain that God gave me power".[40]

This royal instruction for an absolute obedience to the church and to the court confused the believers. The king knew that his announcement interfere again into the church affairs. In his opinion he had the right to do so, because God had chosen him to be the king. Only God is the one who decides who will be the next king. Consequently the elected one, the king, has the royal and the theological power, too. The decision about the right doctrine at the synod of Yəbaba was namely done by the monks, but the king was the one who translated it into action.

It has been the aim of Iyasu I to solve all theological and ecclesiastical disputes and therefore the affiliated regional conflicts. His policy turned out as a false conclusion and he failed. Particularly with regard to the synods, also after the synod at Yəbaba the internal theological debates continued. At the end, aṣe Iyasu I was dethroned in 1706 by his son of Mäläkotawit, Täklä Haymanot (1706-1708). The theological councils rose again and the Qəbat faction aimed for convincing the new king of their doctrine.[41] Aṣe Iyasu I was shortly after his dethronement murdered by order of his son on Č̣əqla Mänzo, an island in the Lake Ṭana. He was buried in the royal cemetery on the island Məṣraḫa.[42] He is regarded as a martyr and his hagiography (Gädl Iyasu) was written soon after his death.[43]

The royal chronicles are an informative source for the Ethiopian history. They describe intensively the theological disputes and the affiliated power struggles. To be able to write a cultural history about this period of Ethiopian history one should investigate these disputes intensively.

[37] Getatchew Haile (1990:XIII).
[38] Getatchew Haile (1990:VII).
[39] Guidi (1961:204).
[40] Guidi (1961:204).
[41] Ayala Takla Haymanot (1982:100).
[42] Bosc-Tiessé (2007:250).
[43] Conti Rossini (1942:65). The gädl was probably written by azzaž Sinoda, Bosc-Tiessé (2007:250).

Bibliography

Ayala Takla Haymanot, (Abba). 1982. *The Ethiopian Church and its Christological Doctrine*, Addis Ababa (1981 Revised English Ed.). (Mario da Abiy-Addi).

Bartnicki, Andrzej; Joanna Mantel-Niećko. 1978. *Geschichte Äthiopiens.* Berlin.

—— 1969-70. 'The Role and Significance of the Religious Conflict and People's Movements in the Political Life of Ethiopia in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.' *RSE,* Vol. XXIV, pp. 5-39.

Basset, René. 1882. *Études sur l'histoire d'Éthiopie*. Paris.

Beccari, Camillo. 1905-1917. *Rerum Aethiopicarum Scriptores Occidentalis inediti a saeculo XVI ad XIX.* Roma (Vol. I-XV).

Béguinot, Francesco. 1901. *La Cronaca abbreviata d'Abissinia*. Rome.

Berry, LaVerle. 1994. 'Coalition Politics and the Royal Office in Mid-18th Century Gondar.' In: *Études Éthiopiennes. Actes de la X^e conference internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24-28 août 1988.* Paris, Vol. 1, pp. 219-24.

Bosc-Tiessé, Claire. 2007. 'Iyasu I.' In: *EAE,* Vol. 3, pp. 249-251.

Conti Rossini, Carlo. 1942. 'Iyasu I, re d'Ethiopia e martire.' In: *Rivista degli studi orientali,* Vol. XX, pp. 65-128.

—— 1893. 'Due squarci inediti di cronaca etiopica.' In: *RRAL* 5, Vol. 2, pp. 804-818.

Cowley, Roger W. 1988. *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation: a Study in Exegetical Tradition and Hermeneutics*. Cambridge.

Crummey, Donald. 2000. *Land and Society in the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia. From the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Dombrowski, Franz A. 1983. *Ṭānāsee 106: eine Chronik der Herrscher Äthiopiens*. Wiesbaden.

Donzel, Emeri Johannes van. 1979. *Foreign Relations of Ethiopia 1642-1700. Documents Relating to the Journeys of Khodja Murād*. Leiden.

Getatchew Haile. 1975-1993. *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and for the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library.* Collegeville, Vol. IV-X.

—— 1990. *The Faith of the Unctionists in the Ethiopian Church (Haymanot Mäsihawit)*. CSCO 518, Script. Aeth. 92. Louvain.

—— 1986. 'Materials on the Theology of Qebat or Unction.' In: *Ethiopian Studies. Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference, Tel-Aviv, 14-17 April 1980.* Rotterdam, pp. 205-251.

—— 1981. 'Religious Controversies and the Growth of Ethiopic Literature in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.' *Oriens Christianus,* Vol. 65, pp. 102-136.

Guidi, Ignazio. 1961. *Annales Iohannis I, Iyāsu I, Bakāffā.* CSCO, Vol. 22 (1960) (Ed.), Vol. 23 (Tr.), Script. Aeth. 5, 6, (Paris 1903). Louvain.

—— 1900-1901. 'Uno squarcio di storia ecclesiastica di Abissinia.' *Bessarione,* Vol. 8, pp. 10-22.

—— 1893. *Di due frammenti relativi alla storia di Abissinia*. Roma.

Habtemichael-Kidane. 1998. *L'Ufficio divino della chiesa etiopica. Studio storico-critico con particolare riferimento alle ore cattedrali*. Roma.

Huntingford, George W.B. 1989. *The Historical Geography of Ethiopia. From the First Century A.D. to 1704.* (Ed. by Richard Pankhurst). London.

Kropp, Manfred. 1986. 'A hypothesis concerning an author or compiler of the 'Short Chronicle' of the Ethiopian kings.' In: *Ethiopian Studies. Proceedings of the Sixth*

International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Tel-Aviv, 14-17 April 1980. Rotterdam, pp. 359-372.

Munro-Hay, Stuart. 2005. *Ethiopia and Alexandria II. The Metropolitan Episcopacy of Ethiopia From the Fourteenth Century to the Zemana Mesafint*. Warszawa – Wiesbaden.

Pankhurst, Richard. 2003. 'Aringo.' In: *EAE,* Vol. 1, p. 335.

Perruchon, Jules. 1901. 'Notes pour l'histoire d'Éthiopie. Le règne de Iyasu (I[er]), roi d'Éthiopie de 1682 à 1706.' *Revue sémitique d'épigraphie et d'histoire ancienne,* Vol. 9, pp. 71-78; 161-67; 258-62.

Raineri, Osvaldo. 2003. *Lettere tra i pontefici romani e i principi etiopici (secoli XII-XX).* Città del Vaticano: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana. Studi e testi 412.

—— 1994. 'La storia di Iyāsu [1682-1706], secondo Cerulli Etiopico 318.' *OCP,* Vol. 60, pp. 247-253.

—— 1992. 'Il regno di Iyāsu I, re d'Etiopia dal 1682 al 1706.' *OCP*, Vol. 58, pp. 213-240.

Sciarinno, J.-F. 1995. *La chronique de Susenyos, roi d'Éthiopie (1607-1632).* Traduction des chapitres 1 à 51, Mémoire de DEA. Paris I (CRA).

Uhlig, Siegbert. 1983. *Hiob Ludolfs* "*Theologia Aethiopica*". Wiesbaden.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Performance and Ritual in Nineteenth-Century Ethiopian Political Culture

Izabela Orlowska

The analysis of ritual behaviour and the usage of symbol are particularly helpful for the study of the Ethiopia's monarchy, whose rulers made good use of spectacle and ceremony. The recognition of the role of ritual has led historians to explore alternative ways of looking at ritual acts. Yet the question that has troubled historians and anthropologist alike is how rituals work and how they relate to political power. Recent studies of symbolic communication evoked in performative rituals have opened new perspectives on rituals and symbolic gestures.

Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* was particularly helpful in shaping our understanding of how political actors mobilised symbols of authority and power in order to convey a political message.[1] The notion that leaders create complex rituals, symbolic images and ceremonies based on old models but adapted to current challenges is particularly helpful in the context of the reconstruction and revival of the Ethiopian monarchy. The concept of 're-imagined traditions' proposed by Ranger seems to capture the process at work here, as it encapsulates the dynamic of an ongoing process of conceiving traditions.[2]

The rulers of the decades starting from the middle of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century mobilized a range of spectacles and ceremonies evoking historic symbols derived from a glorious past of the Ethiopian monarchy. They did it to justify their rule and legitimise the return of strong imperial power. Ritual served as a means of communicating and reinforcing the revival of the imperial idea. Just as European colonial rulers drew on the invented symbols of 'imperial monarchy' in order to establish hegemony over Asian and African subjects, Ethiopian monarchs mobilised an indigenous body of symbols associated with Ethiopian kingship and deeply embedded in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity.

When approached and appreciated in new ways Ethiopian sources provide us with important glimpses about a range of ritual actions that characterised Ethiopian political culture. Symbolic communication, articulated both in the language and in the performance of ceremonial acts, seems to have addressed not only issues related to legitimacy of imperial rule. Performative ceremonies described in the sources led me to believe that they provide a platform for negotiating status, expressing authority and projecting power.

---

1 Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1992), p.4; see also Terence Ranger, 'The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The Case of Colonial Africa', in Terence Ranger and Olufemi Vaughan (eds.), *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa* (London, 1993); see also David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw their Empire* (Oxford, 2001).

2 Ranger, 'Invention', p. 68.

Approaches to Ritual in Anthropology and History

Since performative ceremonies and ritual actions seem to have been an important idiom in Ethiopian politics, it would be desirable to develop a more systematic way of looking at them. Ethiopian political culture is of course not an isolated example. Similar practices have been described for, among other examples, late medieval Burgundian city sates, where civic traditions were manipulated to make symbolic statements about princely power. [3] The extensive role of ritual and ceremony has been also noted in the cases of imperial China and Japan as well as Indian Mughal Empire. These cases have substantial comparative value, though they may not be direct analogy.

The work of Clifford Geertz on nineteenth-century Bali often provides a springboard for departure. [4] He emphasised symbol as social fact integral to, rather than independent of, the political process. Geertz's work contributed to our understanding of ritual as social action with the ability to sublimate differences between rulers and ruled and enclose them in a wider symbolic union. His anthropological model claimed that rulers who lacked political power constructed a 'theatre-state' based on a series of rituals that created a different form of power - sustained by reference to often supernatural set of values, that provided a certain cosmic order in which both rulers and ruled could locate themselves.[5]

Geertz's model seems to have deeply influenced anthropologists and historians alike. Among other cases it has been applied in the historical analysis of Burgundian Netherlands.[6] Consequently, the presence of rituals in both Bali and late medieval Burgundy has been explained as the inadequacy of state power that employed a range of spectacles in order to control a patchwork of territories.[7] These rituals drew heavily on local traditions and practices, which made it possible for the subjects to relate to the message that was being conveyed and identify with it.

Geertz's theatre-state model approach to state ritual has been, however, also recognised as problematic. Geertz stressed that in the 'theatre-state' context ritual is not an addition to political power, but an integral part of it. His very point was to stress that ritual is not merely a mask covering the core of 'real' power. Geertz lay emphasis on the fact that the ritualised creation of the heavenly order was an end in itself, not a means to an end. The 'theatre-state' model, therefore, worked by acting out the ideal political order. In other words, power seems to serve the pomp of the ritual action, not the other way around.

Useful as it may be as a springboard, historians, however, have had problems with applying Geertz model to other cases. Andrew Brown has made a point that ritual is actually highly functional in the Burgundian context, where pomp does serve power and in fact supports state-building efforts, which makes the application of Geertz's model difficult.[8] In terms of the question of how ritual relates to political power Arnade has also noted that Burgundian ceremonies were not simply instruments of social control,

---

3 Blockmans and Donckers, 'Self-Representation of Court and City in Flanders and Brabant in the Fifteenth and early Sixteenth centuries', in *Showing Status. Representations of Social Positions in the late Meddle ages,* (eds.), Wim Blockmans and Anthus Janse (Turnhout, 1999), 82, 89, 91; Andrew Brown, *Ritual and state-Building:Ceremonies in Late Medieval Buruges* in: Jacoba Van Leeuwen (ed.) *Symbolic Communication in Late Medieval Towns* (Louven, 2006), p. 3.

4 Clifford Geertz, *Negara. The Theatre-State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton, 1981).

5 Ibid., p.13-14, 102-5.

6 Walter Prevenier and Wim Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge, 1986), 223.

7 A. Brown, *Symbolic communication,* p.7-8.

8 Bruges and the Burgundian 'Theatre -State': Charles the Bold and Our Lady of eh Snow', *History,* 84, 1999, p.574-6.

but a way of displaying conflict on to a ritual plane as a strategy to allow political negotiation.[9] Hence, looking at state ritual as a substitute for a weak mechanism of state control is not always useful and simply untrue in many cases.

But more importantly, Geertz's description of the 'theatre-state' has attracted criticism for not being what the author intended it to be. Geertz sought to break down the distinction between ritual action and 'political action'. However, by distinguishing between 'pomp' and 'power ' he does exactly the opposite. The criticism has been that Geertz has actually little to say about how ritual actions affect real life and how the perforative events in the centre, the court, affect the politics of the periphery. Thus, Andrew Brown contested Geertz's claim that the Balinese 'theatre-state' with its ritual didn't served political power and hierarchy. The question that he posed back to Geertz is how the ideological underpinnings of the 'theatre-state' came to be the dominant discourse of power.[10]

Consequently, historians dealing with rituals have identified the term 'theatre-state' as problematic and not widely applicable to the empirical evidence of history. Some have tried to use the anthropological definitions of ritual in order to define how ritual actions are intended to work. However, nuances and actual social contexts challenge the usefulness of the fixed model that anthropology favours. While the impact of rituals with the indirectness and illusiveness of symbolic meanings is rather difficult to assess, it would be a shame if the search for definition would prevent us from recognising its importance and role in particular societies and historical moments.

As mentioned above, Ethiopian monarchs used state rituals to legitimise their rule and the revival of the imperial order. Coronation ceremonies are a great example of that and would in fact loosely fit Geertz's 'theatre-state' model. But the role of ritual action in Ethiopian political culture seems to go much further and this is what I want to illustrate in this paper.

Ambiguity of ritual acts permits ample space for political manoeuvring and should not be regarded as an inferior form of political behaviour. For example, the political function of orality in state ritual and ambiguity that these methods of political negotiation permit is worth exploring in greater detail. Janet Ewald's has addressed these issues in the context of the kingdom of Taqali, in Sudan's Nuba mountains.[11] The rulers of this kingdom rejected literacy offered by Islamic culture in order to preserve their oral and ritual forms of conveying authority and to protect their political autonomy.[12] Ewald concluded that oral communication permitted flexible, context-bound and ambiguous relations grounded in the cultural milieu of the kings of Taqali. Ethiopian political culture provided important parallels. As pointed out by James McCann, despite the country's long tradition of literacy, Ethiopian political culture was highly oral and ritualistic.[13] Literacy only formalised negotiations and assertions that had their origins oral forms of political behaviour.

---

[9] Peter Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (New York, 1996), p.211-13.

[10] A. Brown, p. 7-8.

[11] Janet Ewald, 'Speaking, Writing, and Authority: Explorations in and from the Kingdom of Taqali', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988).

[12] Ibid., p.202; for the kingdom of Taqali see also Janet Ewald, 'Leadership and Social Change on an Islamic Frontier: The Kingdom of Taqali, 1680-1898', PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin (1982); J. Ewald, 'Experience and Speculation: History of Founding Stories in the Kingdom of Taqali, 1780-1935', *International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 18 (1985).

[13] James C. McCann, 'Orality, State Literacy, and Political Culture in Ethiopia: Translating the Ras Kassa Registers', in Page et al, *Personality and Political Culture*, p.19.

Therefore, in order fully to explore political culture of this pre-industrial society one needs to address the inner workings of these performative ceremonies. The spectacles that appear in Ethiopian sources point towards a particular role of indigenous notions of honour and its inverse, humiliation. John Iliffe recently recognised the role of honour, hitherto neglected aspect of political behaviour, as an important and recurring theme in the African context. [14] The notions of honour played out in these ceremonies appear crucial for negotiating status, expressing and acknowledging authority. Furthering our knowledge about the inner workings of these ceremonies can therefore benefit out understanding of the practice of Ethiopian political culture at a number of levels.

Ethiopian submission ceremony

Here, I will use the example of political negotiations between two well known emperors Yohannəs IV (1872-89) and Mənilək II (1889-1913) to discuss the role and significance of a performative ceremony of submission. Since Tewodros' death in 1855 the two were in competition for the imperial throne. Having established himself in Tigray and in the central highlands, in 1872, Yohannəs assumed the ultimate position of emperor in a highly performative ceremony of his coronation that was to legitimise and project his new status. The event was attended by most regional rulers apart from Mənilək, who also had imperial ambitions that he officially expressed by his using the title of *nəgusä nägäst.*

In 1878 Yohannəs managed to bring Mənilək to submission. The latter swore his formally submitted on 20 March. On 26 March at Dämbaro a coronation ceremony took place, in which Yohannəs crowned Mənilək *nəgus* of Šäwa. [15] The agreement between the two came to be known as the Ləche agreement. Its content never appeared in written form and the reports of travellers and missionaries vary as to what they had actually agreed upon.[16] Nevertheless, there is a consensus among historians, that Yohannəs obliged Mənilək to renounce the title of *nəgusä nägäst*, but in return acknowledged his right and that of his descendents to the province of Šäwa. He expressed this by bestowing on Mənilək the title of *nəgus* of Šäwa. The agreement obliged Mənilək to pay of an annual tribute to the emperor, defined Šäwan territory, specified Mənilək's sphere of influence. The two are also said to have agreed on a number of demands that Yohannəs had in terms of religion and the position of foreigners in Šäwa. [17] This is the extent of knowledge about the events of March 1878 usually provided by the conventional literature.

The point I want to make is that it was the ceremonial aspect of the act of submission that signified the change of Menlik's status and the end of his imperial ambitions as much as any written agreement. Since the 'treaty' was never put into written form, the ritual dimension, hitherto neglected by historians, is especially significant to understand this event. Ethiopian sources are crucial in reconstructing this aspect since they provide glimpses of the performative nature of the political game between the two rulers.

From the moment Yohannəs reached the district of Geshē in northern Šäwa in January 1878 the performative negotiations began. In Angoläla, Yohannəs staged a review of all the armies that had joined him - estimated at 100,000 men.[18] It was an

[14] John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge, 2005), p.367-8.
[15] Ibid,, p.93.
[16] Ibid., p.93.
[17] For more details of the terms of the agreement see Darkwah, *Shewa,* p.78-9, Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, *Yohannes IV,* p. 93; Bartnicki and Mantel-Niecko, *Historia*, p.269.
[18] Həruy Wäldä Səllase , 'Tarik', p. 51; Gäbrä Səllase, *Tarikä*, p. 82.

obvious demonstration of power and political allegiance with the regional chiefs who accompanied the emperor and supported his forces. The advance of this huge military force was not without consequences for the province of Šäwa. In the past, the army plundered widely in search of food and loot. This occasion was not different. Mənilək was forced to react to the overwhelming military threat and summoned his army.

Həruy and Gäbrä Səllase, both authors associated with Šäwan court, note in their written recollections that the Šäwan *mäkwannənt* also performed a traditional *fukkära,* a ritual in which a performer, usually a soldier, boasts about his strength in front of his leader, promising to fight hard, to capture guns from the enemy and to secure victory.[19] The aim of this practice was for the soldiers to express loyalty to their leader and raise their spirits for battle. However, the reality was that Yohannəs's army, incorporating those of regional rulers, far outnumbered that of Šäwa and Mənilək would have found it difficult to face such a force. Deeply aware of the danger of imperial attack, he preferred to reconcile.[20]

According to Ethiopian sources, Mənilək did not hold talks himself; the initial negotiations took place orally between messengers of both sides. The Šäwan side sent religious leaders to the imperial camp as intermediaries. The meeting took place in Wädära, where they agreed on the conditions of reconciliation. The agreement addressed two issues: Mənilək's obligation to supply the emperor with troops and the religious status of Šäwa. Yohannəs demanded the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries, especially Guglielmo Massaja, a politically active Capuchin father. He also obliged Mənilək not to be in contact with foreigners, by which he meant the Italians, who were keen to establish trade links with Šäwa.[21]

After the two reached the agreement, Yohannəs announced a proclamation to his soldiers stating that he had reconciled with Mənilək and would not approve of any looting, - a not unusual occurrence - on the Šäwan lands. He was particularly strict in punishing those who disobeyed his order.[22] Indeed, one of his officials, Fitawrari Nadäw had to intervene in order to persuade the emperor not to apply the death penalty in such cases. Such a strict attitude seems to indicate that despite an overwhelming military superiority Yohannəs did not want to provide any pretext to open confrontation. Despite being in an advantageous position, Yohannəs clearly aimed at negotiations leading to the official submission of the Šäwan ruler.

Həruy provides crucial insights as to why the agreement was unsatisfactory. He notes that Yohannəs was unhappy with the agreement, because the two rulers had not met in person 'to strengthen and confirm the agreement'.[23] He than explains that Yohannəs sent two of his officials, Bäğərond Läwte and Fitawrari Nadäw, to press for a face-to-face meeting with Mənilək, which would require a ritual obeisance not possible via writing.[24] It is clear that Yohannəs insisted on that meeting in order to engineer a situation, in which Mənilək would be forced to perform the above ritual act that in turn would provide a solution to his still unsatisfactory relationship with the ruler of Šäwa.

---

[19] Getie Gelayē, 'Amharic Praise Poems Composed and Recited in Honour of Değazmač Bälay Zälläqä During the Resistance Struggle Against the Italian Occupation of Ethiopia, 1936-41', paper given to the seminar of the Department of African Languages and Cultures, SOAS, March 2005. *Fukkära* is usually performed in conjunction with another genre of oral poetry, *qärärto*.

[20] Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.51; Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis*, p.665-7.

[21] Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.50

[22] Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis*, p.669.

[23] Gäbrä Səllase, *Tarikä,* p.84; Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.50

[24] Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.50.

Həruy provides us with details as to why the standing agreement was insufficient and more importantly as to what it was Yohannəs expected of Mənilək. He quotes the emperor as saying: *'Nəgus Mənilək läne aytaṭṭäqəm bəläw'* – 'Nəgus Mənilək did not submit to me' [lit. did not present himself in front of me in a manner that promises loyalty and allegiance].[25] This sentence provides a key concept of the art of political compromise. It refers to the ritual form of submission. The verb used here is *taṭṭäqe (mätaṭṭäq)*, which signifies a manner of dressing as a sign of submission. This act entailed the tightening around the waist of a š*ämma,* a traditional shawl worn by men over their shoulders, and kissing the ground before the person one was submitting to. It is this ritual act that Yohannəs demanded from Mənilək. The sentence cited above explicitly refers to the fact that Mənilək did not perform this rite in front of Yohannəs.

Həruy further describes the circumstances surrounding submission. Having consulted his *mäkwannənt* on Yohannəs's demands, Mənilək responded by asking for a confirmation of the emperor's friendly intentions. 'If Yohannəs gives a promise not to do any evil things I will come to meet him'.[26] As a sign of his will to cooperate, Mənilək sent Yohannəs a golden throne [chair] (*yäwärq wänbär*) and another for Əčäge Ṭewoflos.[27] Having exchanged presents and secured an assurance of friendly intentions, Mənilək agreed to meet. He left Ləche and arrived in Jəjəga, where Yohannəs forces were encamped. Having agreed to meet Yohannəs, Mənilək implicitly agreed to perform the ritualistic ceremony of submission. It was precisely this element of the face-to-face meeting with the emperor that Mənilək was trying to avoid.

Gäbrä Səllase, Mənilək's chronicler, reports in the official record that on reaching the imperial camp at Jəjəga, Mənilək was received by particular individuals Wagshum Gäbru, Däğazmač Maru, Däğazmač Tässämma, Däğazmač Wahəd, Bäğərond Läwṭe and other high officials. In the meantime, Yohannəs ensured a truly royal reception for his contender. The army was traditionally arranged to the right and left of the emperor. Yohannəs, conscious of his image, was wearing *ləbsä mängəst*, literally the 'gown of the kingdom' or government that he would have been previously worn during his coronation ceremony. He also wore a crown and carried other royal insignia. The emperor had with him the *əčäge*, who was also dressed in his ceremonial clothing. The sound of traditional instruments, the *əmbəlta* and *mäläkät,* complemented the occasion.[28] Mənilək was then seated on a specially prepared smaller throne, located to the right of the imperial one. The two rulers thus sat next to each other, one on the grander imperial throne, the other on the smaller one, displaying in this way the hierarchical nature of their relationship. After a while, the *əčäge* began the prayer and the two rulers entered a tent specially prepared for the occasion**.** On the one hand, the grandness of this reception aimed to display Yohannəs's imperial status, reinforced by ritual objects such as *ləbsä mängəst*, the crown and insignia, which Mənilək would officially acknowledge by submitting. On the other hand- as the Ethiopian sources explicitly point out- Mənilək was received '*bäkəbər',* i.e with great pomp and honour, clearly aimed to display respect.

The picture of these events available in the established literature rests mainly on the reports of Mənilək's Capucin advisor, Gugliemo Massaja, who emphasises the splendour of the occasion and records Yohannəs's pronouncement:

[25] Ibid.
[26] Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p. 51.
[27] Ibid.; see also Marcus, *Menelik II*, p.56.
[28] Gäbrä Səllase, *Tarikä,* p.84-5; Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.52.

> My predecessors, the Emperors of Ethiopia had a representative in Showa, who neither wore the insignia nor the title of king. As delegates of an emperor they were merely called *meredazmach.* Today, I wish to give you a special pledge of my affection and in recognition of your loyalty towards me, as king of kings, I confer on you the authority, the insignia and the title of the King of Showa, on condition that you swear an oath of loyalty and submission.[29]
>
> You are accordingly king and master of lands conquered and ruled by your forebears. I shall respect your sovereignty if you will be faithful to the agreements decided between us. Whoever strikes your kingdom strikes me, whoever makes war on you makes it on me. You are accordingly my eldest son.[30]

No written agreement of this proclamation exists. The only other direct reference by European observers to the actual rite of submission is by Augustus Wylde, who reported that Mənilək prostrated himself before the *mäkwannənt* and placed Yohannəs's foot on his neck to indicate his inferiority.[31] The rest of the above quotation based on Massaja refers to the recognition of Mənilək's rights to rule Šäwa and his acknowledgment of Yohannəs as *nəgusä nägäst.*

The consequences of this event were of great significance for Mənilək. Interestingly, the account by the traditional Šäwan historian Aṣme emphasises the humiliation rather than the magnificence of the occasion. Aṣme notes that Mənilək arrived in Jəjəga and 'was seen submitting to the court of Aṣe Yohannəs' - '*Jəjəga därsu, bäAṣe Yohannəs addebabay taṭṭəqäw tayu'.* [32] The verb *taṭṭäqä*, as noted above, refers to the act of submission, expressed in a ritual of folding a *šämma,* around one's waist as a mark of respect.[33] Mənilək was no exception, and had to perform this ceremony he had previously avoided and which signified his lower position and promised obedience. To express the magnitude of this transformation of status both Həruy and Aṣme go on to quote a *gəṭəm* (a type of poem), sung by the *azmarioč*:[34]

> 'Sihon täkänanäb sayhon aṭṭafaw. Mätaṭṭäq ayhonəm ḷäəndät yalä säw. Əndet yalä ruq näw, č̣ənəq yaläw mängäd. Ašaqbo wäṭəto wädätač mäwräd ' – 'Cover yourself or throw your šämma over your shoulders as dressing around the waist [exposing bare shoulders] is not becoming for a person like you. The road is long and strenuous, having come up so far, why fall back down [give up now]'.[35]

The poem, in typically evasive fashion, exposes the degree of humiliation entailed by this act. It urges Mənilək to dress properly as dressing around the waist indicates acceptance of a lower status. The inappropriate manner of dressing refers to the style of folding *šämma* around one's waist, which indicates submission. The following lines draw a parallel. The long and strenuous road refers to Mənilək's attempts to fulfil his ambitions to be independent of any authority and symbolises the difficulty of rising to power. The idea of falling from high is equated with Mənilək's imperial ambitions being ended by his humiliating submission.

Having untangled the metaphoric nuance of this poem, we are left with explicit evidence of how Mənilək's contemporaries perceived his submission. It meant a decline

---

[29] Kevin O'Mahoney, *The Ebullient Phoenix: A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia, 1860-1881* (Asmara, 1987) vol. II. p. 210. The author utilised Adigrat Diocesan Archives consisting of documents, unpublished manuscripts, reports, journals and letters. Marcus, *Menelik II*, p.56.
[30] Marcus, *Menelik II*, p.56.
[31] Wylde, *83'to 87' in the Sudan*, p.331.
[32] Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis*, p.674-5.
[33] Leslau, *Amharic Dictionary,* p.108
[34] *Azmarioč*: plural of *azmari*, minstrel.
[35] Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis,* p.674-5.

in Mənilək's status and an official acknowledgment of his failure to maintain the title of *nəgusä nägäst*, to which he had aspired for a decade. Bairu Tafla, following the Ethiopian tradition of verbal ambiguity in oral poetry known as *sämənna wärq*, 'wax and gold' proposes an additional meaning of the poem that focuses on the reading of *aṭṭäfä* in this context. The word *aṭṭäfä(w)* in the text refers to girding the *šämma* in a way that exposes the upper part of ones body and signifies submission. The poem urges Mənilək here not to do so. However, it can also be read as an imperative form of the word *aṭṭäfä,* in which case it would mean to strike, to eradicate or to make disappear. This interpretation suggests that Mənilək is urged to attack Yohannəs and defeat him, because submission should not be an option for him.[36] Both readings demonstrate the degree of humiliation inflicted on Mənilək by submitting.

In addition, Həruy, Aṣme and Gäbrä Səllase all noted that until that point, Mənilək was referred to as *aṣe,* the imperial form of address, and his seal had pronounced him *Nəgusä Nägäst Minīlīk*. All of them observe that from this moment Mənilək was to stop using this self proclaimed title and his seal changed to *Nəguse Šäwa*, the king of Šäwa.[37] According to Həruy, *'Aṣe Yohannəs wädä Šäwa mätətäw yänəgusənnät zäwd käšällämwačč̣äw bähwala gən Aṣe Mənilək mäbalačäw qärrä nəgus Mənilək yəbalu jämmäre'* – 'Mənilək stopped being referred to as *Aṣe* after the visit to Šäwa by Yohannəs, who decorated him with the crown of *nəgusinet.* Since than he had been addressed as Nəgus Mənilək.'[38] Həruy explicitly points out that it was after being decorated with the crown, *käšällämwačč̣äw bähwala,*that he was no longer to be addressed as Aṣe, but began to be called Nəgus Mənilək of Šäwa.[39] Hence, the visit of Yohannəs to Šäwa and the actual performance of the ceremony was to have enormous consequences for Mənilək's status within the empire. *Yänəgusənnät zäwd*, the crown of kingship brought by Yohannəs, now distinguished his rival from his own imperial crown of the *nəgusä nägäst*. Mənilək, by accepting *nəgusənnät* and hence the change of his status from *nəgusä nägäst,* finally and officially acknowledged Yohannəs's superiority and authority over him. At the same time, however, Yohannəs clearly offered Mənilək a role in his empire, as his first *nəgus.* This status would enable him to sit to the right of the highest authority in the monarchy, the *nəgusä nägäst* himself.

Conclusion

As seen above, the submission of a powerful ruler of Šäwa was not achieved by signing an official agreement, but in a highly performative ceremony. Although, there was some space for verbal communication through intermediaries, who reached agreement on particular matters regarding administration, the actual submission and the change of status happened during the ritual act. The spectacle mobilised the notions of honour and humiliation to project a change of status and the hierarchy between political players. Submission and Mənilək's change of status certainly entailed humiliation, but not complete degradation. The new status of *nəgus,* also confirmed in an appropriate coronation ceremony, displayed hierarchy of power based around the concept of *nəgusä nägäst.* The status of *nəgus* offered prestige and marked connection to the imperial structure, but it also set limitations, signifying the end of aspirations to the highest

[36] Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis*, p.674-5,
[37] Ibid; Gebre Sillassē, *Tarikä,* p.85; Həruy Wäldä Səllase, 'Tarik', p.52.
[38] Həruy Wäldä Səllase , 'Tarik', p.52.
[39] Ibid., also Bairu Tafla, *Aṣma Giyorgis*, p.674-675.

imperial status. All this is not to say that results of those ritualised negotiations were permanent arrangements. On the contrary, fluctuating loyalties and the instability of the Ethiopian political scene – elements of historical conjunction - meant that the arrangements negotiated in these rituals often needed to be reconfirmed in similar ceremonies.

Somewhat paradoxically, the use of indigenous written sources has revealed here the extent and importance of oral and ritual forms in Ethiopian political culture. Despite their limitations, Ethiopian sources allow us to reconstruct particular incidents that enrich our knowledge of political behaviour of the period. They show that political negotiations at all levels, despite Ethiopia's long history of literacy, were highly oral, ritualised and richly symbolic. The political negotiations analysed here reveal the depth, complexity and significance of political ritual on a level that exceeds what Geertz's 'theatre-state' model made allowances for.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Shäwa, Ethiopia's Prussia.
Its Expansion, Disappearance and Partition

Alain Gascon[1]

Since the fall of the Mängestu régime in 1991 a region known as Shäwa/Shoa has not existed any longer. Situated in the centre of Ethiopia with Addis Abäba as its capital Shäwa was the most populated province in the country. This region which was peopled by Oromo and by Amhara did not fit in with the ethnofederal principles of the new Ethiopian Constitution. Paradoxically Shäwa had already disappeared from 1936 to 1938 during the Italian occupation. However because of its rapid growth Addis Abäba has restored around the national capital a metropolitan region the territory of which extends over the former province area.

Disappearance, Reappearance and Partition[2]

Shoa as well as Tegray/Tegré is one of the Ethiopian regions which have their names recorded in a number of European languages : Choa in French, Shewa/Shoa in English, Schoa in German and Scioà in Italian. These spellings come from Xoa in Portuguese which appears on early XVIIth century maps based on accounts by Portuguese travellers, soldiers and missionaries who spent some time in the region which was the core of the Christian Kingdom before it was driven back to the north bank of the Abbay river under repeated attacks by *Graññ* and constant pressure of Oromo migration. The people of Shoa found themselves almost surrounded by Oromo territory and formed a kind of outpost in a border *marche*. As early as the first half of the XIXth century the kings of Shoa took advantage of their peripheral location to establish direct regular contacts with European powers without the kings of kings' permissions. This border region although facing the threat of the Wällo and Tulama Oromo even on its plateaus became the centre of Greater Ethiopia when its king Menilek came to the throne. He benefited from the growth of his new capital, Addis Abäba, which gained national capital status and was chosen as the terminus of the Djibouti railway line. However in the reigns of Menilek, of Zäwditu and in the first reign of Haylä Sellasé (till 1936) Shoa was not the largest or the most populated province (Harär was larger and the North and South-West had a larger population). The size of a region depended on the royal favour enjoyed by its chief : the *shum-sher*[3] policy had also consequences on administrative divisions and for lack of accurate maps it is difficult to grasp the changes of territorial limits. It remains that for a long time the Europeans used the term Shoa to refer to Ethiopia just as Holland is commonly used to refer to the Netherlands.

---

1 Institut français de géopolitique-Université Paris 8, 2 rue de la Liberté 93526 Saint-Denis cedex, France.

2 Translated from French by Bernard LIGER (Paris).

3 The monarch had the right to appoint and to dismiss the chiefs without warning and used this to push aside the ambitious and to promote the faitfull.

In 1936 the Italians banned any reference to Shoa which was a distasteful reminder of their defeat at Adwa. Their victor Menilek was after all the king of this region which had brought together all the *ras* and Ethiopian provinces to form an alliance, however short-lived it was to be. Because of their mixed origins, being both Amhara and Oromo, Shoans resisted the « divide and rule » doctrine implemented by the occupying power (Gascon 1988). It had reorganized the *Impero* on a language basis : *Amara*, *Eritrea*, *Somalia* and *Galla e Sidama* (Guida, 1938). Around the capital city remained a small *Governato d'Addis Abeba*. It must be remembered that in 1945 the Allies removed Prussia from the map of Germany because it embodied German nationalism. After their reunification in 1990 the Germans opposed the fusion of the Berlin and Brandenburg *Länder* possibily because it brought back bad memories[4]. Was this due to regret or remorse ? We cannot say. In 1938 Viceroy Amedeo d'Aosta re-established a *Governato del Scioà* which was larger than the previous *Governato d'Addis Abeba*. He probabily meant to appease the Ethiopians after the bloody repression ordered by Viceroy Graziani and to encourage allegiance. There must have been other considerations such as the construction of the road network radiating from Menilek's capital.

When Ethiopia regained its independence in 1941 Shoa was re-established to its his former status and recovered its previous territorial and population expansion. The centralization policy initiated in the second reign of Haylä Sellasé was continued during the Revolution : despite the loss of its monarch the spirit of the empire remained (Tubiana, 1978). The fall of Mängestu's *Panzersozialismus* in 1991 annihilated the rise of Shoa and of Addis Abäba. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia was ratified in 1994 and confirmed the 1991 division of the national territory into state-regions (*kellel*) on an ethno-linguistic basis. It results that Shoa is no longer a capital region. Mälläs Zénawi's opponents consider this omission as evidence of the « Tegrean » administration hostile intentions towards Shoa and towards the capital city which have been the symbols of Amhara or Amhara-Oromo central power. In fact it was preceded by a division decided in 1987 by the *Shängo* (Parliament) convened by Mängestu Haylä Maryam. However Shoa still exists through its various zones which themselves are subdivisions either of the Amhara *kellel* or of the Oromia/*Oromiyaa kellel*[5]. It also lost Addis Abäba which is now the federal capital locked within a small territory reminiscent of the Brussels capital region, an enclave inside Flanders. Should we consider that this division of Shoa has weakened or strengthened the region ? Has Addis Abäba been cut off from Shoa or has its urban attraction recreated a « Shoan » metropolis within the sphere of influence of the national capital. It is remarkable that in everyday life people still refer to the former regions which have either disappeared or been reduced to zone status. The *Ethiopian Mapping Agency* keeps selling a map of Ethiopia showing the 1987 administrative limits !

Choa and federalism

The First Partition of Greater Shoa (1987)

In 1984 Shoa, Greater Shoa had an area of 85,000 km^2 and a population of over 9.5 million inhabitants, such a figure resulting from the size of the capital. The population density (68 inhabitants/km^2) was twice the national average (n° 5). On about 7 % of the

[4] In present day Germany Prussia is still used in the name of a heritage foundation for the preservation of major monuments.

[5] Oromia in English, Oromiyaa in Oromifaa.

national territory lived 23 % of the Ethiopian population. To the North it extended on the highlands as far as the Blue Nile canyon on the border with Gojjam and as far as Mount Abuyä Méda on the border of Wällo. To the East it plunged into the Afar Triangle to the borders of Harärgé which followed the Awash river as far as Awash-station and included the middle Awash valley and the lakes of the Rift depression as far as Shashämané to the South. Its southern limits ran along the Waläyta mountains and met the Omo canyon to the West on the borders of Käfa. To the North-West Shoa extended as far as Baqo on the Gibé river sharing there the Métcha highlands with Wällägga. North of Addis Abäba this Greater Shoa was peopled mainly by Amhara with an important Oromo minority on the borders of Wällo. To the West and to the South-East of the capital the Oromo were predominant and the Afar were present in the lowlands of the Awash valley. Also part of Shoa the highlands situated west of the Rift had a dense Guragé, Hadiya and Känbata population relying on *ensät* cultivation[6]. Greater Shoa and Greater Ethiopia sustained parallel growths and we shall later draw lessons from their formation.

The 1987 administrative reform was unveiled on the Shängo (Parliament) opening day ; it split Greater Shoa into four regions Addis Abäba, West-Shoa (capital : Wälliso), South-Shoa (capital : Zeway) and North-Shoa (capital : Däbrä Berhan). The latter district was later to be divided into North-Shoa and South-East Shoa (capital : Nazrét).

n° 1 : Population, Area and Density of Divided Shoa (*Shängo*, 1987)

North-Shoa (Däbrä Berhan)		
2 683 793 h	36 205 km²	74 h/km²
South-Shoa (Zeway)		
2 776 486 h	17 035 km²	163 h/km²
West-Shoa (Wälliso)		
2 248 797 h	20 724 km²	108 h/km²
Addis Abäba		
2 685 053 h	11 127 km²	241 h/km²
Shoa Total		
10 399 129 h	85 091 km²	122 h/km²

This hasty reform meant to show that the *Därg*[7] era was over and that from then on the country was stepping into stability with the proclamation of the People's Socialist Republic of Ethiopia. Already Commander in chief and Secretary General of the Party Mängestu was an obvious choice for president. This new administrative map did not survive the collapse of the comrade-president's régime but it is an important turning point (Gascon, 1988). The divisions were smaller and more numerous, the adminsitration was closer to the people probably to keep it under tighter control. The 1987 reform created for the first time a new category : the peripheral regions of Eritrea, Tegray, Afar, Dirré Dawa and Ogadén were granted an autonomous status. Their local Parliaments elected an executive endowed with a number of basically cultural prerogatives. None of the four regions resulting from the division of Greater Shoa acquired an autonomous status. Shoa as the « capital » province was probably far too central for a strong régime not to keep a tight hand on it.

6 *Ensete edule*.
7 Amharic for Provisional Military Administrative Committee (PMAC)

How Shoa Disappeared and Multiplied (1991-1994)

As soon as it seized power in Addis Abäba at the end of May 1991 the transitional coalition government headed by Mälläs Zénawi leader of the Tegray People Liberation Front (TPLF) put on its agenda as a priority the partition of the Ethiopian territory on ethno-federalist lines. It quickly started to divide the country into « homogeneous » state-regions (*kellel*) according to « ethnic » characteristics, basically on linguistic criteria. The 1994 Constitution of the Democratic Federal Republic later endorsed the division and extended the content of autonomy, going as far to recognize the right for every people, nation or nationality to secede (Gascon, 2006). The « multi-ethnic » Greater Shoa which had expanded while « multi-ethnic » Greater Ethiopia was unified and centralised did not fit in with the principles of the new Constitution. However Greater Shoa has not disappeared completely but has been relegated to an inferior administrative status. It is now confined to the status of zone, a subdivision of an homogeneous *kellel*. The *awrajja* (provinces) which were subdivisions of the former regions no longer exist and there is now no intermediate level between the zone (former region) and the *wäräda* (district). West-Shoa (capital : Ambo), North-West-Shoa (capital : Fiché) and East-Shoa (capital : Nazrét) are parts of the Oromia/*Oromiyaa kellel*. North-Shoa (capital : Däbrä Berhan) is one of the zones in the Amhara*kellel* .

n° 2 : Population, Area and Population Density of the Zones Called Shoa (CSA, 1998)

West-Shoa (*Oromiyaa*)		
2 329 699 h	21 551 km²	108 h/km²
East-Shoa (*Oromiyaa*)		
1 668 184 h	13 624 km²	122 h/km²
North-West-Shoa (*Oromiyaa*)		
1 157 978 h	11 376 km²	102 h/km²
North-Shoa (Amhara)		
1 560 916 h	16 070 km²	97 h/km²
Addis Abäba		
2 112 737 h	530 km²	3 986 h/km²
Shoa Total		
8 829 514 h	62 751 km²	141 h/km²

However the new disivision has deprived Greater Shoa from an important part of its population and territory and has created an enclave. In 1991 previous limits were ignored when former South-Shoa was split between the Oromia *kellel* and the Guragé-Hadiya-Känbata *kellel.* In 1994 the latter *kellel* eventually became a zone of the South *kellel* which was itself later reorganized when the Silté zone was created. It must be noted that the South *kellel* is not exactly an homegeneous entity (Gascon, 2006). Addis Abäba was not integrated into Oromia and it forms an urban federal enclave within narrow limits. This is an effort to prevent the capital to extend its cosmopolitan influence (i.e. : Amhara centered[8]) on *Oromiyaa.* It is inspired by a kind of Brussels approach. Before the 2005 elections those Oromo who supported the coalition government obtained that Addis Abäba/Finfinnee[9] was substituted to Nazrét/Adamaa as the capital of their region. Being unable to contain its attraction on *Oromiyaa* they hope

[8] More than 80 % of the population of Addis Abäba speak Amharic (CSA, 1998).
[9] Addis Abäba in Amhareñña, Finfinnee in Oromifaa.

to repatriate Addis Abäba to their territory. There is severe tension between the population of the federal capital and both federal and Oromo administations who belong to the same coalition. This is because the capital has massively returned opposition MPs who in the majority combat federalism which they consider to be manipulated by Mälläs and the Tegray people.

Governments in power frequently try to contain and to limit the influence of macrocephaleous capitals because they fear their political economic or cultural weights. There are numerous examples in Africa, in Ivory Coast, Egypt, Nigeria and Tanzania or outside Africa in Brazil… It is not the case in Ethiopia where there are no plans for a new capital. Since the foundation of the capital in 1887 succesive governments have shown interest in the region : it was promoted, divided, shrunk or obliterated. We shall therefore consider the hypothesis of a « Prussian » process.

« ETHIOPIA'S PRUSSIA »

« By Blood and By Fire » (1889-1935)

In the XIXth century the unfication of Ethiopia was implemented around the kingdom of Shoa under Menilek's leadership. This expansion was contemporary with the Nationalities Movement which led to the unification of Italy and to the foundation of the German Empire. Bismarck's motto : « By blood and by fire » may be applied to Ethiopia to describe the policies of the XIXth century successive *negus*. Because they were in close contact with the Slavs the Prussians headed the German reconquest east of the Elbe and Oder rivers and became the undisputed champions of German unity. Similarly, because Shoa was a frontier confronted with Oromo expansion it headed the formation of Greater Ethiopia. Like Bismarck Menilek had to defeat many competitors. In the reign of *negus* Téwodros (1855-1868) Shoa lost its high degree of autonomy which resulted from its peripheral position. The king captured the Shoan heir Menilek and held him prisoner until he escaped and was sheltered by the Tulama Oromo (1865). Once King of Shoa he had to pay allegiance to the King of Kings Yohannes who came from Tegray. Menilek found no objection to sign a controversial treaty with Italy then at war with his suzerain before turning back to defeat the Italians at the battle of Adwa (1896)[10]. From his base in the « Old Shoa »[11] highlands peopled with Amhara he had removed the threat of the Wällo Oromo in the North while pushing south towards the Awash river to subjugate the Tulama and Metcha Oromo. New Shoa refers to the territories annexed in the 1880s. This incubation period ended with the creation of Addis Abäba on the border between the two Shoa in 1887 and the coronation of Menilek in 1889. The King and his lieutenants planned the systematic construction of a road network lined with fortified towns (*kätäma*) where garrisons were stationed (Gascon, 1989). The soldiers married local women and markets prospered. Gradually some Oromo enlisted in Shoan troops, adopted Ethiopian Christianity and were granted land concessions. Chiefs joined the Royal Family through marriages. In short Menilek's reconstruction efforts could be described by an Italian monarch's statement : *L'Etiopia farà da se*[12].

[10] When he signed the Wutchalé treaty did Menilek recognize the Italian protecorate ? Once he was king of kings he denounced it using as a pretext discrepancies between and the Italian and Amharic versions.

[11] J. Tubiana.

[12] King Charles-Albert of Piémont-Sardaigne said in 1848 : *L'Italia farà da se* [*Italy will unite by* i*tself*].

Extending from Wällo and the Nile in the North, to the Awash river in the South and East and to the Omo river in the South and West Greater Shoa was a testing ground which Menilek used to develop the tools of his expansion (local recruitment, conversion of local leaders to Christianity, intermarriages, land concessions and *kätäma*) which helped him to defeat the Italians (1896) and to push the limits of his possessions beyond the highlands. Until 1935 the frontiers of Shoa remained fairly stable as far it is possible to understand from inaccurate maps (Zervos, 1935). It must be remembered that Royal favour could promote or demote individuals as well as affect the size of provinces. Nevertheless Shoa got the upper hand of the northern provinces once bordering the Red Sea but then cut off from it by Eritrea and became the gateway to the outside world when the railway reached Addis Abäba in 1917. But the Harär region could have hampered the development of Shoa as it had been served by the railway since 1902 and was the personal possession of the future Haylä Sellasé. This was not to be. This is due to the fact that the province of Shoa benefited from the presence of the political power in the capital which gave its market a nationwide attraction. Under the Italian occupation Shoa was obliterated in 1936 (n° 3) and resurrected in 1938. This shows how hesitant and inconsistent the new masters were. There is no doubt that the re-establisment of a *governato* called *Scioà* was an effort to appease the Ethiopians. However the Italians could not escape the recognition of Shoa because they had chosen Addis Abäba as the capital of *Africa Orientale Italiana* and the hub of their road network. In fact this decision was the last posthumous revenge of the victor of Adwa.

n° 3 : Population, Area and Population Density of the *Governato d'Addis Abeba* (1936)

300 000 h	7 000 km²	43 h/km²

This *Scioà* was peopled by Oromo and Amhara that the Italians tried to divide to stir up opposition between them (Gascon, 1988). It re-established the nucleus which had been at the core of the Greater Ethiopia aggregation process. Because the Italian occupation was too short we are unable to evaluate the consequences of this resurrection. We know that the resistance entrenched in Old Shoa was led by Amhara and Oromo chiefs and never showed a sign of weakness.

Greater Shoa (1942-1987)

Once reinstated to the throne in 1941 Haylä Sellasé hastened the pace of the reforms he had started before 1936. He took advantage of the waning influence of local dynasties who had suffered heavy losses because of the Italian repression or had compromised themselves with the occupant and he appointed civil servants to posts in new centralised administrative divisions. He created an Ethiopian Police Force, a Regular Army and Courts of Justice. He made use of the road network, the airfields, the telephone service and the various official buldings left by the occupant. The 12 governorate-generals (regions after 1975) were established around Shoa's central position. In 1942 new Shoa was extended to the Awash river and to Guragé country (Perham, 1948). The plantations which had been planned or started by the Italians were distributed to Haylä Sellasé's favourites and found themselves in the capital province. In the early 1960s Känbata and the Rift as far as Shashämané were annexed (Huffnagel, 1961). New land and an abundant Känbata work force were good opportunities for urban investors. The 1970 and 1984 censuses showed that Shoa which had the highest and densest population in the country attracted the peoples and the products of Ethiopia. It had the most

important education, industrial and health services (Atlas, 1988). The railway and the roads were a serious help in the unification of Old and New Shoa districts. From then on, the cities of the Christian Kingdom (Däbrä Berhan, Ankobär, Däbrä Sina), the *kätäma* founded by Menelik and his lieutenants (Holäta, Addis Aläm) and the stopping places (Ambo, Wäliso) on the highways leading to the coffee growing regions (Wällägga et Jimma) were attracted by the influence of the capital.

n° 4 : Greater Shoa and its *awarajja* (CSA, 1984)

Awrajja	Capital
Chäbo & Guragé	Wäliso
Haykoch & Butajira	Zeway
Jibat & Métcha	Ambo
Känbata & Hadiya	Hosaäna
Märhabété	Aläm Kätäma
Männagäsha	Addis Abäba
Mänz & Gishé	Mähal Méda
Sälalé	Fiché
Tägulät & Bulga	Däbrä Berhan
Yärär & Karayu	Nazrét
Yefat & Temuga	Éféson

n° 5 : Population, Area and Population Density of Greater Shoa

1970 Census		
4 923 906 h	85 500 km^2	58 h/km^2
1984 Census		
9 503 140 h	85 500 km^2	111 h/km^2

Despite the deficiencies of the different censuses and the territorial changes we can observe a constant increase in the population of Shoa. The 1984 census indicated there were almost twice as many inhabitants in the capital province than in 1970 (n° 5). The estimation ordered by the *Shängo* in 1987 showed that the expansion continued (n° 1). From 1991 onwards it is no longer possible to estimate the changes in the population numbers. As we know, former South-Shoa has been divided between the *Oromiyaa* and the Guragé-Känbata-Hadiya *kellel* without taking the former limits into consideration. Moreover the latter *kellel* was integrated in 1994 into the South *kellel* which also experienced a revised distribution of its zones when the Silté zone was created. The total area of the zones still bearing the name of Shoa is only the three fifths of the Greater Shoa area. The loss of 2 million people in the 1994 census (CSA, 1998) was generously compensated by 2004 when the three zones plus the capital had a total population 2 million above the 1987 figure. Population estimates suggest a 50 % increase between 1994 and 2004 (n° 6). This gives all the measure of the huge rural migration towards Addis Abäba which brings activity to the whole of former Shoa and to the northern zones of the South *kellel*.

n° 6 : Population, Area, Population Density and Capitals of the Zones of Former Shoa (CSA, 2004)

West-Shoa (Ambo) 3 203 622 h	21 551 km²	149 h/km²
East-Shoa (Nazrét) 2 397 498 h	13 624 km²	176 h/km²
Addis Abäba 2 886 996 h	530 km²	5 445 h/km²
North-West Shoa (Fiché) 1 582 707 h	11 376 km²	139 h/km²
North Shoa (Däbrä Berhan) 2 103 455 h	16 070 km²	131 h/km²
Shoa total 12 174 278 h	62 751 km²	194 h/km²

Shoa a Metropolitan Conurbation

Shoa was the region with the highest urban population rate in 1970 as well as in 1984. There is now a general growth of the towns in the three zones still called Shoa : the population of Ambo had a five fold increase in thirty five years, Däbrä Berhan a four fold increase. This growth is particularly strong in the Awash valley and in the Rift where many commercial farms are located (Mojjo, Nazrét, Wänji, Mätahara in the middle Awash valley and Mäti, Zeway, Nägälé et Shashämané in the Rift). The Oromo and Amhara cereal cultivators in the highlands have in their majority closely mixed for over a century and the winding limit between North-Shoa (a zone in Amhara *kellel*) and North-West-Shoa (a zone in Oromiyaa *kellel*) was particularly difficult to draw. Addis Abäba has attracted many migrants from all over Ethiopia : the Guragé are known for running the Mercato and the Somali are coming in numbers. Providing for the increasing needs of the capital, eucalyptus forests and vegetable gardens are flourishing and now extend beyond the narrow limits of the city into *Oromiyaa*. Since 2004 the authorities have leased vegetable and flower greenhouses to ethio-foreign firms on the outskirts of the city but in Oromo territory. Located one hour away from the airport they export their production to world markets with the benefit of the reduced cost of Ethiopian labour. Between Addis Abäba (2,800,000 inhabitants) in the North-West and Nazrét (208,116 inhabitants) in the South-East there is a continuous line of factories, workshops and warehouses along the main road and the railway on the way down to the Rift valley. Addis Abäba forms with Aqaqi, Qalliti, Däbrä Zäyt/Bishoftu[13] (119,393 inhabitants) and Mojjo an industrial conurbation (CSA, 2004). Local businesses often in partnership with Chinese, Indian and Japanese firms take full advantage of the good road and rail connections and of the abundant labour. The Shoan metropolitan conurbation which links the capital to Nazrét (third city in the country) enjoys a remarkable development also affecting the towns in between (35,000 inhabitants to 20,000 inhabitants), typically Däbrä Zäyt, now the ninth city in the country. If its growth rate continues the conurbation will see its population rise from 3,200,000 inhabitants in 2004 to 4,000,000 inhabitants in the near future. Its population

[13] Däbrä Zäyt in Amhareñña, Bishoftu in Oromifaa.

is now closer to a third than to a fourth of the total figure of the Shoa zones. As a comparison it must be remembered that the Tegray *kellel* Mälläs's political basis has a population slightly above 6,000,000.

After its partition into three *kellel* Shoa returns under a new shape, that of an industrial-urban region around the national capital acting now as a melting-pot of Ethiopian identity in the same way Shoa did earlier. Like Prussia it was initially a frontier zone and it has become the heart of an empire. However Prussia had acquired a strong industrial position in Rhineland which helped its political rise. With due respect to obvious differences in the case of Shoa, the aggregation of tertiary and industrial activities around the political core of Ethiopia could be compared to the annexion of Rhineland by Prussia.

Bibliography

BERHANOU ABBEBE, Évolution de la propriété foncière au Choa (Éthiopie) du règne de Ménélik à la Constitution de 1931, Bibliothèque de l'École des Langues Orientales Vivantes, Paris, Geuthner, 197I.

BERLAN Édouard, « L'eucalyptus à Addis-Abéba et au Choa », Revue de Géographie Alpine, vol. 39, 1951, pp. 571-577.

BUXTON David R., « The Shoan Plateau and its People, an Essay in Local Geography », Geographical Journal, vol. CXIX, 1949, pp. 154-172.

CENTRAL STATISTICAL AUTHORITY, Statistical Abstract 2004, Addis Ababa, December 2004.

ETHIOPIAN MAPPING AGENCY, National Atlas of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa 1988.

CONSOCIAZIONE TURISTICA ITALIANA, Carta dell'Africa Orientale Italiana, scala 1 : 1 000 000, Milano (after 1936, before 1938).

GASCON Alain, « Diviser pour régner : les vicissitudes du découpage administratif de l'Éthiopie depuis 1941, étude géographique », 10e Congrès international des études éthiopiennes (Paris, 20-26 août 1988), 12 p. et cartes.

GASCON Alain, « Les " bastides " d'Éthiopie. Les villes fortes de Menilek dans le sud de l'Éthiopie et l'urbanisation contemporaine », Tropiques. Lieux et liens, Paris, ORSTOM-CNRS-EHESS, 1989, pp. 435-444.

GASCON Alain, « Éthiopie, Érythrée, pays de la longue durée », dans Les Afriques au sud du Sahara, A. Dubresson, J.-P. Raison & J.-Y. Marchal, (éd.), Belin-Géographie Universelle Reclus, Paris-Montpellier 1994, pp. 272-285.

GASCON Alain, La Grande Éthiopie, une utopie africaine. Éthiopie ou Oromie, l'intégration des hautes terres du Sud, Paris, CNRS éditions (Espaces et milieux), 1995.

GASCON Alain, « Addis Abeba, la plus haute capitale d'Afrique », Les grandes villes d'Afrique, A.-M. Frérot (dir.), Paris, Ellipses, (Les dossiers du Bac, Géographie), 1999, pp. 165-176.

GASCON Alain, Sur les hautes terres comme au ciel, Identités et territoires en Éthiopie, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2006.

GUIDA D'ITALIA DELLA CONSOCIAZIONE TURISTICA ITALIANA, Africa Orientale Italiana, Milano 1938.

yä I.HE.DI.RI. MESERÄTA, lä beherawi Shängo mäjämäriya sebsäba yä qäräbäbä [Séance inaugurale du Parlement National], I.He.Di.Ri. yä astädärenna ras akababiwoch zägäbä, [Les régions administratives autonomes de la R.P.É. — République populaire d'Éthiopie —], Addis Abäba 1980 A. M. [1987 A. D.].
HOVARTH Ronald J., « Towns in Ethiopia », Erdkunde, Archiv für wissenschaftlische Geographie, 1968, vol. XII, n° 1, pp. 42-5I.
HOVARTH Ronald J., « Von Thünen Isolated State and the Area around Addis Abeba », Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 1969, vol. 59.
HUFFNAGEL H. P., Agriculture in Ethiopia, Rome, F. A. O., 1961.
MESFIN WOLDE MARIAM, An Atlas of Ethiopia, Asmera, HSIU, revised edition, 1971.
MESFIN WOLDE MARIAM, An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia, Berhanena Selam H. S. I. Printing Press, Addis Ababa, 1972.
OFFICE OF THE POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS COMMISSION, Ethiopia 1984. Population & Housing Census Preliminary Report, Addis Ababa, Vol. 1, n° 1, September 1984.
OFFICE OF THE POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS COMMISSION, CENTRAL STATISCAL AUTHORITY, The 1994 Population & Housing Census of Ethiopia. Results at Country Level, Volume 1 Statistial Report, Addis Ababa, June 1998.
PERHAM Margery, The Government of Ethiopia, Londres, Faber & Faber, 1948.
TUBIANA Joseph, « Éthiopie : fin de l'empire ou fin de la société impériale ? », Hérodote, n° 10, 1978, p. 8-25.
ZERVOS Adrien, L'Empire d'Éthiopie. Le Miroir de l'Éthiopie moderne 1906-1935, Alexandrie, 1935.

Tables

n° 1 : Population, Area and Density of Divided Shoa
n° 2 : Population, Area and Population Density of the Zones Called Shoa
n° 3 : Population, Area and Population Density of the *Governato d'Addis Abeba* (1936)
n° 4 : Greater Shoa and its *awarajja*
n° 5 : Population, Area and Population Density of Greater Shoa
n° 6 :

Maps :

fig. 1a :Shoa/Shäwa (before 1935)
fig. 1b : *Scioà* (after 1938)
fig. 2 : Shoa and its *awrajja* before 1987
fig. 3a : Ethiopia and Eritrea before the 1987 Administrative Reform
fig. 3b : Ethiopia and Eritrea after the 1987 Administrative Reform
fig. 4 : Population, Area, Population Density and Capitals of the Zones of Former Shoa

fig. 1a : Shoa/Shäwa (before 1935)

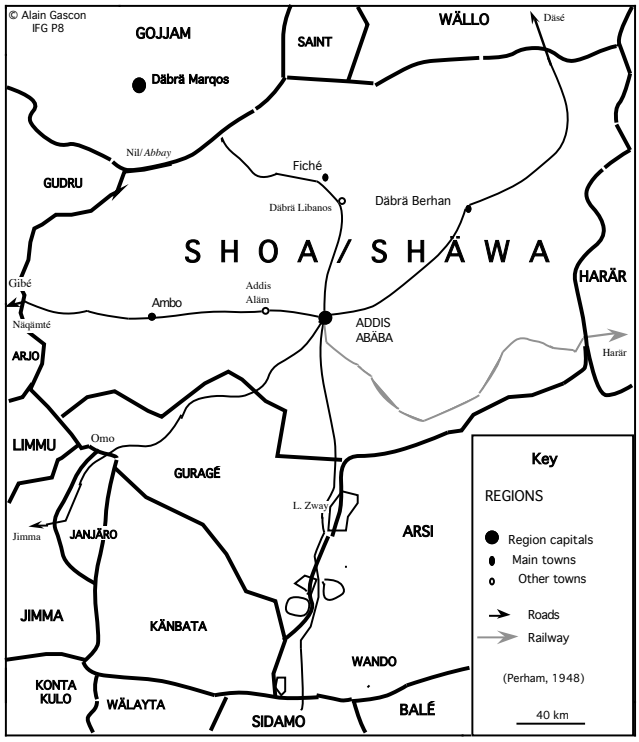


fig. 1b : Scioà (after 1938)

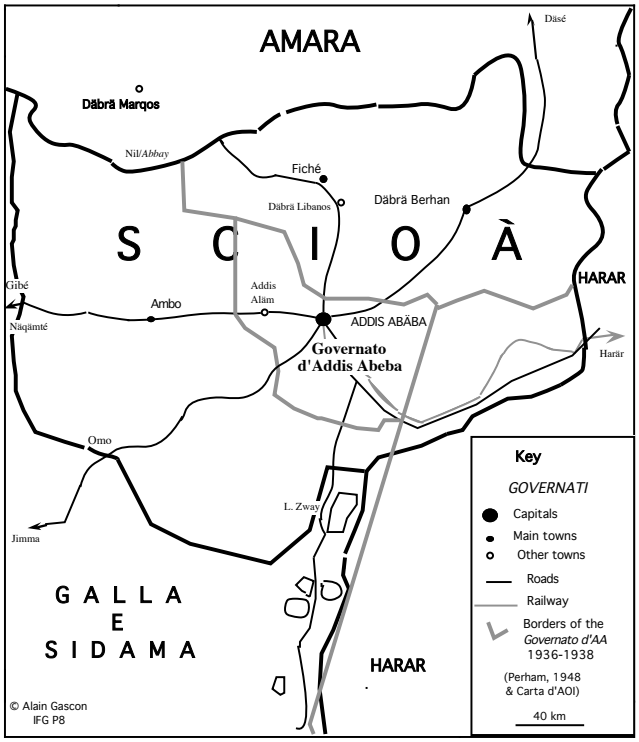


fig. 2 : Shoa and its *awrajja* before 1987

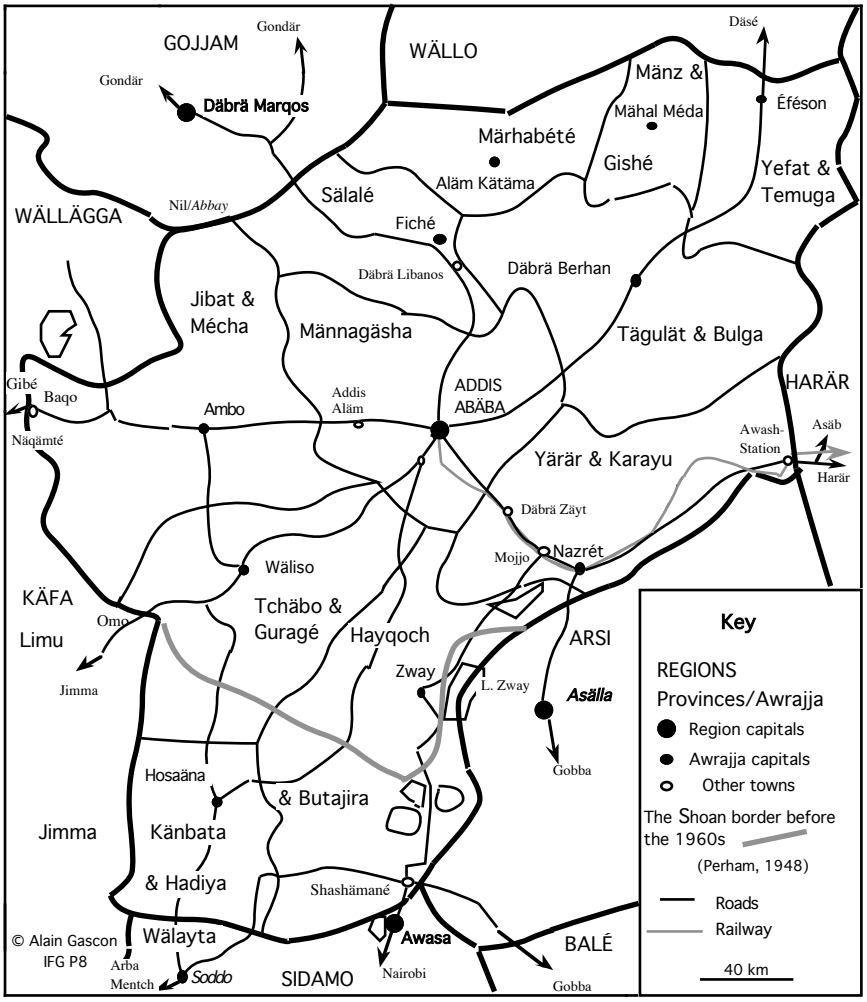
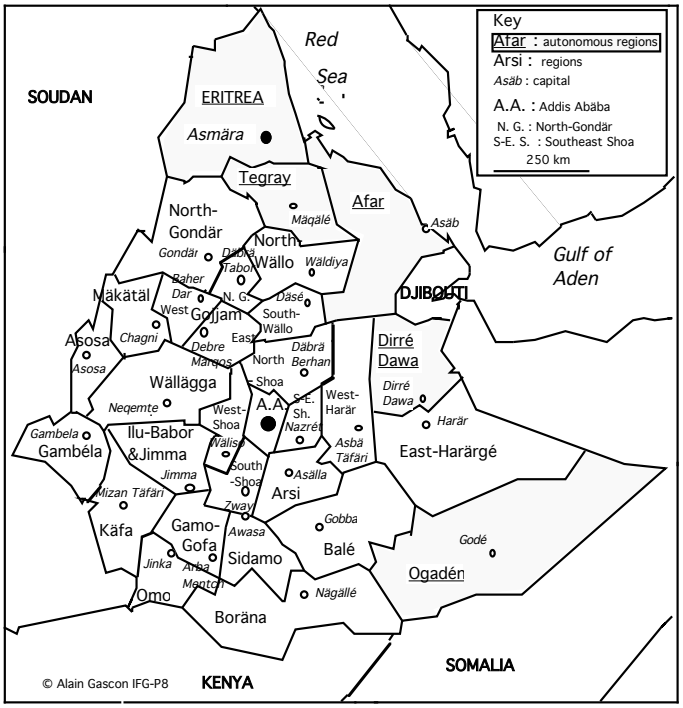


fig. 3a : Ethiopia and Eritrea before the 1987 Administrative Reform

fig. 3b : Ethiopia and Eritrea after the 1987 Administrative Reform



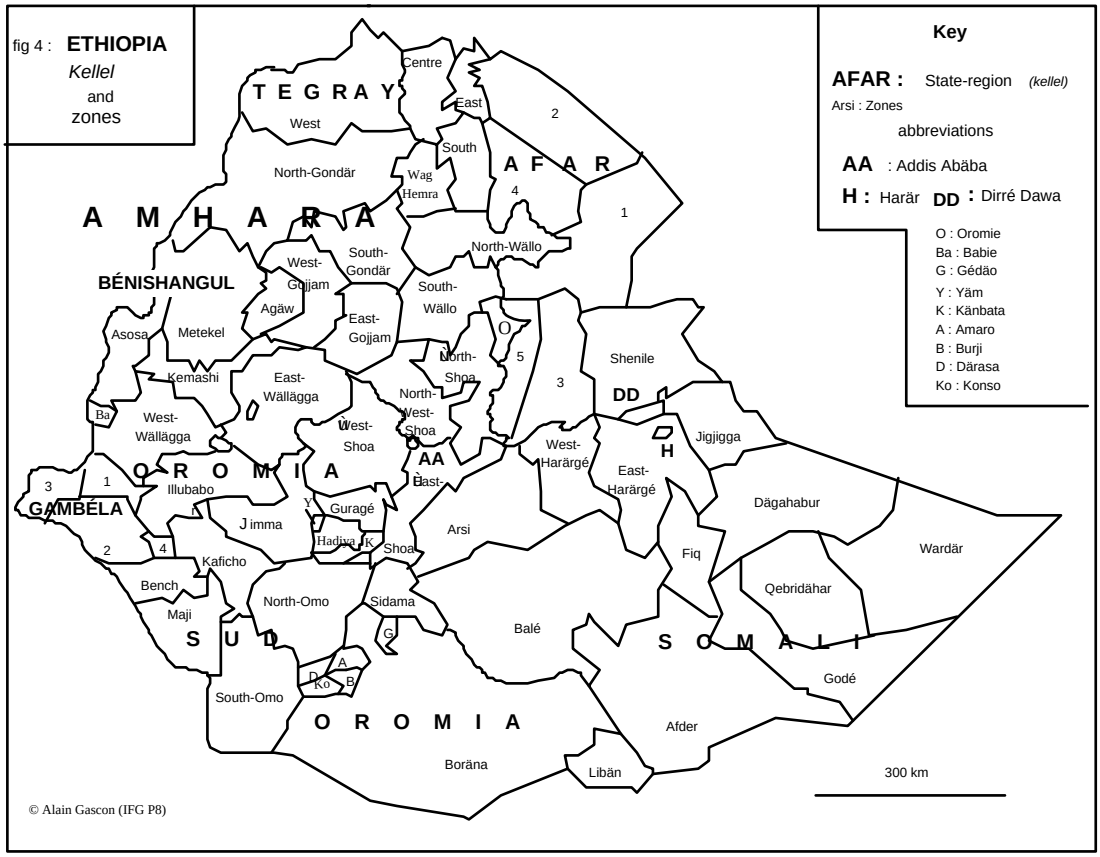


fig 4 : ETHIOPIA
Kellel
and
zones
Key
AFAR : State-region (kellel)
Arsi : Zones
abbreviations
AA : Addis Abäba
H : Harär DD : Dirré Dawa
O : Oromie
Ba : Babie
G : Gédäo
Y : Yäm
K : Känbata
A : Amaro
B : Burji
D : Därasa
Ko : Konso
T E G R A Y
Centre
East
West
South
North-Gondär
Wag Hemra
A F A R
A M H A R A
North-Wällo
West-Gojjam
South-Gondär
BÉNISHANGUL
South-Wällo
Agäw
East-Gojjam
Asosa
Metekel
Shenile
Kemashi
East-Wällägga
North-Shoa
North-West-Shoa
West-Wällägga
West-Shoa
DD
Jigjigga
West-Harärgé
East-Harärgé
O R O M I A
AA
Illubabo
GAMBÉLA
Guragé
Dägahabur
J imma
Arsi
Hadiya
Shoa
Fiq
Wardär
Kaficho
Qebridähar
Bench
Maji
North-Omo
Sidama
Balé
S U D
S O M A L I
Godé
South-Omo
O R O M I A
Afder
Boräna
Libän
300 km
© Alain Gascon (IFG P8)

In: *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009

Imprints of the Time : a Study of the hundred Ethiopian Seals of the Boucoiran collection

Serge Tornay[1] and Estelle Sohier[2]

At the XVth ICES in Hamburg Serge Tornay made a first evaluation of the Boucoiran collection of seal-imprints and organized its donation to the *Institute of Ethiopian Studies.* Since then, Serge Tornay and Estelle Sohier joined their efforts in identifying the owners of the seals, searching for their contribution to Ethiopian political, military and religious history and disclosing the numerous enigmas encoded in the legends, decorations and iconographies[3].

The existence of the Boucoiran collection of seal-imprints and its interest for Ethiopian modern History is known since the XVth ICES, 2003. In Hamburg Serge Tornay made a first appraisal of the collection and organized its donation to the *Institute of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Abeba University, then represented by its Director, Professor Baye Yimam. Participants urged Serge Tornay to prepare for the next ICES a more detailed, if possible exhaustive study of the collection. The challenge was met in the course of the last three years through an active cooperation between Serge Tornay, an anthropologist, and the historian Estelle Sohier, PhD candidate writing a dissertation on "Politics of Images and Royal Power in Ethiopia from Mənilək II until Haylä Səllasé (1880-1936)". The cooperation between the anthropologist and the historian proved particularly interesting and, we hope, productive. As a result we present to the international community of Ethiopianists a fresh publication of the Boucoiran collection. We hope that our book, *Empreintes du temps* (Addis Abeba 2007), will be welcomed by our international scholarly community.

Origin of the collection

Let us briefly recall a few landmarks on the history of the collection[4]. The owner of the collection was Maurice-Louis Boucoiran (1880-1953). He entered the diplomatic career in 1906. Chancellor of the French Legation in Addis Abeba from 1912 to 1914, he was recalled to France at the beginning of the First World War, but came back to Ethiopia in 1917 and resided there till 1925 in charge of the French Consulate. The ownership of an extensive collection of seal imprints of royal, noble, military and religious dignitaries is only one sign of the Consul's friendship and interest for the country and its inhabitants.

---

1 Professor of Anthropology at the National Museum of Natural History, Musée de l'Homme, 17, Place du Trocadéro, 75016 Paris.

2 Doctor in History, CEMAf / University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. Centre Malher, 9 rue Malher, 75004 Paris.

3 The book is entitled *Empreintes du temps : Les sceaux des dignitaires éthiopien du règne de Téwodros à la régence de Täfäri Mäkonnen,* published by the Centre français des études éthiopiennes, Addis Abeba 2007, and diffused through *secretariat-cfee@ethionet.et*

4 For a more detailed account see TORNAY (2006).

After the death of the Consul his daughter, Mrs Anita Bruneton living in Nîmes, piously kept the collection among other « souvenirs d'Éthiopie » and, in 2002, she wisely decided to donate the collection to a Museum. At that time, Serge Tornay was keeper of the African collections of the Musée de l'Homme. The transfer of the ethnographic collections to the Musée du quai Branly had entered its executive phase. There were no instructions concerning donations made after 2001. Tornay thought that the best destination for the Boucoiran collection should be the *Institute of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Abeba University. Mrs Bruneton agreed and Tornay took the opportunity of the Hamburg Conference 2003 for handing over the collection to the Director of the Institute, at the time Professor Baye Yimam. Professor Baye and many participants urged S. Tornay to write a detailed study of the collection : it was a difficult challenge which he couldn't accept without the cooperation, expertise and enthusiasm of the young historian Estelle Sohier.

Nature of the collection

In fact, the collection doesn't consist of original imprints of seals, but of pictures of such originals: homogeneous in quality (black and white printings), in size (9 X 13 cm) and workmanship, the full collection probably originates from a unique, possibly Armenian, photographic workshop. Was it a gift to the Consul, did he buy it ? We don't know. But it is almost certain that he used it as a « Who is who ? » of the Ethiopian Upper Society of the time. Of course some seal owners, like the kings of kings having preceded Mənilək II, were already dead when Boucoiran first came to Ethiopia (1912), but their descendants, families, allies and enemies were the actors of Ethiopian political and cultural life during the first two or three decades of the XXth Century.

On the number of items. I titled my Hamburg Communication « A Hundred-and-One Pictures of Ethiopian Royal and Noblemen's Seals… » How is it that we have only "one hundred" left for our book ? Pictures were numbered from 1 to 102, but number 48 was lacking and one of the imprints was reduplicated. Hence the renumbering from 1 to 100 in our 2007 publication. On the back of the pictures there are lead pencil handwritten inscriptions : the original number of the picture, a French transliteration of the name and title of the seal holder. Although the spelling is approximate, we thought those legends should be reproduced in our book as a historical element of the collection. The identification of the owner of the seal is in most cases correct, which means the captions were the work of a qualified *Ge'ez*-Amharic reader of the time.

Content : chronological order *versus* hierarchical ranking

The ordering of the imprints is chronological, at least in the beginning: Kings of kings Tewodros, Täklä Giyorgis, Kasa-Yohannəs IV (3 imprints), Mənilək II (6 imp.), followed by Täklä Haymanot, *Ras* and *Nəgus* Mika'el (2 imp.), *Abeto* and *Ləğğ* Iyasu (2 imp.). *Wäyzäro* & Queen of kings Zäwditu (2 imp.) comes before *Wäyzäro* & *Ətege* Ṭäytu (3 imp.), which demonstrates that the reigning empress had precedence over the celebrated wife of Mənilək. Immediately following Ṭäytu we find *Abunä* Ṗeṭros, *Abunä* Matewos and *Ečč̌äge* Gäbrä Səllase : this underlines the importance of the Church as support of the Ethiopian monarchy. After the seal of the Monastery of Abrəha and Aṣbəha - the only institutional example-, we find *Mämhər* Akalä Wäld, the famous erudite of the Ethiopian Church during the reigns of Tewodros, Yohannəs IV and Mənilək II. Then comes *Aläqa* and *Nəburä'əd* Gäbrä Səllase, the celebrated *Ṣahafe tə'əzaz*, created Minister of the Pen by Mənilək. Then come the numerous *Ras* of the

heroic and contemporary times : Gobäna Dači, Darge Sahlä Səllase, Mika'el, Mängaša Yohannəs, Wale (2 imp.), Mäkonnən (2 imp.), Mängaša Atikäm Bitärfu, Säbhat, Täsämma, Gugsa Wale. Hero of Adwa, the *Fitäwrari* Habtä Giyorgis Dinagde is placed before other famous *Ras* : Haylu, Däməsäw Näsibu, Səyyum Mängäša Yohannəs (2 imp., the second selected for the cover of the book) ; only then we come to *Ras* Täfäri (2 imp.), to *Ras* Kasa, grandson of *Ras* Darge, followed by the *Wag Səyyum* Gwangul and the *Afä nəgus* Näsibu and Ǝstifanos. So far for the first half of the seal collection. It is not possible to enumerate here the fifty noblemen of the second half : no less than 24 *däğğazmač*, followed by three *näggadras*, three *azzağ* three *qäññazmač*, back to two (difficult to identify) *fitäwrari*, after whom come, last but not least *wäyzäro* Mänän, and another illustrious *wäyzäro* : *Morning star, Golden sun*. The last holders, whose seals are less known, but for this reason worth scrutinizing, wear various military, civil or religious titles. The last ten seals are among the twenty-six which we didn't find in the six references against which we checked the collection[5]. It is quite clear that more research on the subject will disclose the publication of most of those twenty-six imprints. We hope that our book will stimulate efforts towards that, and other, directions.

On the manufacture of the matrixes

The question is poorly documented. We didn't see, either in Addis nor in France, a single specimen of an original seal (a matrix), the tool which is used to seal a document. With the permission of Richard Pankhurst, we reproduced (Tornay & Sohier 2007 : 15), the image of one such seal[6], made of silver and manifestly engraved. The absence of such precious artefacts in public collections might be due to the fact that seals, not only in Ethiopia, were, on the death of their owner, broken or had the surface of their matrix scored in order to prevent misuse by non authorized persons. In our book, we discuss the question when there are material indications or written informations. It seems clear that some seals were made outside of Ethiopia. One of them (Mənilək II, n° 9) is reported by the traveller Jules Borelli (1890 : 180) as « engraved in Italy ». In this case, the term « engraved » is not correct, because the imprints gives the evidence that the matrix was embossed. 77 % of the matrixes, made of silver, copper, brass or other blendings, were engraved, the inscriptions and iconographies being kept white against an inked background – the colour of the ink used being lost in our black and white imprints' pictures. The remaining 23 matrixes offer an opposite appearance, letters and designs being inked against a white background : they are embossed. It is in that category that the proportion of matrixes made outside of Ethiopia might be higher. Among the most remarkable - in design and quality - of the embossed seals we find those of *Wayzäro* and *Ətege* Ṭäytu (n° 20 & 21), *Ras* Mäkonnən (n° 35 & 36), *Ras* Säbhat (n° 38), *Ras* Səyyum Mängaša Yohannəs (n° 45), *Ras* Kasa (n° 48), the iconography of which being a real puzzle, *Däğğazmač* Gäbrä Səllase (n° 75) and others. The chapter remains open for discussion.

5 GUEBRE SELLASSE (1930 & 1932), LITTMANN (1941), PANKHURST (1972 & 1973), RUBENSON (2000), BERHANOU ABEBE (2001).

6 Published in the *Ethiopia Observer*. PANKHURST (1972).

Seal n° 21 : *Ǝtege* Ṭäytu

Seal n° 38 : *Ras* Säbat

Uses and values of seals in early XXth Century Ethiopia

The matrixes of our imprints' collection seem untraceable today[7], they might have been broken after the death of their owners. Several reasons justify such gestures. The seal was a very personal object, equivalent to the signature of its owner. Since the development of contacts between Ethiopian leaders and foreign governments, the visits of more and more travellers to the country and, later, the development of an Ethiopian modern administration, seals had several uses, in particular for signing letters send by chiefs and other authorities to their counterparts in the country or abroad ; seals were used as an evidence of the authority of the dignitary delivering a pass to a foreign traveller and of course the seal also evidenced the authenticity of the pass. They could be affixed on the top of royal proclamations, read in various places of the territory[8]. A seal could also be a sign of ownership, affixed especially to manuscripts. Then it could be used to take an oath. After the coup d'État of 1916 which led to the dismissal of Iyasu, all the chiefs were required to affix their seal on the deposition form of the *Ləğ*. Economical transactions were also concluded with the seal, which had in that case a legal, contractual value. In any case, the stamping of a seal was a mark of commitment of its owner.

Therefore the seal was a carefully kept object of value. The royal matrix was under the custody of the *Ṣähafe tə'əzaz*. Still diplomatic sources relate several state problems around the royal seal. In 1911 for example two persons close to the Court were accused to have schemed the reproduction and to have used a counterfeit seal of Mənilək made by a French craftsman in Paris. The fake seal would have been used to sign a letter allegedly addressed by Mənilək to the president of United States[9].

The seals as political discourse

Thus the seal is in many ways the official and personal representative of its owner. It bears his name but also his title(s), sometimes the name of the region or the city of

[7] Except the one of Tewodros, taken away by the English soldiers at Mäqdäla in 1868 and brought to England. PANKHURST (1973 : 189).

[8] GUEBRE SELLASSIE (1932 : 309).

[9] Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, Nouvelle série, Correspondance politique et commerciale, 1897-1918 Éthiopie (Dossier 206-1, Éthiopie 1910-1911) « Contrefaçon du sceau de l'Empereur par un Français nommé Lesieur ». Lettre de Brice au MAE de Addis-Abeba le 27 février 1911.

which he is the ruler, the origin of the holder or a motto, and always a symbol. Every element of its tiny surface was carefully chosen : we took this guess as the hypothesis that led us to scrutinize every imprint under all of its aspects, each detail possibly bearing significance. Not only the words and symbols selected by the artist, but also their setting out in the global iconography, define the identity of the holder, but possibly reveal his rank, his faith, an ideology or a simple belief, a wish or a strong political claim.

The chronicle of the Queen of the kings Zäwditu is suggesting the power assigned to the seal. The second chapter enumerates the measures taken by Mənilək II, father of the Queen, for the progress of his country. One of the points concerns the royal seal :

> He made a seal saying : "the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Mənilək II, Emperor of Ethiopia." And it has a lion on it, and the lion has an Ethiopian flag in its right hand, and on top it has the sign of the cross. It also wears a crown. It is baring its teeth and has staring eyes-it is a majestic and fearsome sign for the enemy. It bares its teeth to bite its enemy and its eyes are formed staring at the enemy. Its form is known to the world's governments. And it will be unforgettable and unchanged for ever.[10]

Several ideas are developed in this account. The imprint of the royal seal was known, more precisely it had to be to be known and was significant : one of its aim was to prevent possible enemies to challenge the king's strength and power. The imprint also claims for the immutability of the lion of Judah, designed to be handed down to posterity. It had to evidence and guarantee the everlasting Ethiopian kingship. But since political symbols are naturally changing, there are created or modified depending on the context and the intentions of the rulers.

One of the great interests of the Boucoiran collection is to display the steps of the creation of the symbol of the lion of Judah and its appropriation by the Ethiopian kingship through the last quarter of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth centuries. The history and meanings of the symbol have been analysed by Sven Rubenson (1965) in an important paper of the *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*. The first seal which bears the design of a lion along with the *Ge'ez* motto "*moha anbäsa zä'əmənägädä yəhuda"* is a seal of Menilek II created abroad. The model of it seems to have been arms conceived in Europe for Ethiopia during the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. It refers to the lion of Judah of the *Apocalypse* (V : 5) who designates the Christ and is echoing two traditions: the lion as a widespread symbol of power and the Ethiopian royal ideology according to which the King of kings is a cousin of the Christ, both being the descendants and heirs of King David, chief of the tribe of Judah.

[10] GEBRE-IGZIABIHER ELYAS (1994 : 308).

Seal n° 1 : Tewodros

Seal n° 4 : Yohannes IV

King Tewodros was the first to select the leonine symbol for his seal which after his death became the model for the seals of all following Kings of kings and even for the candidates to sovereignty. But the reference to the tribe of Judah wasn't yet there, as for example in the seals of Yohannəs IV which are adorned with lions. What was the meaning of those lions? Were they a mere symbol of strength? In one of his chronicles, King Yohannəs IV is explicitly compared to a lion cub[11]. Now the lion cub is used to describe Judah (*Genesis* XCIX : 8-9), first chief of the tribe which bears his name. The seals of Yohannəs should implicitly refer to the glorious biblical character since the ruler claims to be "King of Zion", the hill of Jerusalem which also designates Ethiopia here. So while Yohannəs's seal implicitly refers to the first chief of the tribe of Judah, Mənilək's seal explicitly refers to Judah, but calls to mind the last and supreme king of the Bible, the Christ. Thus Mənilək is claiming both to succeed to the royal power of Yohannəs but at the same time he is asserting a more absolute sovereignty.

Seal n°6 : Kings of kings Mənilək II

The collection demonstrates that the seals are connected, somehow in interaction to one to another. The symbols are, as the conquest of power itself, objects of competition, as we can see with the lion, used successively by *Nəgusä nägäst* Tewodros, Täklä

[11] BAIRU TAFLA (ed.) (1977 : 61).

Giyorgis, Mənilək, *Nəgus* Täklä Haymanot, *Nəgus* Mika'el, *Ləǧ* Iyasu, Queen of kings Zäwditu, in each instance with light but perceptible changes of significance, answering to the various political situations.

The seal of *Nəgus* Täklä Haymanot is a copy of one seal of Mənilək II, but its imprint is white on black (engraved matrix) instead of black on white. The legend of the seal acknowledges not only the higher rank and leadership of Mənilək but his lordship and suzerainty; the power of Täklä Haymanot depends entirely on the King of kings, of whom he is a vassal.

Seal n° 12 : *Negus* Täklä Haymanot

The seals which *Ras* Mika'el ordered after his elevation to the rank of *nəgus* also bear lions as claims to royal power. Nevertheless his seals, with their *Ge'ez* and Arabic legends, also claim for the specificity of his power, grounded both in Christian faith and Muslim origins.

We could deepen the theme of the royal seals, but time and place are missing. Those examples are the expression of a newly centralised political power that is searching for the efficiency of its symbols and definitions, in a context of strong competition for supreme power. The selection and uses of the lion and then of the lion of Judah was necessary insofar as the royal power was not transmitted hereditary. So every new king had to enter his office by fitting with a model, traditionally the model of biblical kings such as David or Judah, but not without adding to that ideological model the assertion of his own specificity.

Swords, angels, eyes and flowers. What are the meanings of the seals?

During the first period covered by our collection – that is the second half of the XIXth century- only kings and dignitaries of high rank allowed themselves to have seals. Later their use became more common in Ethiopian society, till their adoption by lower rank chiefs such as *azzaǧ* or *qäññazmač*. Thus the seals got a variety of shapes, sizes, symbols. They display human figures, eyes, hands, feet, animals such as lions of course but also leopards, elephants, birds or snakes, all kind of weapons, religious figures such as angels, stars, several kinds of crosses, chalices, hearts or flowers…Many seals are of course connected to religious and political meanings, but bear also sometimes propitiatory symbols used in other kinds of Ethiopian images. They carry sometimes a simple message, like in the case of a single cross as iconography, but they can also refer to a whole story, to a myth or to express or even to be part of a political struggle of the time. Stressing the point that each image transmits a message from its owner and about

himself, we tried, with more or less ease, and of course more or less success, to analyze and understand their various meanings. The seals displayed in the book give an idea of the many themes and problems faced, but also the wealth of information met throughout the study of the collection.

Conclusion

The Boucoiran collection offers a well dated (made before 1925) and homogeneous collection of seal imprints of the Ethiopian « Gotha » at the turn of the XIXth and the beginning of the XXth Centuries. Our work is an exercise in sigillography. We did our best for using the appropriate terminology which we took and adapted from a professional publication[12]. In the hundred accounts dedicated to the individual imprints we checked for the accuracy or made guesses about the identity of the holders and their biographies; we deciphered the inscriptions, transcribed, transliterated and translated them carefully[13]; we made an iconographic analysis of each imprint, searching for its political, religious and other esthetico-cultural sources and meanings; finally we tried to interpret the symbolic bearing and significance of the iconographies in connexion with the inscriptions and the personalities of the seals' holders. Our hypothesis is that, in the context of the political, cultural and economic modernization of Ethiopia, the use of seals by sovereigns and other prominent or less prominent dignitaries was a political act in itself, inside of the country as well as for its international relations. The seals and their iconographies, we believe, are useful sources for deepening our understanding of the offices and functions of the holders, their claims to political, military, legal, religious or even in some cases economic power, and last but not least for exploring the aesthetic and ludic expressions of personalities. The seals do not pertain to the sole Political and Religious History, they deserve recognition in Art History. We hope that our work will stimulate further research on such, only apparently humble, documents.

[12] *Vocabulaire international de la sigillographie* (1990).

[13] But of course we have no claim to perfection : we welcome remarks and corrections from the distinguished audience of the Conference and from our future readers.

References

Bairu Tafla (ed.). 1977. *A Chronicle of Emperor Yohannes IV (1872-89*). Wiesbaden: F. Steiner.

Berhanou Abebe. 2001. « Le Coup d'État du 26 septembre 1916 ou le dénouement d'une décennie de crise », *Annales d'Ethiopie*, Vol. 17, pp. 309-359.

Borelli, Jules. 1890. *Éthiopie méridionale. Journal de mon voyage aux pays Amhara, Oromo, et Sidama (septembre 1885 à novembre 1888).* Paris : ancienne maison Quantin, librairies imprimeries réunies.

Conseil international des archives et le Comité de sigillographie (ed.). 1990. *Vocabulaire international de la sigillographie,* Rome : Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali.

Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas. 1994. *Prowess, Piety and Politics, The Chronicle of Abeto Iyasu and empress Zewditu of Ethiopia. (1909-1930),* Köln : Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

Guebre Sellassie. 1930 & 1932. *Chronique du règne de Ménélik II, roi des rois d'Ethiopie.* Paris : Gembloux, J. Duculot & Maisonneuve.

Littmann, Enno. 1941. « Sigilli abissini », *Rassegna di studi etiopici*, Vol. 1, pp. 217-225.

Pankhurst, Richard. 1972. « Ethiopian Noblesmen's Seals of the late Nineteeth and early Twentieth Centuries : a First Selection », *Ethiopia Observer*, Vol. 15(3), pp. 142-153.

Pankhurst, Richard. 1973. « Letter Writing and the use of Royal and Imperial Seals in Ethiopia prior to the Twentieth Century », *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 11 (1), pp. 179-207.

Rubenson, Sven. 1965. "The Lion of Judah. Christian Symbol and/or Imperial title", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 3 (2), pp. 75-85.

Rubenson, Sven (ed.). 2000. *Internal Rivalries and Foreign Threats (1869-1879),* Addis Ababa University Press / Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick N. J. *Acta Aethiopica* vol. III.

Smidt, G. C. Wolbert, 2008. "The coronation of *negus* Mika'el, king of Wollo and Tigray, in May 1914: New findings", *Annales d'Éthiopie*, in press.

Sohier, Estelle. 2007. « La création des symboles nationaux éthiopiens et la conquête coloniale sous le règne du roi des rois Menilek II (1889-1913), *Hypothèses 2006*, pp. 55-65.

Tornay, Serge. 2006. « A Hundred-and-One Pictures of Ethiopian Royal and Noblemen's Seals Collected by the French Consul Boucoiran: A New Document in Sigillography from the Time of Tewodros to the 1920s », in *Proceedings of the XVth Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 496-506.

Tornay, Serge & Sohier, Estelle. 2007. *Empreintes du temps. Les sceaux des dignitaires éthiopiens du règne de Téwodros à la régence de Täfäri Mäkonnen.* Addis-Abeba : Centre Français des Études Éthiopiennes & Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Diffusion : secretariat-cfee@ethionet.et

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

The Hall Family and Ethiopia: A Century of Involvement

Toby Berger Holtz[1]

Moritz Hall cast cannon at the Gaffat foundry established by Emperor Tewodros II. Married to Wälättä Iyäsus (Katarina), née Zander, they left Ethiopia with Napier in 1868, and settled in Jaffa. Katarina Hall returned to Ethiopia c. 1902, joined by her sons Jakob Gotlieb, Friedrich Salomon, and David, and daughter Christina. The Halls were closely associated with the royal court, most notably David, who had a long career as a diplomat and businessman during Haile Selassie's reign.

The Hall family's association with Ethiopia began early in the second half of the nineteenth century and continued through the second half of the twentieth century. Moritz Hall, the progenitor of the family, left the country in 1868. However, the family's connections with Ethiopia were maintained. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Mrs. Hall and several of her sons returned, followed by other members of the family. They made significant contributions to economic, cultural, and political affairs under several monarchs.

Moritz Hall was born in the vicinity of Cracow on 14 March 1838, the son of Johann Jakob Salomon Hall and his wife, Sofia Rebeka Babette Hall, née Kunze. Very little is known of his early life. The first records of Moritz Hall's presence in Ethiopia describe him as a "Pole," [2] alluding to his identification with his birthplace, Cracow, a city traditionally viewed as Polish, but at that time a protectorate of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The area surrounding Cracow became a part of Russian Poland, and the inhabitants of the area were subject to conscription into the Czar's army. The same early records of Moritz Hall in Ethiopia also mention his service in the Russian army and suggest that he may have been a deserter. Concerning Hall's knowledge of metal casting, one source claims that he learned the craft early in life, perhaps in the city of Warsaw, while another attributes his knowledge of arms manufacture to skills acquired during his putative army service.[3]

Very little else is known about Moritz Hall's early life. It is to be assumed that he received a traditional education. From "Poland," it seems that Moritz Hall came to Ethiopia on his own, as an adventurer.[4] Once in Ethiopia, Hall was associated with the British and German missionary societies,[5] including those that sought to convert the

[1] Department of Chemistry, Barnard College, 3009 Broadway, New York, NY 10027, USA. <tholtz@barnard.edu>

[2] Holtz and Holtz, 1992: 52; Holtz and Holtz, 2003: 12, 50, n. 27.

[3] Dufton, 1867: 85; Waldmeier, 1869: 13; Waldmeier, 1925: 36; Crummey, 1972: 132.

[4] Markham, 1869: 75; Rubenson, 1976:179.

[5] Some accounts indicate that the missionaries may have been responsible for Moritz Hall's arrival in Ethiopia, by appointing him as a servant to a missionary, or by placing him as an aide to an officer who traveled to Ethiopia (perhaps Lieutenant John Bell, who went to Ethiopia around 1850, or Lieutenant, later Captain, Charles Speedy, who went to Ethiopia in 1861). However, no contemporaneous records name Hall as serving in any of these positions. See *Report*, 1860:22; and

"Falasha" Jews to Christianity. In the early 1860's, he joined the settlement of the Swiss German Chrischona Brethren missionaries living in a colony at Gaffat, east of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile, who had come to Ethiopia as a result of the efforts of Bishop Samuel Gobat. The Chrischona Brethren were known as "artisan missionaries" because of their plan to live and work alongside the residents and to teach crafts and skills, thereby attracting them to Christianity. Other European missionaries and lay settlers in Ethiopia were attracted to the Gaffat colony, where together they endured many hardships, due to the remote location of the station, their poverty and lack of funding, and their difficulties in communicating with the local population, but they were determined to continue their work and make a life for themselves, regardless of the minimal success of their missionary activities.[6]

While at Gaffat, Moritz Hall married the young maiden Wälättä Iyäsus (1850-1932), also called Katarina (or Katherine), on 17 May 1863. At the time of their marriage, she was fourteen years old. Her mother was Assete Worq Maqado, a member of the Ethiopian aristocracy, the first Ethiopian wife of the German Christoph Eduard Zander (1813-1868),[7] the artist and illustrator for the German naturalist Dr. Wilhelm Schimper. Katarina's later use of "Howsepian" as a maiden name may indicate that she had at some point lived with or been raised by an Ethio-Armenian family, who may have been related to her mother.[8] The first child of Moritz and Katarina Hall, a son named Jakob Gottlieb, was born in 1866.

The residents at the Gaffat settlement initially benefited from the benign and welcoming attitude of the Emperor Tewodros (1818?-1868), who sought to modernize his nation as he attempted to consolidate his rule over Ethiopia. He encouraged the efforts of missionaries and foreigners, because he felt would they would enlighten his subjects and improve their lives. However, the emperor's emotional stability was severely affected first by the death of his wife Tewabetch in 1858 and further undermined by the deaths of his English advisers and friends, Walter Plowden, killed by brigands in 1860, and John Bell, at the hands of rebels against the emperor, in 1861. As part of his attempts to modernize his army, he ordered the members of the Gaffat colony to manufacture modern weapons, including cannon. Despite their protests that they had no knowledge of weapons production, the Emperor insisted. The artisans at Gaffat erected a foundry for the production of arms. It was at this juncture that Moritz Hall's experience as a caster of brass (or iron) stood him in good stead. At Gaffat, the members of the colony constructed not only the molds to cast cannon, but also the mill dam and waterwheel for the bellows used in the smelter and ovens of the forge. After several unsuccessful attempts in 1862-1863, Moritz Hall and his artisan-missionary co-workers manufactured several cannon and other pieces of ordnance, to the emperor's satisfaction.[9] Most notable among these was the mighty cannon known as "Sebastopol,"[10] still in existence today.[11] The armaments foundry at Gaffat may be viewed as the beginning of modern industrialization in Ethiopia.

Pankhurst, 1983:429-430.

6 Strebel, 2001: passim.

7 On Zander, see Gräber, 2005: 23, and McEwan, et al., 2006: 27.

8 See Smidt, 2005a: 32-33.

9 He said "it was the happiest day of my life." See Rassam, 1869: II, 304-306.

10 Concerning the name of the cannon, see Pankhurst, 1971: 67.

11 The remains of the Sebastopol cannon are located at Mäqdäla. See photo in McEwan et al., 2006: 17. According to Pankhurst, 1977: 255, the settlement and foundry at Gaffat were destroyed in April of 1867. The European workers and their families were relocated at Debra Tabor, where the arms foundry was rebuilt and where Sebastopol was cast on 21 September 1867.

Despite his satisfaction with the successful casting of the cannon, Tewodros began to drink in excess and became vindictive and deranged. He now imprisoned all the English missionaries, ostensibly because he felt that a letter he had sent to Queen Victoria had been ignored, and subsequently, in 1867, the emperor held the other foreign worker missionaries and their associates captive, including Moritz Hall and his family. Eventually, all the captives were taken to the fortress of Mäqdäla, southeast of Gaffat. According to a letter published in a newspaper of the Basel Chrischona Mission,[12] it was at this time, during the captivity at Mäqdäla, that Moritz Hall, born to Jewish parents, converted to Christianity.

On 13 April, Easter Monday, 1868, all the captives at Mäqdäla were freed by the British military expedition led by General (later Lord) Robert Napier, sent to rescue the British prisoners. During the battle and the storming of the fortress, the Emperor Tewodros took his own life. On the day of their liberation, Moritz and Katarina Hall's second child was born, Magdalena, a daughter named for the battle at Mäqdäla.[13] The Hall family and the other liberated foreigners left Ethiopia along with the British forces.

The Hall family was offered a passage to India with the returning British troops of the Indian army, but they appear to have traveled to Syria, perhaps to Baghdad. By 1874, the Halls settled in Jaffa, in the neighborhood known as the "German Colony," where many inhabitants were members of the Temple Society, an evangelical German Protestant denomination with settlements in Palestine as part of its messianic ideals. Moritz Hall continued his connections with the missionaries of the London Jews Society and resided in their Jaffa mission house. From 1883 to 1885, Moritz Hall served as the manager of the missionary-sponsored Artouf colony in the hills west of Jerusalem, for potential converts to Christianity, but after his dismissal from this post, Moritz Hall returned to the Jaffa German Colony, where he was one of the elders of the community. Moritz Hall supported his family as a lumber merchant and as the proprietor of a hotel managed by his sons, known as the Hôtel du Parc because it adjoined the "Baron's garden," named for the Russian Baron Platon von Ustinov (1858-1917), who married Magdalena Hall in 1888.[14] This garden, with its exotic trees and animals, was a popular gathering place for members of the German Colony and other Europeans visiting Jaffa or living there. The Hôtel du Parc was highly recommended by contemporary guidebooks and was a favorite with tourists. Kaiser Wilhelm and his wife, Augusta Victoria, stayed there when they visited Jaffa in 1898. Moritz Hall and his family came under the protection of the German Consulate in Jaffa, which he served as an Honorary Dragoman and interpreter.[15] He never returned to Ethiopia. His health seems to have deteriorated, and there are references to a penchant for strong drink. He died on 27 January 1914, after a stroke, and was buried in the Templar cemetery in Jaffa.[16]

---

[12] *Christlicher Volksbote*, 9 January 1867 (no. 2): 11.

[13] Some accounts state she was born during the battle. See Holtz and Holtz, 1992: 57.

[14] Their oldest son Jona ("Klop") was the father of Sir Peter Ustinov (1921-2004); Moritz Hall was thus the great-grandfather of the famous British actor and director. See Holtz and Holtz, 1992: 62; Gräber, 1999: 173-174; Holtz, 2005: 980.

[15] The Hebrew author Mordecai Ben-Hillel HaCohen (1928: Vol. 4, 62), Hall's neighbor and friend in Jaffa, mentions Hall's Ethiopian connections and his status as an elder of the Jaffa German colony. It was at this time also that Moritz Hall appears to have been acquainted with the Nobel Laureate S.Y. Agnon, who included an anonymous character identified as Hall in his Hebrew historical novel, *T'mol Shilshom* (*Gestern, Vorgestern* and *Only Yesterday*). See Holtz and Holtz, 1992: 49.

[16] In 1952, his remains were transferred to the Jerusalem Templar Cemetery when the Jaffa Templar Cemetery was moved.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Halls had thirteen children:

Jakob Gottlieb Hall	1866-1919*
Magdalena Hall Ustinov	1868-1945*
Daniel Hall	1870-1943
Pauline Hall	1872-1874
Christina Hall	1874-1964*
David Hall	1876-1971*
Friedrich Salomon Hall	1879-1964*
Joseph Hall	1882-1964
Augusta Hall	1884-1936*
Vera Hall Schumacher	1886-1983*
Immanuel Hall	1888-1917
Katia Hall Bach	1891-1978
Olga Hall	1895-1911

(* indicates personal association with Ethiopia)

Without her husband, Katarina Hall returned to Ethiopia, accompanied by her son Jakob, around 1902.[17] Her sons Friedrich Salomon and David later joined them in Addis Ababa. She became a Lady-in-Waiting and was in charge of the Royal Pages at the court of the Emperor Menilek (1844?-1913). In time, Katarina Hall became a close confidante of his wife, the Empress Taytu (1856-1918), so close that she was viewed as wielding considerable, if not undue, influence at the court, particularly because of her involvement in the education of Lij Yasu.[18] Katarina Hall died on 15 August 1932 in Addis Ababa, where she is buried.

Jakob Gottlieb Hall returned to Ethiopia, the land of his birth, with his mother, after having lived in Jaffa and briefly in Haifa, and also in the United States. In Ethiopia, he was a businessman and an importer of machinery for the royal household. Besides his machine shop at the royal palace, he directed a school there for the sons of the aristocracy. Later on, he obtained concessions for exploring and mining minerals in Ethiopia. The Emperor Menilek appointed him to accompany Ethiopian diplomatic and commercial missions to Europe.[19]

Friedrich Salomon Hall returned to Ethiopia in 1906, as part of his older brother Jakob's program to bring German settlers and investors to Ethiopia, and to promote the development of industry and the country's natural resources. Friedrich Salomon Hall founded and managed the Imperial Hotel, the first modern hotel in Addis Ababa. Many European travelers stayed in this hotel and described the magnificent views from its windows, as well as the barely adequate amenities in this so-called luxury hotel. During World War I, Friedrich Salomon Hall became a member of the secret mission led by the German Professor Leo Frobenius. The goal of the mission was to provide communication and funds for the German ambassador in Addis Ababa from the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin. Friedrich Salomon Hall disguised himself as an Arab guide of the mission, but the members of the mission were unmasked by the Italians in Eritrea, before they ever reached Ethiopia. According to one version of the story, Friedrich Hall tripped and exclaimed a decidedly European, non-Arab "Hoppla!," and at the same time

[17] Katerina's decision to return to Ethiopia may have been prompted by her contact with an Ethiopian delegate who traveled to Jerusalem in 1902 to the resolve the status of the Ethiopian churches there. See Smidt, 2005b: 26.

[18] Rosenfeld, 1976: 221, 226; Smidt, 2005a: 33-34, 41; Smidt, 2005b: 26.

[19] Bairu Tafla, 1981: 102-104; Bairu Tafla, 1994: 115-116; Smidt, 2005b:26.

was observed to have corns on his toes from wearing shoes, which would not be seen on a traditionally sandal-shod Arab.[20] The members of the mission were imprisoned first in Eritrea, and then on an Italian island in the Mediterranean Sea, for a total of four years, until the end of the war. Friedrich Salomon Hall later settled in Dire Dawa, where he was a coffee trader, and was married to an Englishwoman.

David Hall was born in Jaffa but settled in Ethiopia, joining his mother and brothers there after World War I. In 1922, he founded the import-export firm Hall & Co., which represented several foreign firms in Ethiopia, including Ford, Opel, Agfa, and ICA. He became active in the cattle trade. He obtained a brewery concession and founded the Saint George Brewery, later the Addis Brewery, still in existence today. Visitors and travelers in Ethiopia during this period mention David Hall as the local agent who arranged for supplies, guides and servants, pack animals, and other necessities for their trips and expeditions.[21]

In addition to his business activities, David Hall served as director of government purchasing and as an adviser to the Ethiopian Foreign Ministry, and later as a Counsellor of State to the Emperor Haile Sellasie (1892-1974). In 1930, at the time of the celebrations of Haile Sellasie's coronation, David Hall was the official press officer and the government's liaison with foreign correspondents and dignitaries. Soon after, in 1935, David Hall went to Germany on a secret mission to buy arms for use against the Italian invaders of Ethiopia.[22] During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, David Hall lived in Palestine from 1936-1941, and as a diplomat in the service of the exiled Emperor, he traveled to Europe and to England to further the Ethiopian cause.[23]

After the liberation, David Hall returned to Ethiopia and lived in Addis Ababa. He resumed his business activities with a view towards public service. He traveled to Europe as a representative of the Ethiopian government, to interest displaced persons in settling in Ethiopia. His concessions put him in charge of road building in southern Ethiopia. He founded the Ethiopian Cooperatives and Mutual Assistance Fund, which was successful in providing employment and assistance. These cooperatives included a medical insurance fund with its own hospital and an experimental farm and agricultural school administered by Seventh Day Adventist missionaries, built on his land holdings in the countryside outside Addis Ababa, to educate and train street children from Addis Ababa as productive agricultural workers. As administrator of enemy (Italian) property, he had a pasta factory brought to Ethiopia, in an effort to provide much needed food. He continued his government service well into the 1950's, serving as an adviser to the emperor and accompanying him on state visits. In his later years, he made his home in Addis Ababa, where he was highly respected for his wide first-hand knowledge of Ethiopia and Ethiopian affairs. Foreign visitors and researchers frequently consulted him for assistance and guidance with their projects. He paid for the construction of the synagogue in Addis Ababa. He was honored by the Emperor with Ethiopia's second highest order, and upon his death in 1971, was given a funeral in the Trinity cathedral and was buried in a place of honor in its cemetery.[24]

Christina Hall went to Ethiopia as a teacher and then became a governess at the Royal Palace. She lived in Cyprus during the Italian occupation of Ethiopia. Vera Hall

[20] Smidt, 2005a: 44; Smidt, 2005b: 70.
[21] See, for example, Herzbruch, 1925: passim; and Fuertes and Osgood, 1936: 12, 17, 27, 30.
[22] Funke, 1970: passim; Spencer, 1984: 21.
[23] Pankhurst, 2003: 172, 219.
[24] *Ethiopian Herald*, 7 March 1971: 1, 3.

married the German physician and missionary Dr. Alfred Schumacher, and served with him for many years in Lebanon. She later joined her family members in Ethiopia, where she became a governess at the court of the governor of Eritrea.[25] Augusta Hall, another sister, was also in Ethiopia at this time. When the members of the Ethiopian royal family fled to Jerusalem at the time of the Italian occupation of Ethiopia in 1936, the Empress Menen and her daughter, Princess Tsehay, were interviewed by the local press. The reporter commented on the Princess' fluency in English, French, and German. She explained that as a child, her mother's German lady of honor took care of her, perhaps one of the Hall sisters.[26]

Although Magdalena Hall Ustinov did not return to Ethiopia, the land of her birth, she was instrumental in augmenting the Ethiopian presence in Jerusalem. The Empress Taytu had convinced her adviser, Katarina Hall, to persuade her son-in-law, Baron von Ustinov, to acquire property in Jerusalem near the Ethiopian Church. The land was purchased in 1910, and construction of a large building began. Baron von Ustinov and his family left Palestine for Russia in 1913, where Baron von Ustinov died in 1917. His widow Magdalena, who went to live in England and later in Canada, inherited the land in Jerusalem and the partially completed building on it. During a trip to Jerusalem in 1924, she sold the property to the Empress Zauditu while the Empress was also visiting there. The Empress continued the construction on Ustinov's foundations. The building became the Ethiopian Consulate and is still in existence. It is an enduring reminder of the activities of the Hall family in both Ethiopia and in Jerusalem.[27]

Moritz Hall started his family's relationship with Ethiopia when he came there as an adventurer. His ties to the country were strengthened by his marriage to Katarina. The subsequent records of the activities of the Halls and of their children reflect the family's century-long involvement in Ethiopia's history and underscore their varied contributions to many facets of Ethiopian life.

[25] Smidt, 2005a: 45, who notes that members of the royal family called her "Tante Vera."
[26] Hoffman, 1936: 5.
[27] Pedersen, 1983: 79; Smidt, 2005a: 42.

Figure 1. The Hall family in Jaffa, in the garden of the residence of Baron von Ustinov, 1902, at the time of the wedding of Daniel Hall. From left to right, upper row: Joseph, Friedrich Salomon, Jakob Gottlieb, David, Christina, Augusta and Vera Hall. Middle row: Mrs. Klimscher, Daniel Hall, Natalie Klimscher née Michalski, Moritz Hall, Wälättä Iyäsus (Katarina), Magdalena von Ustinov née Hall (holding Tabitha von Usintinov), her husband Baron Platon von Ustinov. Bottom row: Olga Hall, Katia Hall (later Bertsch), Immanuel Hall, Jona ("Klop") von Ustinov, Peter ("Petja") von Ustinov. (Photo courtesy of Otto Bertsch)

References

Bairu Tafla, 1981. Ethiopia and Germany: Cultural, Political and Economic Relations, 1871-1936 (= Äthiopistische Forschungen, Vol. 5). Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH.

—— 1994. Ethiopia and Austria: A History of their Relations (= Äthiopistische Forschungen, Vol. 35). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Christlicher Volksbote aus Basel. 9 January 1867 (no. 2). p. 11.

Crummey, Donald. 1972. Priests and Politicians: Protestant and Catholic Missions in Orthodox Ethiopia, 1830-1868. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Dufton, Henry. 1867. Narrative of a Journey through Abyssinia: 1862-3. London: Chapman and Hall.

Ethiopian Herald. 7 March 1971. "Emperor Attends Funeral Rites for Veteran Adviser." pp. 1, 3.

Fuertes, Louis Agassiz and Wilfred Hudson Osgood. 1936. Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Funke, Manfred. 1970. Sanktionen und Kanonen: Hitler, Mussolini und der internationale Abessinienkonflikt, 1934-1936. Düsseldorf: Droste.

Gräber, Gerd. 1999. "Die befreiten Geiseln Kaiser Tewodros' II: Aus dem Photoalbum der Royal Engineers 1867/68." Aethiopica, Vol. 2, pp. 159-182.

—— 2005. "Eduard Zander: Abenteurer, Naturforscher, Maler, Architekt und Handwerker in Äthiopien—Eine Biographie." Aethiopica, Vol. 8, pp. 10-28.

HaCohen, Mordecai Ben-Hillel. 1928. Olami [My World]. Jerusalem: Mizpeh. Vol. 4.

Herzbruch, Kurt. 1925. Abessinien: Eine Reise zum Hofe Meneliks II. München: Fr. Seybold.

Hoffman, Gail. 1936. "The Empress and the Princess: Interview with Royal Exiles." Palestine Post. Vol. 12 (17 May 1936), p. 5.

Holtz, Avraham and Toby Berger Holtz. 1992. "The Adventuresome Life of Moritz Hall: A Biographical Study." In: Piotr Scholz, (ed.): Orbis Aethiopicus, Studia in Honorem Stanislaus Chojnacki natali septuagessimo quinto decata, septuagessimo septimo oblate. Albstadt: Karl Schuler. pp. 49-66.

Holtz, Avraham and Toby Berger Holtz. 2003. Moritz Hall: Der alte Mann in Jaffa/ The Old Man of Jaffa. Haifa: University of Haifa. (Abhandlungen des Gottlieb-Schumacher-Instituts/Publications of the Gottlieb Schumacher Institute, 3).

Holtz, Toby Berger. 2005. "Hall, David." and "Hall, Moritz." In Siegbert Uhlig (ed.) Encyclopaedia Aethiopica, Vol. 2. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 979-980.

Markham, Clements R. 1869. A History of the Abyssinian Expedition. London: Macmillan and Co.

McEwan, Dorothea, Gerd Gräber and Johannes Hock. 2006. Das Skizzenbuch Eduard Zanders: Ansichten aus Nordaethiopien. Köthen/Dessau: Verein für Anhaltische Landeskunde e.V. (Veröffentlichungen des Stadtarchivs Dessau, Band 4).

Pankhurst, Richard. 1971. "Linguistic and Cultural Data on the Penetration of Fire-Arms into Ethiopia. Journal of Ethiopian Studies, Vol. 10 (1), pp. 47-82.

—— 1977. "The History of Däbrä Tabor (Ethiopia)." Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. Vol. 40 (2), pp. 235-266.

—— 1983. "Captain Speedy's 'Entertainment': The Reminiscences of a Nineteenth Century British Traveller to Ethiopia." Africa (Rome). Vol. 38 (3), pp. 428-448.

—— 2003. Sylvia Pankhurst: Counsel for Ethiopia. Hollywood, California: Tsehai Publishers.
Pedersen, Kirsten. 1983. The History of the Ethiopian Community in the Holy Land form the Time of Emperor Tewodros II till 1974 (= Studia Oecumenica Hierosolymitana, Vol. 2). Jerusalem: The Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research-Tantur.
Rassam, Hormuzd. 1869. Narrative of the British Mission to Theodore, King of Abyssinia. 2 vols. London: John Murray.
Report of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. 1860. Vol. 52, p. 22.
Rosenfeld, Chris Prouty. 1976. A Chronology of Menelik II of Ethiopia, 1844-1913: Emperor of Ethiopia, 1889-1913 (= Monograph No. 4, Occasional Papers Series, Committee on Ethiopian Studies). East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University.
Rubenson, Sven. 1976. The Survival of Ethiopian Independence. London: Heinemann.
Smidt, Wolbert G.C. 2005a. "Verbindungen der Familie Ustinov nach Äthiopien." Aethiopica, Vol. 8, pp. 10-47.
—— 2005b. Äthiopien und Deutschland: 100 Jahre diplomatische Beziehungen/Ethiopia and Germany: 100 Years Diplomatic Relations. Ausstellungskatalog/ Catalogue. Addis Abeba: Goethe-Institut und Deutsche Botschaft.
Spencer, John H. 1984. Ethiopia at Bay. Alquonac, Michigan: Reference Publications.
Strebel, Barbara. 2001. "Leben auf dem Missionsfeld: Chrischona-Pilgermissionare in Äthiopien (1856-1868)." Aethiopica, Vol. 4, pp. 121-157.
Waldmeier, Theophilus. 1869. Erlebnisse in Abessinien in den Jahren 1858-1868. 2. auflage. Basel: Verlag von C.F. Spittler.
—— 1925. The Autobiography of Theophilus Waldmeier, comprising Ten Years in Abyssinia and Forty-six in Syria. Ed. Stephen Hobhouse. London: Friends' Bookshop.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Using Cases to Teach Ethiopian, African and World History

James Quirin[1]

Case studies are a useful way to lead structured discussions in history classes. This paper provides some general statements about the use of case studies in several fields and focuses on my use of cases to teach Ethiopian, African and world history courses. I analyze my experience in particular in using a case study I have written on King Menilek and the Battle of Adwa in several different types of classes over the past decade. This case study experience has proven to be an exciting method to get students immediately involved in particular historical situations from which they can also learn broader lessons.

These international Ethiopian conferences have historically focused overwhelmingly on new research with little regard to the classroom where most of us spend a great deal of time. This paper shifts attention to the teaching side of our profession, and argues for the use of a specific teaching technique that I have used for the past fifteen years—that of the case study.

The case study teaching technique has been used for many years in various venues, particularly at advanced levels in professional schools of education, law and business.[2] In such places, cases are used to illustrate particular problems or situations. In business and education, the cases are usually short, descriptive rather than analytical, and arranged chronologically. The facts of a story are described in sequential order, in the course of which a dilemma or problem is raised that requires a decision by the protagonist in the case, whether it be a teacher in the classroom, or a business person working in his or her business position.

The case study technique has also been used to teach international affairs, including history. In these types of cases, the intent is for the students to learn what actually happened in historical situations and events. They have been most utilized in teaching about diplomacy and international relations in such disciplines as political science, political economy, international relations, or international economics and hundreds of such cases have been written and are available for use.[3] My own introduction to using cases came in a summer seminar at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 1993. That seminar included 24 participants, among whom were only three historians. We studied the use of cases in several fields, and we each wrote a case and committed to use cases in a class in the coming semester. Then in the next spring, we met again over a weekend for a follow-up discussion of our experience using cases. This paper continues with an analysis of my personal experience since 1993 in writing several cases, and in using some cases in teaching classes in African and world history.

---

[1] Professor of History, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee 37208, USA

[2] C. Roland Christensen, "Teaching with Cases at the Harvard Business School," in C. Roland Christensen and Abby J. Hansen, eds. *Teaching and the Case Method: Text, Cases and Readings*. Boston: Harvard Business School, 1987, pp. 16-49.

[3] See, for example: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Pew Case Studies Center, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057 that has made available hundreds of the Pew Case Studies in International Affairs.

Writing Cases

In my experience, I have found two types of cases: short accounts of a page or two, and much longer, more detailed pieces sometimes called "deep" cases. Most of the cases I have written have been the latter. In general, all cases should provide a written description of a problem or situation that does not include analysis or conclusions, but mainly the facts of the story told in chronological order. The purpose of the writing is to engage the reader sufficiently so that the person feels him/herself to be an actual participant in an unfolding drama.

The writing style, therefore, must be straightforward and focused on the narrative rather than an analysis of all the nuances and various interpretations of the situation. Direct quotations from the participants in the story are good in order to hold the interest of the reader, but of course the story must follow proper canons of history, so the quotations cannot be reconstructed or made up to illustrate the situation. The type of "deep" historical cases that I have written need to be based on a good amount of research because the credibility and "truth" of the story is important. These cases are being used to teach the "facts" of history, not merely analyzing alternative actions in the abstract. That is, in cases raising questions about teaching strategies, the facts of what may have happened in actual situations are not as relevant as the idea that such situations could have happened and pose real-life dilemmas. The same is true for cases with regard to business decisions. But in these historical cases, the names, dates and events are obviously significant and must be recorded accurately in a written case, which therefore must be based on substantial historical research.

On the other hand, the apparatus of that research in the written text of the case itself should not be overwhelmingly evident. Thus, not every interpretation or fact in the case has to be directly footnoted as would be the case for a journal article. I have found it important to footnote carefully direct quotations as well as other facts—it is essential not to get away from being an historian—but I have worked hard to cut down on the number of footnotes so the reader does not need to be distracted by looking up every reference while reading the case. A bibliography of sources at the end of the case is, however, essential.

Long or "deep" cases should be written with a detailed Part A, in which a situation is laid out and a dilemma or question is posed. The students then discuss various alternative answers to the dilemma or question—many of which are raised in the context of the writing itself, though they may think of other alternatives—and then they come to a decision as to what a major protagonist in the case should do about something. A much shorter Part B, handed out in class after Part A has been thoroughly discussed, tells what actually happened in the case at hand.

The Case Discussion in Class

Let me continue by discussing my use of an actual case in class discussions to further illustrate this process. I have written several cases and used them in classes over the past 15 years. These include one on the first phase of the Sudan civil war from 1955 to 1972, one on Tewodros II, another on Menilek II, and a shorter one is a work in progress on King Lobengula of the Ndebele kingdom. In addition, I have used a few cases written by other people, though I have felt more comfortable using my own. The case I have most often used, and one that I have revised the most, is the one on Menilek II and the battle of Adwa, so let me focus mostly on that case in describing how I have

written it and how I use it in class. (The text of the case is too long to have provided it in this paper, so I will just have to describe it.)

As noted above, a case needs to present a clear dilemma or question that the students will be required to answer. In this case, I have laid out the question in the first paragraph of the document: the setting is February 29, 1896 on the outskirts of Adwa where Menilek is encamped with his approximately 100,000 troops and thousands more camp followers. They have been there several weeks and food supplies are running low. The approximately 20,000 Italian-led invading soldiers are deeply entrenched a few kilometers away. The question posed for the students is what Menilek should do about this situation.

The next several sections describe the early life of Menilek, including the significance of his name, his more than nine years of captivity by Tewodros, his escape and rise to be king of Shawa, his inaction with regard to the conflict of Tewodros and the British, and his competition for power with Emperor Yohannes IV, the process of Shawan expansionism, and the "diplomacy of commerce" he carried out with Europe. All of these sections are for the purpose of giving the students an idea of the nature of rule by Menilek and the nature of the situations he faced. They begin to get enough insight into Menilek to be able to put themselves into his position.

The context is further developed with an account of foreign interests in the Horn, including those of Egypt, Britain, France, and Italy. The specific dispute concerning the Treaty of Wechale is elucidated, and the immediately preceding conflicts with Italy at Amba Alage and Maqale are described up to the point of the standoff in the area between Adigrat and Adwa by January 21, 1896.

Over the years of using versions of this case, I have employed various discussion techniques. In the present version of the case, it is eleven pages long single-spaced so it contains a lot of detail, but in earlier versions it was even longer. Depending on the nature of the class, and on the students' pre-existing background on Ethiopian history and political culture, I have had to spend varying amounts of time drawing out some of the basic information so they can understand what the dilemma is all about. I pass out a list of study questions with Part A. We then go through the list and discuss the answers until we get to the last one that is the main question of the whole case—what should Menilek do? The key to using this technique is not to get bogged down on too many details that can get quite tedious and slow down the discussion of the main question. If the discussion gets too slow, I have found that some of the stronger students want to jump ahead to discuss the main question and some of the others may not know exactly what is going on.

To stimulate the students to read the case carefully before coming to class, it is useful to give them the assignment of writing a paragraph or two to answer the main question and bring it with them to class. In that case, we can spend more time discussing their answers and the various alternatives they have come up with. In any case, it is necessary to allot about one class period to the class discussion itself, after having distributed the text of Part A to the students from two days to a week previously. In the various venues I have used for this discussion, the class periods may be from 50 minutes to 100 minutes in length. If the class is only 50 minutes, there may not be sufficient time to discuss thoroughly Part A and then also have the students read and discuss the much shorter Part B.

The key to a good discussion of Part A of the case is to get the students talking back and forth to each other rather than merely responding to the instructor's questions.

When that occurs, the discussion "takes off" and then the instructor's main problem is to guide it along fruitful lines. A fruitful discussion technique is to get them to take sides, or even to role-play as if they were Menilek's advisors. A natural issue in this case, for example, is between those who urge Menilek to attack immediately, and those who think he may have to withdraw his troops from Adwa. Some may call for him to march into Eritrea and attack Asmara directly, or may want him to continue diplomacy and appeal to other European countries for support. Once the students become engaged in the discussion, they are quick to point out the likely difficulties of any proposed course of action. At this point in the discussion, very few of them know much about what actually happened, particularly if I am using it in a world history rather than African history course.

Large classes often need to be divided into small groups for discussion in that venue before coming back as a whole class. The small groups can be set to discuss separate questions, and have a rapporteur tell the rest of the class what they came up with. In this way, every student in class gets to say something. Even in classrooms where the seats are fixed to the floor, they can do this but may end up with a stiff neck as they twist around.

After we have exhausted the discussion concerning Part A—or we have run out of time, whichever comes first—I pass out Part B for them to read right there. Part B is in my current version only about 3 pages long (single-spaced) so they can read it in a few minutes. It tells the students what actually happened. That is, they find out that Menilek did not have to decide whether to attack or withdraw, or another alternative, because General Baratieri's forces attacked him first. It briefly describes the battle itself, mentions the peace treaties signed later in the year, the immediate impact and legacy of the Ethiopian victory in Europe and the African diaspora, and alludes to the difficulties Ethiopia faced in maintaining its independence in the coming decades.

Though I have revised this case several times over the years, mostly to clarify points and to omit some of the detail, it still contains a great deal of information. I feel a high level of detail is necessary in order to get a truer flavor of the situation. Adequate maps and pictures are essential to assist the students in putting themselves into the situation.

Student Responses to the Case Discussion Process

Students have responded overwhelmingly positively to this process, though in larger classes that are surveys of world history it is more difficult to get them to put themselves wholly into the situation. The level of detail, the unfamiliarity of the names and vocabulary and so on can be intimidating, but then that is true of teaching most aspects of Ethiopian or African culture and history to American audiences.

I have found some variations among student responses depending on the level of the class, as well as the institution where I have used it. Most of my experience has been at Fisk University where the students are nearly 100% African American with a few Africans, people from the Caribbean, and some others. The classes at Fisk where I have used this case include our required Core class, "The World and Its Peoples" (Core 360), a one-semester course that deals with world history and culture from prehistory to the present with 30-40 students in each class. I have also used it in a survey of African history that usually has 15-20 students, and in various seminars of 10-20 students, taken mostly by junior and senior history majors that deal with aspects of African and world history. The most successful venue has been the smaller classes, either the survey or the

seminar. These students are mostly but not entirely history majors who are eager to learn topics they have never been exposed to in high school or other college classes.

I have also taught this case at other institutions in Nashville where I have been an adjunct professor, including Vanderbilt University and Watkins College of Art and Design. At Vanderbilt, I used this case in a freshman seminar on the Horn of Africa with less than 15 students, while at Watkins College I have used it in a world history survey that is their only required history course and which usually has 50-60 students.

Most of my students in all venues and institutions are strongly pro-African and anti-colonial in their outlook, and have therefore usually favored a position in this case that urges Menilek to attack at once, whatever the likely cost in loss of lives in a frontal attack on the well-armed and entrenched Italian and Italian-led troops. But in all venues, they are usually willing to consider some of the other alternatives when they are posed as possibilities. Student comments on the method have included the following:

> I can appreciate this kind of teaching style because it allows for the entire class to become involved in the discussion without so much pressure on whether your opinions are right or wrong. It also allows the class to listen and evaluate the opinions from our classmates and open up discussions among ourselves.

Another recent perspective was:

> The case study of emperor Menilek II was an effective teaching tool that instilled critical thinking and a different perspective of history….Learning from a case study is a better learning technique because you're putting yourself in the same situation as that person and you can analyze how you would deal with that situation.

Another student focused on the process of reading the case: "The story is easily understandable as well as interesting. It doesn't seem like anything from a textbook…I would suggest this in a class setting of a few individuals. It is a very effective reading." Another comment concerned the main character, Menilek: "This case study allowed us to bring the reading to life and…examine Menilek as a significant contributor to history. This allowed him to come to life."

All these comments were from a recent experience using this case in a small seminar class that had already involved a great deal of analytical reading and discussion. In larger lecture classes, it is more difficult to get all the students involved, and the discussion can become tedious if they have not been motivated sufficiently to be prepared ahead of time.

Using Other Cases

In some classes, I have used more than one case. On this topic of colonial conquests and African resistance, I have used a much shorter piece on the efforts of King Lobengula to maintain the independence of the Ndebele kingdom during this time period. This case provides a very useful counterpoint, particularly with regard to the attempted manipulation of the treaty-making process and the use of the "protectorate" scheme. In the case of Lobengula, such treaty-making trickery worked while with Menilek it did not. In southern Africa, the foreign pressures were also different. The case thus provides an interesting contrast.

Other potential comparisons would include the situations of Moshoeshoe in southern Africa, or the Asante or Samori Toure in west Africa, or several others. So far I have

not written these situations up as cases, but they could provide very interesting comparisons.

Summary: Evaluation of Using Cases in Classroom Teaching

In summary, the advantages of the case method of teaching are that at its best this method can be very engaging for the students, putting them inside the process of making history and leading to a deeper understanding not only of the particular case being used, but of the nature of history itself. History comes alive rather than being seen as just one thing after another they are required to memorize. History comes to be seen as life, complex, multi-layered, full of ambiguity and irony, and often very messy. Students, for example, find it ironic and exciting that Menilek got many of his guns from Italian sources. They also find it ironic, even if disappointing, that Menilek's army became larger and more experienced by attacking and conquering less well-armed peoples in the broad swathe of southern Ethiopia as they discuss the question, "Was Menilek an imperialist?"

Given the density of information in this case, I have usually been pleasantly surprised at the extent to which the students become knowledgeable about the details, just in the course of reading the narrative and trying to answer the study questions and come up with their advice to the king. The lecture method is of course still useful and valid in imparting a great deal of information, but student involvement is a key to getting them to remember the data beyond the time of the final examination. For those educational environments where anything but lecturing is frowned upon or considered as too experimental, I would argue that I have found the case study discussion process to be a useful technique to have a structured discussion where a great deal of information can be conveyed, but where the students are often likely to remember it better. Many other sources are available for a consideration of the value of the discussion methods.[4]

The difficulties of using this method include the fact that it can be very time consuming. If your curriculum demands that you "cover" certain specific topics on which students need to pass tests you may not feel free to devote so much time to just one instance of history given the myriad of information. Most textbooks of world history may mention the battle of Adwa in one sentence and present it as an unexplained oddity, or do not even state the name of the battle itself: "only Ethiopia in northeast Africa and Liberia on the west African coast remained independent."[5] A similar example is the following: "The Italians invaded Somaliland and Eritrea. They attempted to extend their controls to Ethiopia, but were repulsed by an army of 80,000 Ethiopians, the first instance of a major victory by native Africans over whites."[6] Another account that provides little idea of what happened is the following: "In 1896 the Italians attempted to conquer the Christian state of Abyssinia (Ethiopia), but the emperor Menilek's forces, four times the size of the Italian army, defeated the invaders at Adowa."[7] A somewhat more complete statement is the following:

> The Ethiopians were more successful in repelling foreign invasions. In 1896 they soundly defeated the Italian invasion forces at Adowa. By cleverly playing off

[4] C. Roland Christensen, David Garvin, and Ann Sweet, eds. *Education for Judgment: The Artistry of Discussion Leadership*. Boston, 1991.
[5] John McKay, et.al. *A History of World Societies*, 3rd edition. Boston, 1992, vol. II, p. 973.
[6] Edward Burns, ed.al. *World Civilizations*. 7th edition. New York, 1986, vol C, p. 1105.
[7] Richard Greaves, et.al. *Civilizations of the World*. New York, 1990

> rival European nations, the Ethiopian emperors managed to secure arms and avoid any subsequent partition or takeover of their ancient nation.[8]

Even many textbooks of African history do not have adequate coverage of this particular conflict, and often present it in the context of what Europeans, rather than Africans, were doing:

> More alarmed by French ambitions in Ethiopia, Britain encouraged Italian interests there, leading to the occupation of Eritrea in 1889 and the advance southwards into the Christian kingdom which Menelik repelled at the Battle of Adwa in 1896, the greatest African victory against foreign invaders.[9]

Another example from an African history textbook is similar to the preceding example, though it comes at the end of a section that discusses Tewodros and Yohannes as well:

> In the north Menelik was confronted by the imperial ambitions of Italy. He was forced to recognise the Italian coastal colony of Eritrea over which they had extended their authority in 1887 and 1890. But an Italian attempt to extend their conquests into the Ethiopian heartland was faced with resounding defeat by Menelik's vastly superior army. Menelik's victory at the battle of Adowa in 1896 effectively saved Ethiopia from European colonial conquest during the era of the 'Scramble for Africa.'[10]

Another African history textbook puts the battle in the context of British imperialism in the area, but does not consider the significance for Ethiopia or for Africans:

> By 1896, however, wider considerations [affecting British interests] had supervened. The Italians had invaded Ethiopia from their coastal enclave at Massawa with 17,000 European troops, and had been resoundingly defeated by the Ethiopians at the battle of Adowa.[11]

One of the major African history textbooks in the United States almost fails to mention the battle, particularly considering it is a book of more than 500 pages:

> Early in 1896, Italy launched an invasion of Ethiopia from its existing colony in Eritrea, but Ethiopian forces armed with modern weapons won decisively at the battle of Adowa.[12]

The most thorough textbook coverage I have found appears in the survey by Joseph Harris that discusses the Ethiopian and international context in two pages, including an account of the dispute over the Treaty of Wechale. But it also has only a brief mention of the immediate battle and no mention of the preceding conflicts of 1895.[13]

None of these textbook statements is entirely wrong, but neither do they explain the Ethiopian success, or give students much feeling or flavor of what happened and why it happened.

The case method of teaching has helped overcome the perennial problem of the disconnect that often exists in the classroom between "what is taught and what is caught"[14] by the students. It brings history alive for students in an understandable and

---

8 Jiu-Hwa Upshur, et.al. *World History*. 2nd edition. Minneapolis/St. Paul, 1995, p. 647.
9 John Iliffe. *Africans: The History of a Continent*. Cambridge, 1995, p. 190.
10 Kevin Shillington. *History of Africa*. 2nd ed. revised, New York, 2005, p. 287.
11 Roland Oliver. *The African Experience*. New York, 1992, p. 182. Not all the 17,000 were Italian.
12 Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson, Jan Vansina. *African History*. 2nd ed. London and New York, 1995, p. 321.
13 Joseph Harris. *Africans and their History*. 2nd ed. New York, 1998, pp. 192-93.
14 Comment by Steve Lamy in Pew Faculty Seminar in 1993.

even exciting way while not sacrificing historical analysis and depth. I urge other instructors to experiment with cases to see if they work for you in your situations.

Bibliography

Edward Burns, et.al. 1986. *World Civilizations.* 7th ed. New York, vol. C.

C. Roland Christensen. 1987. "Teaching with Cases at the Harvard Business School," in C. Roland Christensen and Abby J. Hansen, eds. *Teaching and the Case Method: Text, Cases and Readings*. Boston: Harvard Business School, pp. 16-49.

C. Roland Christensen, David Garvin, Ann Sweet, eds. 1991. *Education for Judgment: The Artistry of Discussion Leadership*. Boston.

Philip Curtin, Steven Feierman, Leonard Thompson, Jan Vansina. 1995. *African History.* 2nd ed. London and New York.

Richard Greaves, et.al. 1990. *Civilizations of the World*. New York.

Joseph Harris. 1998. *Africans and their History*. 2nd ed. New York.

John Iliffe. 1995. *Africans: The History of a Continent*. Cambridge.

Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Pew Case Studies Center, Georgetown University, Washington D.C.

John McKay, et.al. 1992. *A History of World Societies*. 3rd ed. Boston, vol II.

Roland Oliver. 1992. *The African Experience*. New York.

Kevin Shillington. 2005. *History of Africa*. 2nd ed. New York.

Jiu-Hwa Upshur, et.al. 1995. *World History*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis/St. Paul.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

"Knowledge is an immovable eternal law which rules the world:" Gäbre-Heywät Baykädañ's Blueprint for Ethiopia's Sovereign Modernity

Matteo Salvadore[1]

This paper examines Gäbrä-Heywät Baykädañ's blueprint for the modernization of Ethiopia and argues that Gäbrä-Heywät offered a cosmopolitan critique of his society by reproaching the provincialism and oppressiveness of the *makwanent* and denouncing the threats of an unmitigated Westernization. In light of his attempt to mediate between the local and the global Gäbrä-Heywät rightfully belongs to the Ethiopian intellectual tradition of *creative incorporation*.

Thirty years ago Philip Curtin (1972) published a seminal work, *Africa and the West,* dedicated to African intellectuals undertaking the complex task of modernizing their country without losing their identity. Despite having been a major contribution to the field of African intellectual history this work was grounded on a dualistic framework granting little space for an analysis willing to reach beyond the very dichotomy of "Africa" and the "West." This remains today a defining contraposition, part of a discourse that for the last two hundred years has framed world history as a North vs. South, East vs. West, West vs. rest, and colonizer vs. colonized contest.

Curtin categorized African intellectuals as either *modernizers* or *traditionalists*, with different degrees of combinations along a monodimensional spectrum: as if the two cultural realms of the "African" and the "European," which had been separate from time immemorial, had been forced by modern imperialism to finally come to terms with each other. In Curtin's edited collection there was no hint of originality on the part of African intellectuals: they were simply coping with European novelty, either embracing or rejecting it: sometimes mixing bits and pieces of the two different worlds, becoming what Ayandele labeled "deluded hybrids". The distinction between the *traditional* and the *modern* has been challenged by a plethora of scholars of Africa, and rightly identified by Messay Kebbede as a "method of indoctrination", aimed at dismissing non-occidental pasts as outdated (Messay 2001: 4). The debunking of such a dull category as that of "traditional Africa," has left the field free for more nuanced interpretations that brought to our attention the complexity of interactions between intellectuals across continents.

Boundaries that seemed perennial and unquestionable throughout the twentieth century and that were also used as a blueprint for the rise of modern academia are now questioned: area studies-defined units are seen today more as the result of Cold War logics than scientific certainty while the notion of Africa itself has been challenged by, among others, prominent scholars such as Valentin Mudimbe (1988) and Paulin Hountondji (1983). It is with this perspective of historiographical dissent, dismissive of

[1] Matteo Salvadore, doctoral candidate; Temple University, Philadelphia (USA). salva@temple.edu

preconceived and often misleading categories, that we should look at Gäbre-Heywät Baykädañ, by trying to contextualize his thought in a world history framework.

This paper will argue that Gäbre-Heywät's ideas were much more than a simple mimicry of European capitalist modernity and offered a modern take on the challenges that Ethiopia was facing as part of its incorporation in the capitalist world economy. Gäbre-Heywät struggled to see his country turn modern, but at the same time maintain its cultural and political independence: his ultimate goal was Ethiopia's *sovereign modernity*. In fact, building on the notion that capitalist modernity should not be conflated with western capitalism – the latter being only one of many expressions of the former - this paper rejects the notion that Gäbre-Heywät was Eurocentric.

In the words of Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* is a "culturalist phenomenon in the sense that it assumes the existence of irreducibly distinct cultural invariants that shape the historical paths of different peoples. Eurocentrism is therefore anti-universalist [because Europe *is* different…] but it presents itself as universalist, for it claims that imitation of the Western model by all people is the only solution to the challenges of our time" (1989: vii). Representing the self-consciousness of western capitalism, Eurocentrism allowed for the interpretation of the modern world as the uncontested emergence of the West and presented modernity as the gift of the West to humanity. However, that the West enshrined itself as the sole representative of an "inherently European" capitalist modernity and looked at the *rest* as inferior does not make capitalism or its supporters Eurocentric by definition. On the one hand capitalist modernity can be seen as a global rather than a European phenomenon; on the other, once separated from its Eurocentric self-consciousness, it can be used and adapted to suit and serve the local.

Gäbre-Heywät was deeply concerned with the status of the Ethiopian economy at large and of the peasantry in particular as it was suffering under overlapping layers of oppression. The erosion of *rəst* rights, the growth of *gult* demands, and the lack of land ownership in the South made the lives of the Ethiopian peasant unbearable: Gäbre-Heywät wrote that "when land is in the hands of a few people, it is a bad omen for the country. It signals that people have become poorer and that the authority of the government had diminished. If the land is equitably distributed and held by many people, it indicates that power is wielded by the people and the government" (1995: 126).

The affliction of the peasantry and the negative impact of banditry have been indeed largely confirmed by a plethora of successive studies. In his seminal work on banditry in Ethiopia, Donald Crummey maintained that far from being a form of violent top-down redistribution of resources consistent with Hobsbawm's notion of "social banditry"- *ṣḥēfəṭəñäṭ* in the nineteenth century represented the "criminal undercurrents of all forms of state power," in other words it was a tool for career mobility within the ruling class (Crummey 1986: 133). Despite its glorification as the springboard of "just" leaders banditry was simply one more form of oppression and surplus extraction afflicting the peasant, and for this reason it attracted Gäbre-Heywät's stigma: "more than the impediment to progress posed by soil and the climate, there is another one which is an even greater obstacle, and that is banditry and war" (1995: 71).

Gäbre-Heywät understood not only its detrimental effects on the peasant's condition and morale but also the class aspect of the phenomenon: "A peasant under one local chief would not dare to kill the chief of the other peasant. Even if a peasant captures a rival chief, he will have to serve the captured chief with a lot of diligence. While their peasants kill each other, the chiefs will not shy away from exchanging cordial

messages." As it emerges from this ironic passage, the condition of the peasantry is central to Gäbre-Heywät's concerns as he started his main work contending that "a government which wants to help and strengthen its people should strive to improve the life of the peasantry" (1995: 134). This oligarchic system based on the extraction of surplus from a victimized peasantry had become untenable. Gäbre-Heywät envisioned a change of mentality, arguing that "We have not understood yet that men are respected for their work and their intelligence; we discount those who can write and we treat them as sorcerers; with regard to those who know how to use their hands, we diminish them […] The only glory we know is that of the soldier, who carries an old rifle and spends his days following his chief like a dog" (1993: 43).

Gäbre-Heywät also introduced the idea of a regional redistribution of wealth as "in Beguemder, Semen, Lasta, Godjam and Wollo for example one does not earn much; one cannot tax as much as in the rich Shewa or Tigre" (1993: 46). Here Gäbre-Heywät explicitly defends the equality of all Ethiopians and the necessity to redress past wrongs. Banditry, unjust taxation, and patrimonialism represented the malaise that Gäbre-Heywät wanted to cure with the reforms proposed in *Menelik and Ethiopia.* "First, it is necessary to have rules to distinguish the money of the state from the money of the King, chiefs should be paid and the taxes collected in the country should go directly to the state; soldiers should depend on the King; there should be a separation between the representatives of the king and the military chiefs; the first would be in charge of the peasants and the second of the soldiers." The purpose of this reform was to abandon the structure of a patrimonial state in favor of a rational administration and limit the extorting prerogatives of the nobility that could leverage its monopoly on violence to extract taxes.

Higher taxes on speculators, breaking of state-sanctioned monopolies, tariffs aimed at balancing trade, advancement of education and creation of a modern bureaucracy, work ethics rewarding manual labor and trades: all of Gäbre-Heywät's proposed reforms, together with an overhaul of custom duties and of trade regulations, were aimed at creating what we would call today a productive middle class. Gäbre-Heywät's fundamental contention was that many aspects of Ethiopia's social structure were vestiges from a past that had not adapted to the fast changing reality of the world around her and that rapid change was required to give the Ethiopian peasantry a chance at a decent life. The "Ethiopians" Gäbre-Heywät had in mind were not those whose jests had been narrated in the Chronicles but rather peasants, minorities and in general individuals occupying the lower levels of the *geber system* (Teshale 1995: 4-5).

The big question remains: how should we interpret Gäbre-Heywät's continuous references to values that he himself referred to as *European*? Should we take his semantics at face value or look beyond that, building on the historiographical inroads of these last decades? Gäbre-Heywät was far from any universal notion of a "civilizing mission", which at the time was indeed very popular even among contemporaneous African and African-American intellectuals. Gäbre-Heywät's call for change targeted specific aspects of Ethiopian society proposing pragmatic solutions for social and economic problems, never indulging in considerations over the superiority or inferiority of Ethiopia at large.

In a recent work Anthony Appiah argued that "*cultural purity* is an oxymoron" (2006: 113) and that globalization has engendered a misleading rush to the definition of authentic ethnic-based cultural principles, which should be supposedly salvaged before being run over by an unstoppable capitalist juggernaut. The intellectual history of

Ethiopia, very much like the intellectual history of modern Africa, would be better served if looked through the lenses of what Appiah calls "contamination" i.e. the exposure to the stranger, the new. Appiah contested the notion of a pure ethnic culture, of pre-modern isolation and of a timeless and uncontaminated "before" spoiled by contact with the West.

A proper understanding of Gäbre-Heywät and other Ethiopian and African intellectuals alike should start with jettisoning the pigeonholing urges of nineteenth century anthropology that, conflated with the political necessities of the Cold War, gave birth to "area studies," i.e. the representation of a world order where each region would retain a certain degree of specificity grounded on some irrevocable racial or religious alterity (Wallerstein 2004: 10). This intellectual structure implies two overall assumptions: that Africa can be positively separated from Europe on the ground of some immutable specificities (Blaut 2000: 200-204) and that such specificities are part of a tradition that is being irremediably corrupted by western intrusion. Gäbre-Heywät's case illustrates well the futility of these distinctions: as a paragon of contamination and ambivalence he is in line with both ancient and recent tradition of thought originated within Ethiopia. Gäbre-Heywät attempted to understand his country as part of a world that he saw fast changing and increasingly menacing. It is with good reason that Tenkir Bonger (1995) portrays him as a forerunner of the world-system school.

One of the criticisms directed against Gäbre-Heywät is that his ideas were simply borrowed and his pro-development spirit at odds with the nature of the African and Ethiopian *weltanschauung;* that he can be equated to Hegel or Marx for his strict universalism (Messay 2006: 818). Messay Kebbede argued that Gäbre-Heywät "forfeited the option of considering African societies as different, as pursuing other goals than the mastery of nature" (Messay 2006: 820) Yet this interpretation seems to take the discussion dangerously close to Eurocentric understandings of Africa and to its byproducts: Senghor's *Negritude*, Cheick Anta Diop's *southern cradle* and Mole Kefi Asante's *Afrocentricity*. As we know, these understandings of Africa and Africaness present remarkable differences with each other, yet they share two defining features. On the one hand they all reject – and rightly so - western superiority; on the other they share what we can call an essentialist or biologist view of Africa that is problematic, representing what Hountondji called - "[…] a form of acquiescence in the ideological presuppositions of European racism."

According to the school of *professional philosophers* some strains of African nationalism and philosophy demonstrate how paradigms grounded on African uniqueness and alterity constitute Eurocentrism turned on its head rather than a full rejection of its racist assumptions: categories developed as part of a domination process are grabbed and thrown back to the sender rather than being superseded. Philip Zachernuk offered the following assessment of this intellectual process: "we have been offered a misleadingly simple story of the "West" confronting a distinct and distinctive "Africa" and obliging it to absorb – or repel- the forces and ideas of the modern world. In post-colonial Africa the distinction between the African and the European, the indigenous and the imported, remained fundamental" (2000: 3).

Change occurred, and at the end of the nineteenth century Ethiopia was being incorporated into the modern world-system. It was such change that Gäbre-Heywät tackled as he attempted to understand how to turn the tide in favor of the inheritors of the glorious Axumite tradition. Gäbre-Heywät wondered about Axum and tried to fathom the reasons behind its implosion: unlike self-righteous purveyors of a

philosophy of history Gäbre-Heywät interrogated himself in pragmatic terms, acknowledging the centrality of human agency and looking for specific solutions to well defined social problems. Gäbre-Heywät's understanding of history is not linear, but perhaps cyclical, as he was aware of the Axumite era and strived to find that level of wealth and prosperity again. His understanding of history is devoid of those overarching intellectual structures that characterized Christian and Marxist worldviews. He assumed development for Ethiopia was possible not by means of an overhaul, but rather adopting a piecemeal process aimed at freeing the country from the yoke of customs that had indeed crystallized into unchanging traditions.

Far from presenting himself as a self-righteous evangelist of a superior civilization and importing a pre-arranged decalogue of modernity he argued that "it is not possible to determine exactly what a public constitution should be. That which is said to be good could be useless after a while when the wealth and knowledge of the people advance. Accordingly that constitution which is good to those who are educated could be considerably harmful to those without education. No rule can be useful for all time. Because a constitution is applicable to one people, it cannot be inferred that it is also useful to others. […] although any constitution is useful, it is so for a specific people and time." (1995: 55) Gäbre-Heywät refrained from criticizing his own country in its entirety: as we have seen he only stresses the anachronism of some key characteristics, namely the rapacity of the *mäkwanənt.* If criticizing certain aspects of a society by borrowing intellectual or technological material from other societies is equated with Eurocentrism, then socioeconomic change becomes an impossibility as it is indeed the free flowing of technological and cultural capital that stimulates change.

The very history of Ethiopian thought is adverse to this posture: if we reach back to classical Ethiopian philosophy and look at the contribution of the *Physiologues*, *The Book of the Philosophers*, *The Life and Maxims of Skendes* we can claim the existence of an old tradition of intellectual borrowing. In his seminal works on Ethiopian philosophy Claude Sumner stressed the peculiar ability of the Ethiopian literate class to "adapt, modify, add, subtract" as in a process of positive contamination; arguing that "although the nucleus of what is translated is foreign to Ethiopia, the way it is assimilated and transformed into a indigenous reality is typically Ethiopian" (1986: 29).

Sumner's take on classical Ethiopian philosophy confirms Ethiopia's role as intellectual entrepôt, characterized by a process of creative incorporation that contradicts one of the most enduring notions of Ethiopia, that of an isolated country. As it has recently been contended "given Ethiopia's location and history, as the original home of the species and a major trading center, it is not an accident that the sapiental themes at once are Arabic, Syrian, Biblical and Greek. Ethiopia is clearly a confluence of world cultures" (Teodros 1994: 10). When considering Gäbre-Heywät these old misconceptions should be dismissed together with essentialist notions of cultural purity which Hountondji saw as "born of a hundred years of Africanism (Hountondji 1983: xi).

Gäbre-Heywät's belonging to an Ethiopian tradition of rational and eclectic thought can be traced back to Zera Yacob, whom Sumner described as a "splendid witness for Ethiopia of a rationalistic attitude" (1986: 17), parallel to Cartesio's departure from scholasticism and the schism between faith and reason (1986: 38). Teodros Kiros (1994: 19) characterized Zara Yacob as someone who rejected tradition "where the values of Ethiopian tradition were found to be unacceptable by reasonable standards, the standard of rationality. He does not simply appropriate traditions from outside, nor does

he bow down to the customs of the society into which he is born […]. How can one accept something just because he is born into it?"

Zara Yacob and Gäbre-Heywät upheld the perfectibility of human nature and of social arrangements. It is striking that in Zera Yacob's *Second Treatise*, compiled by Walda Heywat, we can find a commendation of manual labor that sounds uncannily familiar when compared to Gäbre-Heywät's:

> Do not say: "hard work is suitable to the poor and the workers, the blacksmiths and the builders, to the sons of artisans, not to the sons of important and noble persons"[…] do not say " I have all I need to be able to eat and drink without work" ' this springs from vicious laziness and destroys the order of the creator who said "You shall eat from the fruit of your work". He who lives on the work of another man while he has himself the ability to work is a thief and a plunderer (in Sumner 1986: 143).

This quote reminds us of Gäbre-Heywät's loathing for unproductive activities such as war and banditry, to which the concluding portion of this paper is dedicated.

Gäbre-Heywät saw nineteenth century Ethiopia as a country plagued by peasant unrest, banditry and war. What he described can be compared to the rise and fall of predatory states in West Africa, and certainly to other political realities in modern Europe: it is not an Ethiopian specificity but the result of political and economic contingencies that in his opinions should be superseded. Gäbre-Heywät was aware of the limits of a warrior class that was exhausting its options and whose reproduction had become unsustainable. Messay is on target when he contends that war-prone values were not only Ethiopian but also European and that "in terms of conflict and war, European history is by far unsurpassed" (2006: 820). However, there is a corollary to this historical truth: European history was indeed hampered by violence and warfare until it took a sharp turn in 1492, when political and economic anxieties were unleashed overseas.

According to the world-system school and its acolytes Europe had hardly any primacy before the *age of explorations*. It is during this period that European development gained momentum: precisely at the moment when the negative effects of a militarist and looting mentality which had hindered European development became, to use an economic term, externalities. The social and economic costs sustained to maintain armies were progressively transferred abroad while economic resources were imported in Europe. However, Ethiopia did not have its 1492, i.e. she never engaged in exploration and exploitation on a world scale. Warlike values and a skilled warrior class can be a defining asset to a nation capable of expanding and ravaging other societies. However armies are unproductive entities by definition and militarism is sustainable in the long run only when accompanied by territorial expansion: in other words a state can afford militarism if the cost is externalized, forced upon somebody else. The choice for a militarist society is therefore between expansion or implosion as the histories of imperial Japan, Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire demonstrated.

What does this perspective tell us about nineteenth century Ethiopia? As Teshale Tibebu put it, the predatory state meant an "intermittent destruction of productive forces […] [as] the predatory warrior was a professional destroyer" (Teshale 1995: 33). In the long run a predatory logic is unsustainable especially when it clashes with other entities also expanding with a predatory intent: when expansion is halted the process of forced wealth extraction becomes exquisitely a domestic one. Once Ethiopia's boundaries coincided with those imposed by European powers, for the survival of the system, the

only alternative to expansion seemed to be inward exploitation. Menelik's *southern marches* constituted the proverbial swan song. The Empire reached its maximal extension as European and African powers were limiting its ability to expand any further, it incorporated areas rich with agricultural surplus which prolonged the agony of an unsustainable regime. At the end of the nineteenth century, Ethiopia was being incorporated willy-nilly in the capitalist world economy, what remained to be determined was the modality of incorporation and how it could have modernized saving its political and cultural sovereignty.

Gäbre-Heywät wanted to jettison the most anachronistic aspects of the Ethiopian social structure to preserve its culture and material independence, making Ethiopia a modern sovereign nation. Messay's fascinating notion of "survival ethos" was at the very center of Gäbre-Heywät's concerns: one could argue that it was indeed a sentiment of survival to lead Gäbre-Heywät's intellectual production. Gäbre-Heywät was explicit about his predilection for capitalism as he saw Ethiopia immerged in the world economy, forced to reform itself to stand up to the challenge of modernity. Gäbre-Heywät can be called a pro-capitalism bourgeois intellectual, yet one can still espouse capitalism without being Eurocentric. As argued by a plethora of scholars related to the *world-system school* (Gunder Frank 1998; Kenneth Pomerantz 2000; Janet Abu Lughod 1989; Jack Goody 2004) capitalism was a system well in place before the so called *rise of the West*. By the early thirteenth century, if not earlier, capitalism was already embracing Eurasia: according to this model, modern capitalism is not European but the result of complex Eurasian dynamics that extended to Africa and later incorporated the Atlantic world. Gäbre-Heywät, obviously unaware of such complexities, simply saw capitalism as an unstoppable force and he saw it right. Dying before the "short century" had managed to give birth to the two big alternatives – Communism and Nazi-Fascism - Gäbre-Heywät could not have elaborated an alternative outlook.

In conclusion: Gäbre-Heywät saw unstoppable change flowing in from Europe but refrained from judging these forces of change as inherently better, as part of a superior civilization. His thought lacked the ideological stiffness that characterized visions later elaborated by Marxist intellectuals in Ethiopia and Africa. The flexibility and compromising nature of his stance – the idea of taking the best of two worlds and make it work – could be seen as the serene perspective of somebody who had been spared the horrors and sufferance of colonialism. Gäbre-Heywät was oblivious to colonialism and its racist ideology: having been spared the evil of colonial domination he was capable of reasoning without the heavy baggage of colonial oppression. His legacy should be rediscovered because with its uncanny lucidity it bears testimony to an African intellectual's quest to secure to his country a sovereign modernity.

Shiferaw Bekele reminded us that "the revolutionaries of the seventies were not really inspired by [… the *japanizers,* and…] it should be remembered that there was a sharp generational gap between the pre- and post-war intellectuals" (1994: 110). This consideration is central to the understanding of Ethiopia's intellectual history. During the Italian occupation the so called *japanizers* had died, retired or colluded with the Fascist regime (Bahru 1991). Only decades later would their ideas be rediscovered. In the meanwhile Ethiopia and Africa had seen the development of several strains of nationalist thought, the spreading of Marxism and the construction of a continent-wide network of intellectuals, freedom fighters and Pan-African ideas. Haile Sellassie's educational programs started to attract foreign African students which proved key to the process of radicalization as they exposed Ethiopian intellectuals to the evils of the

colonial experience, making an even more convincing case for the equation between capitalism and exploitation.

The new context of Ethiopian intellectual history, faithful to the tradition of "creative incorporation," continued with the ancient practice, yet this time sentiments of awe such as those of Gäbre-Heywät were superseded – and quite rightly so - by those of rage and hatred against an exploitative West. One should hope that the future would yield the right intellectual climate for the valorization of intellectual contributions such as Gäbre-Heywät's, beyond preconceived notions of what is African and what European since – as Paulin Hountondji put it - "to acknowledge Africans' freedom of thought, one [has] to get rid of all sorts of essentialist and particularist doctrines born of a hundred years of Africanism."

Bibliography

Abu-Lughod, Janet L.. 1989. *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Addis Hiwet. 1975. *Ethiopia: From Autocracy to Revolution*. London: 'Review of African political economy. London: Onyx Press.

Amin, Samir. 1989. *Eurocentrism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Appiah, Anthony. 2006. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. London: Allen Lane.

Ayandele, Emmanuel Ayankanmi. 1974. *The Educated Elite in the Nigerian Society.*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Bahru Zewde. 1993. 'The Ethiopian Intelligentsia and the Italo-Ethiopian Was 1935-1941.' The Int'l Journal of African Historical Studies, Vol.26(2), pp. 271-295.

Bahru Zewde. 2001. *Pioneers of Change in Ethiopia*. Oxford: J. Currey.

Balsvik, Randi Ronning. 1985. *Haile Sellassie's Students: The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution, 1952-1977*. Lansing, Michigan State University.

Betts, Raymond F. 2004. *Decolonization*. New York: Routledge.

Blaut, James. 2000. *Eight Eurocentric Historians*. New York: Guilford.

Caulk, Richard. 1978. 'Armies as Predators: Soldiers and Peasants in Ethiopia c. 1850-1935.' *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.11(3), pp. 457-493.

Caulk, Richard. 1978. 'Dependency, Gebre Heywet Baykedagn, and the Birth of Ethiopian Reformism,' *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, April 13-16, Chicago, pp. 569-581.

Caulk, Richard. 1984. 'Bad Men of the Borders: Shum and Shefta in Northern Ethiopia in the 19th Century.' *The Int'al Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.17(2), pp. 201-227.

Cooper, Frederick. 1996. *Decolonization and African Society the Labor Question in French and British Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, Frederick. 2005. *Colonialism in Question : Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Crummey, Donald 1986. 'Banditry and resistance: noble and peasant in nineteenth-century Ethiopia' in Donald Crummey, *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa,* London: James Currey.

Crummey, Donald. 1990. 'Society, State and Nationality in the Recent Historiography of Ethiopia.' *Journal of African History,* Vol. 31(1), pp 103-19.

Curtin, Philip D.. 1972. 'African Reactions in Perspective,' in Curtin, Philip D., and James W. Fernandez.. *Africa & the West*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Gabrahiwot Baykadagn and Tenkir Bonger (edt.). 1995. *State and Economy of Early 20th Century Ethiopia.* Chicago: Karnak House.

Gabrahiwot Baykadagn, Kebede Beletou, and Jacques Bureau. 1993. *L'empereur Menelik & L'ethiopie*. Paris: Maison des études éthiopiennes.

Goody, Jack. 2004. *Capitalism and Modernity: The Great Debate*. Cambridge: Polity.

Gunder Frank, Andre. 1998. *Reorient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hobsbawm, E. J. and T. O. Ranger. 1992. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hountondji, Paulin J.. 1983. *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kennedy, Paul M. 1987. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000.* New York: Random House.

McCann, James. 1999. *Green Land, Brown Land, Black Land: An Environmental History of Africa, 1800-1990*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

McNeill, William Hardy. 1963. *The Rise of the West; a History of the Human Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Messay Kebede. 1999. *Survival and Modernization - Ethiopia's Enigmatic Present: A Philosophical Discourse*. Lawrenceville: Red Sea P.

Messay Kebede. 2001."From Marxist-Leninism to Ethnicity: the Sideslips of Ethiopian Elitism." *International Conference on Contemporary Development Issues in Ethiopia*. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, August 16-18.

Messay Kebede. 2006. 'Gebrehiwot Baykedagn, Eurocentirsm, and the Decentering of Ethiopia.' *Journal of Black Studies.* Vol.36(6), pp. 815-832.

Mudimbe, V. Y. 1988. *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Pomeranz, Kenneth. 2000. *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rouaud, Alain. *Afä-Wärq, 1868-1947: Un Intellectuel Éthiopien Témoin De Son Temps*. Paris: CNRS, 1991

Scott, William. 1993. *The Sons of Sheba's Race : African-Americans and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1941*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Shiferaw Bekele, 1994. 'Gäbrä-Heywät Baykädañ and the Emergence of a Modern Intellectual Discourse,' *Sociology Ethnology Bullletin*, Vol.1, pp. 106-121.

Sumner, Claude. 1986. *The Source of African Philosophy: The Ethiopian Philosophy of Man*. Stuttgart: F. Steiner.

Teodros Kiros. 1994. *The Meditations of Zara Yaqob , a 17th-Century Ethiopian Philosopher*. Boston: Boston University.

Teshale Tibebu. 1995. *The Making of Modern Ethiopia: 1896-1974*. Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press.

Wallerstein, Immanuel M.. 2004. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Zachernuk, Philip Serge. 2000. *Colonial Subjects: An African Intelligentsia and Atlantic Ideas.* Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Economic and Social Innovation during the Last Years of Emperor Mənilək's Life and the Short Reign of Ləj Iyasu

Richard Pankhurst[1]

The last years of Emperor Mənilək's life, and the brief reign of his grandson and successor Ləj Iyasu, tend to be ignored in the history of Ethiopian modernization. This period was however not insignificant in the story of development. Influenced by the advance of market forces, and by the old Emperor's earlier modernizing agenda, the years 1909-16 represented a continuation of the previous reform era, and witnessed continued modernization.

Introduction

Mənilək's Innovations and their Influence

Modernization in the immediate post- Mənilək period was in its infancy. The old Emperor's reign had however witnessed several important innovations. Earlier developments included the establishment of the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway; the telephone-telegraph system, a Russian-run hospital, the Bank of Abyssinia; the Mənilək School; and the postal service. Pankhurst (1968).

The Ethiopian Government, by Iyasu's time, also operated a mechanical flour mill, a printing-press, and a munitions factory. Four private industrial enterprises were also in operation: a saw-mill, a grinding-mill, a tannery; and a soap-factory. Montandon (1913: 375-6); Garretson (2000: 148-50).

Ministerial Appointments

Iyasu's reign witnessed several interesting political appointments. The most important was that of Nägadras Ḫaylä Giyorgis as the country's first Prime Minister. Just as Mənilək had set up Ethiopia's first Cabinet, his grandson appointed its first Prime Minister. A Minute Book for 1915, kindly made available by Wolbert Smidt, reveals that the Ministers reported to Ḫaylä Giyorgis regularly. The importance of this administrative arrangement was emphasized by the chronicler, Gäbrä Əgzi'abh.ər Eləyas. He declares that 'all the government administration' was in Ḫaylä Giyorgis's hands, and that 'all the nobles used to gather around his house to obtain his favour'. He adds: 'As Pharaoh… entrusted Joseph with all his money … so Iyasu entrusted Ḫaylä Giyorgis with all his money and the government administration'. Mers'é Ḫazen (2004: 147, 151); Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 323).

Iyasu's reign also witnessed the appointment of two foreign-educated Ministers. (1) Däğazmač Abraha Ar'aya, a kinsman of Emperor Yoh.annəs. Abraha, who had studied in Eritrea, and Italy, was appointed Minister of the Interior. He was chosen, according to

[1] Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, POB 1896, Addis Ababa, Pankhurst@ethionet.et

Ethiopian historian Märs'e Ḫazän, 'precisely because he was considered knowledgeable about the ways of modernization', and began, the chronicle says, to run his Ministry on 'modern', i.e. European, lines. His appointment was popular among the capital's foreign community. (Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 106-7); Gebre-Igziabher and Molvaer (1994: 325).

(2) Täsämma Əšäte, who had studied in Germany, was an intellectual, musician and singer, who had learnt to drive, and 'worked his way', according to the Syrian businessman Habib Ydlibi, 'through his wife', who was a Princess. Iyasu, who sometimes lived in Täsämma's house, appointed him as the first Minister of Posts, Telephones and Telegraphs. Täsämma was also put in charge of the capital's very popular thermal baths, which were frequented by Iyasu and his court, and were a lucrative source of Government revenue. Ydlibi (2006:200). Täsämma later imported Ethiopia's first gramophone – which reportedly could sing in several languages! (Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 111-2); Gebre-Igziabher and Molvaer (1994: 322).

Economic & Financial Developments

Extension of the Ǧibuti Railway

Innovation in Iyasu's time, as in that of Mənilək, centred largely on Addis Ababa, then little more than two decades old, but rapidly expanding.

The most important technological development of Iyasu's reign, and one which brought one of his grandfather's principal achievements to fruition, was the extension of the railway to Addis Ababa. This extension, was agreed on 6 April 1913 when Iyasu and General Famin, the French vice-president of the railway company, concluded an agreement for the construction of the final stretch of line from the Awaš river to Addis Ababa.

This agreement was also psychologically significant in that it overcame the widespread belief, recorded by the capital's resident pharmacist Dr Mérab, that the Awaš constituted a 'sacred frontier', which no foreigner should ever cross. This was thus, he claims, a happy time for enlightened Ethiopians, who wanted their country to enter the modern world, but a sad one for those mistrusting Western civilization. Mérab (!922: II, 626); Prouty (1986: 340).

Construction of the line made steady progress. Iyasu and his cousin Täfäri Mäkonnən (later Emperor Ḫaylä S'əllase) entrained for Ǧibuti in April 1915; and the railway finally reached Addis Ababa on 21 May. Guèbrè Sellassié (1931-2: II, 628). Around this time Iyasu allocated land for the city's railway station. Ydlibi (2006: 247).

Hydro-Electric Power

A no less exciting innovation, in 1911-12, was the harnessing of hydro-electric power from the Aqaqi river, with two 74 horse-power dynamos supplied by a Manchester firm. (F.O., *Diplomatic and Consular Report for 1911-1 on the Trade of Abyssinia*, p. 13).

Banking, and Printed Money

The Bank of Abyssinia developed significantly in the post- Mənilək period. Originally operating in a small hut in Ras Mäkonnən's compound, the bank moved in 1910 to a specially- built stone structure. Designed by an Italian architect Vaudetto, it was constructed by his compatriot Castagna.

The Bank also expanded in the provinces. It had originally begun with two provincial branches (in Harär and Dere Dawa), but three additional ones were opened in 1912: at Däse, Gore, and Dämbidolo. Mérab (1922: II, 124); Pankhurst (1965: VIII, 394-5).

A further innovation, in 1915, was that of bank notes, of 5, 10, 100 and 500 thaler denominations. Such notes were at first accepted only by foreign merchants, who found it inconvenient to rely solely on silver coins, 500 of which weighed 14 kilos. Guèbrè Sellassié (1930-1: II, 596).

Two French banking institutions, the Banque de l'Indochine and the Compagnie de l'Afrique Orientale, likewise established themselves in Addis Ababa in 1915. Bouicoiran, (1918: XI, 201). Contact with Ǧibuti also led to the circulation of French currency at Dere Dawä, and along the railway. Mérab (1922: II, 595).

Another development was the Ethiopian postal authority's introduction in January 1912 of money-orders, which were 'much appreciated' by the capital's Ethiopian population. Tristant (1977: 471); Eadie (1924:174-7).

Commercial Consciousness

This period witnessed intensified Ethiopian commercial consciousness. The Bank of Abyssinia's annual report for 1911 states that merchants had stopped burying Maria Theresa thalers. 'Many Abyssinian chiefs' had therefore begun putting their money into commercial concerns – and were 'only too willing to contract with European merchants' for the sale of ivory, coffee, wax, and civet. (F.O., 1294/27541 *Annual Report of the Bank of Abyssinia*, June 1911)**.**

Attempted Reform of State Finances

Soon after assuming power Iyasu became aware, according to Märs'e Ḫazän, of the need to reform the Ethiopian tax structure. He gave orders, Gäbrä Igzi'abeh.er records, for a review of Government property - the first in Ethiopian history. He instructed the Chief Controller, Aläqa Märawi Sə'əlu to examine the Palace supply of 'tools and weapons, silver, gold and furniture', and to investigate State revenue and expenditure, and outstanding loans. This study revealed that expenses 'greatly exceeded' income, and that loans were greater than assets. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 342-3). Other 'mismanagement' was discovered. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 124-5).

Faced with this report Iyasu appointed a new Minister of the Pen: S.ähafe Tä'əzaz Afäwärq, who was reportedly well qualified for his job, as he had been a secretary since childhood, and had worked 'faithfully and peacefully' with his predecessor, chronicler S.ähafe Tä'əzaz Gäbrä S'əllase. Aläqa Märawi was later replaced by Empress T.aytu's former secretary, Ato Wäldä Mäsqäl Tariku, who was assisted by a group of young men, who had studied foreign languages, and accounting. They comprised three Christians, and two Muslims, one an ex- interpreter at the Turkish Legation.

The situation uncovered was so serious that some State offices were sealed. It was found that many loans were ignored, and money and property missing. Iyasu ordered those responsible to be indicted in the *Čəlot* (royal court of justice). Many officials were prosecuted, and some imprisoned. Those implicated included the Finance Minister, Bäğərond Yəggäzu. This earned Iyasu 'many enemies', not only because of the investigation, but also because he used it as a pretext to have officials he disliked 'charged, dishonoured and harassed'. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 125, 159-60).

Distinction between State Funds and the Monarch's Personal Funds

Iyasu was apparently the first Ethiopian ruler to draw a distinction between state property and the monarch's personal property. After Mənilək's death the latter's widow, Empress T.aytu, asked for a share of her husband's wealth, but Iyasu (who had no liking

for his grandfather's widow), replied: 'The gold and the silver in the Palace are for the government of the people,… it is not the Emperor's or your [private] property'. He nevertheless gave the old lady several thousand *berr***,** and 'allowed her to take all the gold and silver jewellery in her store'.¨Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 348).

Addis Ababa Land Ownership

An important development of this time related to Addis Ababa land tenure. Land in and around the city in Mənilək's day had been allotted at the Emperor's pleasure. With the growth of the town, the erection of stone structures - and uncertainty as to the political future, the nobles pressed for greater security of tenure. Charles. Rey, a British businessman, reports (1927: 183-4) that when Mənilək fell fatally ill 'a number of the big chiefs became nervous', fearing that a future monarch might dispossess them. They therefore persuaded the Regent, Ras Tässäma, to grant them title deeds, 'sealed in due form for their [hitherto] temporary possessions'.

Addis Ababa Urban Growth

This period witnessed the continued expansion of Addis Ababa. Dr Mérab estimated that a hundred stone structures were erected between 1908 and 1913, by which time two hundred were in existence.

Brick-building began around 1907, and four brick factories came into existence in the next few years. One was owned by Castagna, and the others by Greeks. Mérab 1(922*:* II, 130).

Addis Ababa Municipality – and Guards

A notable achievement of Iyasu's reign was the founding by Ḫaylä Giyorgis of an Addis Ababa Municipality. 'Working faithfully and making diligence his guide', Gäbrä Əgzi'abh.er says, he established a municipality 'like that of the European system'. To ensure law and order Ḫaylä Giyorgis appointed municipal night guards. Established in 1914 as an elite force, they came mainly from the north of the country, whence they had earlier been recruited for the Italian invasion of Libya. Having been in the Italian colony of Tripoli, they were known as *Trimbule*. They were armed with Italian Albin rifles, i.e. those used by Italy's Alpine troops. Mersé Ḫazen: (2004: 148-9).

The Trimbule, perhaps because of their subservience to a foreign power, were not highly respected by Iyasu. He is said to have delighted (like Emperor Bäkaffa before him) in riding around at night incognito. When stopped by the Trimbule he allegedly sometimes fired at them. Mersé Ḫazen (1924: 147, 162): Gebre-Igziabher and Molvaer (1994: 323).

The Trimbule, as northerners, were independent of the Šhäwan nobility – but as a European-trained, and -equipped, squad, foreshadowed Ras Täfäri Mäkonnen's army of mercenaries who had served with the British East African forces in World War I.

Municipal Regulations on House-Letting

The growth of the capital led to the enactment of urban regulations. A decree of 14 November 1913 stated that persons letting houses, and breaking their agreements, created trouble for the Government. Landlords and tenants were accordingly ordered to register their transactions at a police station - and anyone violating an agreement could be fined 10 thalers. Eadie (1924:190-1).

Imperial Hotel, and Smaller Private Hotels

The Imperial Hotel, founded by Empress T.aytu in 1907, subsequently underwent important reorganisation. It was re-opened in 1909, when it was taken over by a Greek entrepreneur, M. Bololakos, who further developed it. Mérab (1922, II, 122).

This period also witnessed the establishment of several smaller private Addis Ababa hotels. The first, according to Dr Mérab, was opened in 1909. An increasing number of restaurants, cafés and drinking houses also came into existence at this time. Mérab (1922, II, 122).

Foreign Merchants and Entrepreneurs

Numerous foreign merchants and entrepreneurs, mainly Armenians and Greeks, arrived in the capital in this period. They included an Armenian import-exporter, Sevadjian, and a Greek liquor-dealer, Kallinikos, both of whom came in 1909; a Greek grocer, Kiousis, and an Armenian ironware dealer, Mesropian, in 1910; two Greek entrepreneurs, Doucas, and Sarris, and an Indian businessman, Abdul Hussein Akbarally, in 1911. Among arrivals in 1912 were an Armenian watchmaker, Antranikian, and a Greek entrepreneur, Panayotato. Foreigners arriving in 1913 included a Greek restaurateur, Costantinides, and baker, Hadjigrigoriou; and two Armenians: a café and billiard-room proprietor, Knadjian, an import-exporter, Israelian, and a Greek businessman, Theodossianes. Arrivals in 1914 included a Greek iron-monger, Dritsonas, and a Greek import-export firm, the Liverato brothers, an Indian importer, Bhagvandas, an Austrian commercial representative, Alfred Abel, and a German actor turned pharmacist, Hakim Zahn. Among those arriving in 1915, the last year of Iyasu's rule, were two Armenian craftsmen, Margossian, an ironsmith, and Kehyayian, a tanner and saddle-maker. That year also witnessed the coming of representatives of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Zervos (1936: 187-204).

Aliens' Registration

This influx of foreigners was followed by changes in their legal status. Frenchmen had been given protected status by the Klobukowski, or Franco-Ethiopian, Treaty of January 1908. Early in the following year, it was agreed that this privilege should apply to all Europeans. *(Semeur*, 528).

Increasing foreign immigration led to the enactment of a further decree on 28 May 1913. It stated that aliens not registered with Consulates were no longer permitted to reside in Addis Ababa, and that unregistered foreigners should register forthwith. Consul-less foreigners wishing to acquire Ethiopian nationality had to present proof of allegiance to the Ethiopian Government. Eadie (1924: 186-8). Many foreigners, Armenians in particular, thus acquired Ethiopian nationality.

Proposed Elimination of Eucalyptus Tree

Difficulties relating to the fast-growing eucalyptus tree, which Mənilək had introduced two decades earlier, came to the fore in this period. Iyasu's Minister of Agriculture issued a decree on 21 March 1913. It stated that the old Emperor had introduced the eucalyptus because the area of the capital was virtually treeless. His intention, according to the edict, was also to introduce other trees, with useful wood and edible fruit. Trial had established that these, among others, included the mulberry that yielded fruit, while its leaves were edible by livestock and could serve in silk production. The decree stated that Iyasu thought that a 'tree with such advantages' should be cultivated. The eucalyptus, by contrast, 'destroyed the soil', 'dried up' the land, 'sucked the wells dry'

and killed other plants. Persons cultivating eucalyptus trees were ordered to eradicate two-thirds of them, and replace them with other trees supplied by the Ministry. Eadie, (1924: 177-81).

Dr Mérab recalls that this decree applied to both Ethiopians and foreigners - only the *Abun* and foreign legations were exempt. Persons disobeying the decree were liable to have their trees pulled up, and confiscated, and could be fined 100 thalers. Within three days the majority of Ethiopians and many foreigners had complied with Government orders, and former eucalyptus fields were reduced to pot-holes. Mérab (1922: II, 129).

Addis Ababa Church-Building

Iyasu continued his grandfather's programme of Addis Ababa church-building, by founding one of the city's larger churches: Mädh.ane ʻAläm church at Qäčäne. It was completed in July 1911. Mérab (1922: II, 129).

This church was entrusted to Iyasu's Father Confessor, Wäldä Giyorgis, whose hostility to foreign brands of Christianity was reminiscent of that of Emperor Yoh.annəs a generation earlier. Wäldä Giyorgis urged his young master to 'eradicate' the Protestant and Catholic faiths. He declared that missionaries claimed to teach the Gospel, but were actually bribing people with gifts of clothes and sugar, and corrupting their character, so that that they would no longer honour their government or love their country. He went so far as to claim that missionary converts were spies, who in the event of invasion would serve as guides for the enemy. Iyasu was reportedly much influenced by Wäldä Giyorgis's teaching, and responded by arresting a number of Mission school students, several of whom were flogged. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 108-9); Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 326).

The great Church of Giyorgis, which Mənilək begun, was also completed at this time. Built by Castagna, it was inaugurated by Iyasu in 1912 on the seventh anniversary of the Battle of ʻAdwa. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 108-9); Mérab (1922: II, 129); Montandon (1913: 382).

Asmära Consulate

Realising the importance of relations with the Italians in Eritrea, Iyasu's government established Ethiopia's first Consulate in Asmära in the Summer of 1915. The post of Consul was given to a nobleman, Wässäne Zamanel**,** who spoke French, and was said to understand wireless telegraphy and the sending of telegrams. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 345).

The consulate had a staff of six, and was supplied with an Ethiopian flag, a royal seal, portraits of Mənilək and Iyasu, a map of the Ethio-Eritrean frontier, and uniforms for two guards (Minute Book: 49-50). Wässäne was reportedly in contact with non-Italian Europeans, who briefed him on Italy's aggressive intentions. Gebre-Igziabher and Molvaer (1994: 345).

Dere Dawa Municipality

Iyasu's Syrian aide Ydlibi was appointed Governor of the railway town of Dere Dawa on 28 February 1915. He established its Municipality, and re-organized its police – providing it with salaries and uniforms. A prison service was also set up, and some new road-building undertaken.

Particularly important was the Dere Dawa customs, which, according to his daughter, May Ydlibi, was her father's 'creation from A. to Z. He designed the buildings, devisd the forms and registers, and taught each employee his duty, from that of the Guard up to

that of the Manager'. Ydlibi also engaged two Europeans. 'one as Manager and the other as Chief Clerk responsible for the statistical work'. Ydilbi (2006: 221).

Ydlibi also attempted to reorganize the Harär taxes, and showed, his daughter claims, that its tax revenues, running at 600,000 thalers, should have been 'at least three million'. Ydilby '2006: 212, 228-9; n.d. 182).

Two Small New Towns

Iyasu founded two small new towns. One was Gəšän in Wällo, where his mother was buried. Mérab (1922: II, 270). The other was Wäyna-Hara, in Adäl, to which he gave his horse-name, T.əna, or T.ənaye. There he reportedly donned Muslim dress, to win the support of the local population. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 348).

Slave-raiding in Gəmira

In 1912, the last year of Mənilək's reign, Iyasu undertook an expedition to Gəmira, land of the Šanqəlla, or dark-skinned people. This campaign, Ethiopia's last large-scale slave-raid, was reminiscent of his grandfather's expedition to Wälayta (formerly Wälamo) in 1894. Both operations were characterized by extensive seizure of slaves, and had significant demographic implications for Addis Ababa. Mérab (1922: II, 625).

Iyasu's expedition was carried out, Dr Mérab believed, by 5,000 soldiers, whose behaviour shocked educated Ethiopian opinion. Märs'é Hazän observed that Iyasu should 'not be praised' for his action Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 118), while Gäbrä Əgzi'abh.ər recalls that the prince and his men 'captured those he captured and killed those he killed'- and allowed his followers to kill as they wished, giving 'their lust to kill full reign'. At the end of the fighting, the defeated Gəmira chiefs pleaded to Iyasu that they had never had any intention of refusing to pay their taxes, or resisting his army, but that the latter had 'destroyed them in a surprise attack'.

Iyasu spent three months in Gəmira, after which he assigned the survivors, 1,785 men, women and children, to his followers, whom he instructed to take to Addis Ababa. Many Gəmiras were settled near Iyasu's compound toward the north-east of the capital, in an area named Gəmira, and along the road to Ent.ot.o. There 'they built houses', Gäbrä Əgzi'abh.ər states, 'planted vegetables and trees, and bore children'. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 124); Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 335); Mérab (1922: II, 261).

Iyasu took a personal interest in these ex-slaves: 'he chose youths from among them and made them blowers of trumpets of various kinds and beaters of royal drums' – thus developing a royal band. He also employed the old men 'as wood-cutters and gardeners'. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 124); Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 337).

Big-Game Hunting

The Ethiopian Government, aware of the depletion of wild animals, issued a decree on 23 August 1913, recalling that big-game hunting had previously been prohibited. Orders were accordingly repeated that anyone hunting should immediately return to their homes. Eadie (1924: 188-90). This decree seems however to have been largely unenforceable.

State Consolidation

Expeditions in Quest of National Integration

Iyasu, like many earlier monarchs, spent much time on expeditions – which took him all over the country. Gäbrä Əgzi'abh.ər states that the prince wished to inspect the entire empire, and all its borders. He accordingly gave orders, on 11 September 1911, for his followers to clear forty metre wide highways in all directions. Seven months later, on 13 April 1912, he rode northwards, with only 200 horsemen, to Däse.

Many of Mənilək's old courtiers followed Iyasu, as they had his grandfather, but he dismissed them, brusquely, saying: 'When I set out with young men… to subdue areas not under effective government, you should not have followed me...'. Arrogantly he added, 'You cannot run as fast as us. You have grown fat. You have become old'. His courtiers accordingly returned to Addis Ababa. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994, 327). Iyasu's favourite, Täsämma Əšäte nevertheless accompanied his master. Mersé Ḫazen (2004, 116). Märs'é Hazän (162) confirms this account, declaring that Iyasu mocked Menilek's obese old officials, calling them 'My father's prize sheep or goats'. Sometimes, however, he reportedly disturbed them by saying to them, 'Let your wife come to see me'. This clash between the young ruler and his grandfather's former followers represented a rite of passage between the old era and the new, between the era of the aging Mənilək and that of his young, but still untried, grandson.

Iyasu, according to the chronicle, won considerable acclaim for the speed with which he rushed around the country, on horseback. A *qəné,* or traditional poem, Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 324) declared:

> 'You do not know whether he [Iyasu] will come by night or by day.
> 'Take care not to be found idle [when he comes].
> 'Iyasu… is faster than rain'.

Such expeditions show that Mənilək's grandson, though a child of the 20th century, was likewise in the tradition of his earlier predecessor Tewodros. Both rulers shunned the comfort and luxury of fixed capitals - and were renowned for the rapidity of their marches.

Iyasu, the chronicle states, was generally accompanied by only about 300 men. 'He travelled fast', and 'never warned his soldiers in advance'. Telling only a few of his most loyal officials in secret of his plans, he would mount his horse, T.ena, while 'his chosen soldiers would mount quickly…, with their guns on their shoulders, and be on their way'. Dispensing with the immense number of soldiers and camp-followers traditionally accompanying an Ethiopian army, he had few supply problems. Wherever he went, 'the governors and peasants would provide fodder for the horses and bread for the soldiers, and oxen as meat'. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 334).

Iyasu's Expeditions, and Addis Ababa Life

Iyasu's frequent departures from the capital had important consequences, particularly when he was accompanied by a significant number of followers. One result, noted by Thesiger on 3 November 1912, was 'a depressing effect on trade'. (F.O., 403/1293/49890, Thesiger to F.O., 2 November 1912). Dr Mérab on the other hand held that the capital at such times was quieter, and free from molestation by the soldiers, who might number at least 10,000, including importuning drunkards. Merab (1922, II, 625).

Another effect of Iyasu's expeditions was that his Ministers were left leaderless, and freer to make their own decisions – or sink into inertia. Mérab (1922: II, 625).

Däse

One of Iyasu's expeditions took him to Däse, where he stayed with his father Ras Mika'el, governor of Wällo, and reportedly 're-organized the government'. Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 332).

Security

Whether because of, or despite, Iyasu's frequent expeditions, Ethiopia on the eve of World War I was widely regarded as militarily stable. A British Foreign Office note of 9 July 1913 argued that the country was 'not likely to break up', and that, if it did, the chiefs would 'unite to resist any aggressor. It added that anyone attempting such aggression, 'would find a very difficult task before them'. (F.O., 1572/31574, F.O. Minute of 9 July 1913).

Proposed European Tour

Ethiopia was by then so poised for modernization that Thesiger felt, in the Summer of 1912, that Iyasu should be invited on an educational tour of Western Europe. Discussing this with Abunä Matewos, he explained that he considered it 'excellent' if the future ruler should 'have some knowledge of Europe' and 'see for himself what civilization could do for a country and understand the new influence which was beginning to play upon his country'.

Thesiger accordingly asked Matewos 'whether he had not thought of suggesting that Iyasu should visit Britain, France and Italy'. The Abun expressed himself 'in favour of the idea', and declared that the Ethiopian Ministers 'might be persuaded' to agree to Iyasu's absence 'for a period of six months'. Elaborating on his personal analysis of the possibility of Ethiopia's modernization, Thesiger continued:

> Abyssinia is now at the parting of the ways, the old feudal system is worn out and can never be re-established; new influences are now at work and new desires have been created among the people,…the country must either accept civilization or drop out of existence as an independent Power. Modern ideas are getting a certain hold among the younger generation, but are strongly opposed by the old chiefs of Menelik who would resist all innovations by force if necessary.
>
> …Yasu will have to decide which of the two parties he falls in with, and I would strongly recommend that, before he has taken a decision, he should be induced to accept the chance of seeing what the strength of modern civilization is. He is now of an age to appreciate what he sees, and if his tour through Abyssinia were to be followed by a visit to England, France and Italy I believe the lesson he would learn would have an inestimable effect on the future of Abyssinia.
>
> (F.O., 371/34842, Thesiger to F.O.26 July 1912).

This proposal was however rejected in London. The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Grey, replied, on 13 September, drawing attention to what he termed Iyasu's 'precarious position', and argued that 'the danger that his absence at a critical moment might have… might be held to outweigh the advantages…'(F.O. 371/34842, E. Grey to W. Thesiger, 13 September 1912). The British envoy's initiative thus came to naught, and, as events transpired, sealed Iyasu's fate.

Social Development and Reform

This period witnessed not insignificant developments in education and medicine.

Education

Iyasu gave some encouragement to modern education. On 16 July 1911, he went to his alma mater, the Mənilək School, founded by his grandfather three years earlier, and awarded prizes. The first prize, of 100 thalers, went to Abäbä Yəbsa, son of an Oromo nobleman.(Mérab (1922, II, 127).

A year or so later, on 24 November 1912, the Alliance Française inaugurated a French school. Entrusted to the Frères de Saint Gabriel, it had a French orientation, that balanced the Anglophile bias of the Mənilək School which was run by Coptic Egyptian teachers. Mérab (1922, II. 128).

Printing-Presses, and French-language Newspaper

Printing expanded significantly in this period. In May 1911 Iyasu inaugurated a new printing press, the Imprimerie Ethiopienne, the equipment for which had earlier been imported by the French trader Léon Chefneux. A further printing-press was introduced in 1913 by a French businessman, M. Devages. Zervos (1936: 271).

Ethiopia's first foreign-language newspaper was launched at this time by another Frenchman, Léopold Polart. Published weekly it was entitled *Le Courrier d'Ethiopie,* and printed on Devages's press. Zervos (1936: 270).

The Mənilək Hospital, and Dr Mérab's Pharmacy

Faced with the closure of the old Russian Red Cross hospital in 1906, Iyasu's government in 1910 established a new hospital, the Mənilək II, which was situated on site of the earlier institution. Mérab (1922: II, 131).

That same year, on 1 December, Dr Mérab, a Georgian, founded the capital's first pharmacy - and named it the Pharmacie la Géorgie. Mérab (1922: II, 124).

Smallpox Vaccination

The Ethiopian Government was much concerned by the apparently growing incidence of smallpox. A decree by Nägadras Ḫaylä Giyorgis, as Minister of Commerce and Foreign Affairs, was accordingly issued on 11 March 1912. Stating that the disease had 'entered the country', it ordered Addis Ababa inhabitants to go for vaccination, either at the Mənilək Hospital, or by veterinary surgeons at nearby Gulläle. Vaccination, the edict stated, was *gratis,* and took 'no more than five minutes'. Eadie (1924:163-4).

This edict was followed by a second, issued on 9 August 1913. It stated that, though numerous vaccinations had been given, many people had not been treated, and had caught the infection and died. Unvaccinated persons were accordingly instructed to be vaccinated without delay - at a fee of two *piastres* per dose. Eadie : 1924: 180-1).

Jigger-fleas

This period apparently witnessed a northward expansion of jigger-flees. This was reportedly caused by increasing contacts between Šäwa and Boräna – where the insects were earlier prevalent. They were accordingly called Moyale, after the Boräna settlement of that name. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 154).

Thermal Baths

A much appreciated innovation in Addis Ababa, a city virtually without piped water, was the establishment in 1911 of thermal baths at Fəlwəha**.** Personally patronized by Iyasu, they were entrusted to Täsämma Əšäte, under whom annual receipts rose, according to Dr Mérab, from five or six hundred to 2,000 thalers. Mérab (1922. II, 152); Mersé Ḫazen (2004, 162).

Increased Coffee-drinking

Improved transport, and increased geographical mobility, led meanwhile to changes in social life. Contact with Muslim traders and others resulted for example, according to Märs'e Hazän, in the Šäwa peasants adopting coffee drinking. This custom had previously been common among Muslims, merchants, *qaləča*s**,** or witch-doctors, and *näft.äññoč*, or armed settlers, but now gained popularity among village women, who started drinking associations. More and more people became addicted to coffee. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 154).

Legal Developments

Several notable changes in laws affecting economic life took place at this time. Two of the most important related to tithes and inheritance.

Tithes

One of Iyasu's most important reforms sought to overhaul the cumbersome system of tithes instituted by Mənilək. Four officials and a secretary would travel around the country at harvest-time, and inspect the threshing-floors, to determine how many *dawəla*, or 100 kilo sacks, a peasant should pay as tax. These officials, who expected to be feasted, consisted of a village headman, a rich landlord, and two elected elders. Until they had decided upon the tax the peasant was forbidden from moving his grain - even if was in danger of damage by the rain or vermin.

This delay had two major problems. One was that peasants often seized the opportunity to tamper with stored harvests - so that inspectors might find that it consisted more of chaff than grain. A second problem was that inspectors often had insufficient time to visit threshing-floors - thus oblidging peasants to search out all four officials - who were tempted to over-estimate crop yields- thus causing the peasants much suffering.

Iyasu recognized that the feasting of officials constituted an unjust burden on the peasants, and that their obligation to search out the officials was likewise onerous. He therefore decreed, 'Let the peasant gather his harvest, and declare its amount under oath; tax collectors are not required'. This order reportedly much pleased the people, and led to an increase in taxes - for people feared to break their oath. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 114-15).

Inheritance

A second reform related to inheritance. Formerly when persons died childless, their land and houses were forfeited to the Government, and no funeral service was provided.

Iyasu abrogated this situation, and declared: 'Even if childless, let a person bequeath his or her property to a trusted relative, and let the latter provide a funeral service for the dead. The Government should no longer inherit such property'. Mersé Ḫazen (2004: 115); Gebre-Igziabiher and Molvaer (1994: 328-33).

Summary and Conclusions

The process of modernization initiated by Mənilək - and facilitated by market forces – continued during Iyasu's reign. This witnessed a consolidation of the Cabinet system introduced by Mənilək, as well as the appointment of the first Prime Minister, and the first two foreign-educated Ministers. Economic developments included the extension of the railway to Addis Ababa; and an expansion of the Bank of Abyssinia, with a new headquarters building, three new provincial branches, and the introduction of both paper money and postal orders, as well as the establishment of two French banking institutions, increased commercial consciousness, and the circulation of French currency along the railway line. Iyasu attempted to reorganize State finances, and allegedly for the first time drew a distinction between state funds and those of the monarch.

Addis Ababa, the site as in Mənilək's day of most innovations, continued to expand. Private land ownership was established, as well as a Municipality, with rent control – and municipal guards. Further stone buildings were erected, and the foreign trading community grew. The old T.aytu hotel was reorganized, and several other hotels, restaurants and drinking-houses set up. Registration of aliens was introduced, and many Armenians acquired Ethiopian nationality. An abortive attempt was made to scale down the town's dependence on the eucalyptus tree, and to introduce mulberries. Work on the Giyorgis church was completed, and a new church, that of Qäčäné Mädh.ane ´Alä̲m̲, erected.

Outside the capital a Consulate was established in Asmära, and the railway town of Dere Dawa expanded. A Municipality was set up, with a lucrative customs post. The administration of Däse was reportedly improved, and two small new towns, Gəšän in Wällo, and Wäynä-Hara, founded.

Iyasu undertook expeditions to bring the country, and in particular its periphery, under greater control. His absence from the capital enabled the Minister's to work under reduced supervision – but may also have contributed to governmental paralysis.

Iyasu was responsible for the last great Ethiopian slave raid, a bloody expedition to Gəmira. Many slaves were taken to Addis Ababa, where some were enrolled in a Palace band. Legislation was enacted, probably ineffectively, to curtail big-game hunting.

Progress was however achieved in education and health. The old Mənilək School, which Iyasu had attended, continued to turn out graduates – and a new school was operated by the Alliance Française. A new French-run printing-press was inaugurated, and published the country's first foreign-language newspaper. The earlier Russian hospital having closed several years earlier, a new one, named after Mənilək was founded. Vaccination for smallpox was introduced. Addis Ababa acquired popular thermal baths, and its first pharmacy, run by Dr Mérab. This period also witnessed a marked expansion in coffee-drinking – and possibly of jigger-fleas.

Legal reforms included an edict to improve the system of tithes, and substantial changes in the inheritance system to improve the lot of the peasantry.

References

Eadie, John. 1924. *An Amharic Reader.* Cambridge: University Press
Garretson, Peter. 2000. *A History of Addis Ababa from its Foundation in 1986 to 1910.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas and Molvaer, R.K. 1994. *Prowess, Piety and Politics. The Chronicle of Abeto Iyasu and Empress Zewditu of Ethiopia (1909-1930).* Köln: Rüdiger Köppe
Guèbrè Sellassié. 1930-1. Chronique du règne de Ménélik II. Paris: Maisonneuve
Mérab, Paul. 1921-9. *Impressions d'Ethiopie.* Paris: Ernest Leroux
Mersé Ḫazen, 2004. *Of What I Saw and Heard The Last Years of Emperor Menelik & the Brief Rule of Iyassu.* Addis Ababa: Zamra
Montandon, Georges. 1913. *Au pays Ghimirra* Neuchâtel: privately published
Pankhurst, Richard. 1968. *Economic History of Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Haile Sellassie University Press
Pankhurst, Richard. 1965. 'The History of Currency and Banking in Ethiopia'. *Ethiopia Observer.* VIII
Prouty, Chris. 1986. *Empress Taytu and Menelik II. Ethiopia 1883-1910.* London: Ravens
Rey, Charles. 1927. *In the Country of the Blue Nile.* London: Duckworth
Le Semeur d'Éthiopie
Tristant, Henri. 1977. *Histoire postale de l'Ethiopie.* Paris: privately published
Ydliby, May. n.d. *With Eastern Potentates.* typescript.
Ydliby, May. 2006. *With Ethiopian Rulers by His Daughter – May Ydliby*. Addis Ababa: University Press
Zervos, Adrien. 1936. *L'empire d'Éthiopie. Le miroir de* l'*Éthiopie moderne 1906-1936.* Alexandria: privately published

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Imam Sugato Zäyni. A war-lord of the *Selt'é Gogot*.

Dirk Bustorf[1]

The Italians asked Sugato, "Do you speak Italian?"
Sugato nodded. The Italians said, "*Bono, bono*."
(oral informant, Azärnät)

The Italians said to the Englishmen:
"Sugato is on our side".
Sugato himself said:
"I only fight for my own people."
And he sided with the Englishmen,
who had promised him to be
appointed governor.
(oral informant, Ennäqor)

This article discusses the story of the war-lord *imam* Ahmad Sugato Zäyni[2] who is one of the most important protagonists of the oral history of the Selt'é[3] people of South-Central Ethiopia about the period between the mid-1930s and the early 1940s. The historical interpretation I present here is mainly based on oral traditions and eye-witness accounts, which I gathered during three field stays carried out between 2003 and 2005.[4] This critical meta-narration may be understood as not more than an "archaeological trench" through the epoch along the line of a single biography. The relevance of the topic is already assured by the strong interest many Selt'é themselves have in Sugato and his time. Asking people about local history, it was hard to find any conversation partner of the older generation, who did not want to tell me something related to Sugato or at least who mentioned him. Especially in his home region, Ennäqor, in the Azärnät-

[1] Dirk Bustorf, Universität Hamburg, Asien-Afrika Institut, *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, D-20146 Hamburg, Germany.

[2] Ahmad is Sugato's Islamic *kitab* name. In praise songs his name is often abbreviated to Suge (s. below).

[3] The ethnonym Selt'é was officially recognized as the common name for the speakers of the „East Guragé" language of *Selt'innya* only in 2002. In a referendum the *Selt'innya*-speakers (excluding the Wällane whose language is very similar) claimed their own ethnic identity separate from that of the Guragé and voted for the establishment of an independant administrative zone within the "Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region". Before, the Selt'é were identified as "[East] Guragé", "Islam", "Adäré" or "Adéa" or by the names of their sub-groups such as the Azärnät-Bärbäré, Alichcho-Wuriro, Selt'i, Mälga (or Welbaräg). Selt'é, the name of the entire ethnic group is not to be confused with Selt'i, the name of the sub-group.

[4] This article uses material collected for my Ph.D. project on the history of the Selt'é people. My thesis will present more details and will provide the wider context of the events discussed here. I owe my deepest gratitude to the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) and the Hansische Universitätsstiftung of Hamburg for their financial support and to Prof. Dr. Siegbert Uhlig for allowing me to stay away from my work at the editorial team of the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* during my research periods. I am very grateful to my field assistants and/or travel companions Abdulfetah Huldar, Tajuddin Shkuri and Abdella Oumer (all from Mugo and Addis Abäba) for their friendship, hard work and patience.

Bärbäré *wäräda* of Selt'é zone, I was nearly "forced" to listen to such narrations. For many of my elderly informants the time of Sugato's main activities was the time of their childhood or youth. However, it is astonishing how much of their recollections fainted during the Haylä Śellasé and *Därg* eras or were superimposed by a standardized (and romanticized) "image of history". The enthusiasm of some informants for this historical figure went so far, that Sugato was ranked as a "hero" comparable with the 16th-century *jihad* leader *imam* Ahmad b. Ibrahim al-Ghazi or with the famous ancestor of the Selt'é, *hajji* Aliyye Umär. Such comparisons, of course, were more influenced by the traditional art of war boasting (Slt.[5] *yäfafchay shebäl*, "warrior song") then by an actual belief in Sugatos qualities.

However, Sugato is interesting in a wider context: he was the most powerful war-lord of the so-called *Gogot*[6] (Slt./Gur., "alliance, coalition") a military coalition which included in its heydays warriors from all sub-groups of today's Selt'é, most of the Guragé groups as well as Allaaba and Hadiyya. Its influence reached into Kambaata proper and the bordering Arsi-Oromo territories. The core group of this trans-ethnic alliance were the *yäselt'é/i gogot* (Slt., "Alliance of the Selt'é/i") or *Selt'é Gogot*, a union of the Azärnät-Bärbäré, Alichcho-Wuriro, Selt'i and Mälga (Welbaräg) who most regularly were allied with Allaaba and Mäsqan and later the *Säbat bét* Guragé. Additional historical significance Sugato owes to the fact that he became the most important ally of the Italian authorities in the region during the time of occupation. His story is a good example for the ambivalent relation between the local population and the European intruders.

Sugato's origin and early years

Sugato's homeland was the small country of Ennäqor[7] in the territory of the Selt'é group of Bärbäré situated on a narrow strip of highland between the Azärnät lowland in the East, Lémo-Hadiyya in the South, Endägany-Guragé in the West, and Bärbäré-inhabited Mount Mugo in the North. For most of his lifetime Sugato's seat was the village of Suloludo, north of the market place of Duuna. Many of his military campaigns started near to his village at the sharp edge of the highland, because from here it is possible to oversee the major part of Selt'é country and to climb down to the lower regions with war-horses. Naturally, the fame of Sugato is the strongest in Ennäqor and among the Azärnät-Bärbäré in general, while among the other Selt'é groups he has to share it with that of their own leaders.

In his patriline Sugato was from the Sabuuté *giiččo* (Slt. "clan") of the *Asrasa'apt Bärbäré*, i.e. the "Seventeen [clans of the] Bärbäré". About Sugato's father, Zäyni Dachaso, tradition relates, that when he was young, he stole cattle from his kinsmen and sold this booty as far as Quch'é in Wällayta. Subsequently Zäyni had to flee from Ennäqor to Mafäd in Ennämor-Guragé. Later, he killed a man in Mafäd and, as a punishment, the Guragé threw him into a ditch so that his legs were severely injured and crippled thereafter. Zäyni returned to Ennäqor to live on the land of his wife Bézo, which was inherited from his wife's father.

[5] Slt.=Selt'é language or *Selt'innya*, Amh. = Amharic, Gur. = Guragé..

[6] In the history of the region many different *gogot* have been formed successively. The famous *gogot* after which the Dobbi people earned their second name as well as their language name has no direct relation with Sugato's *gogot*. Ignorant of the real meaning, the Hadiyya informants of Getahun Watumo (1988: 40) interpreted the term as "invasion" referring to Sugato's punitive campaign in their country.

[7] For basic information on Ennäqor refer also to Bustorf (2005: 309f.).

Having his land from his mother's line, Sugato had a lower prestige than men living on the land of their fathers. Oral tradition emphasizes that Sugato came from an average or even a poor family. Concerning the beginning of Sugato's career, most folk narrations follow the explanatory pattern "son of a poor (or unprestigious) man became powerful". This pattern may reflect two contrasting attitudes: (a) the indignation of the old-established leading families (i.e. the *balabbat* families) about the success of a parvenu, and (b) the admiration of Sugato's followers about how he made his way by his own merit; a virtue highly valued by the traditional warrior's ethics.

However, in contrary to the idealized image many local people might have, Sugato was not a pure self-made man, but was promoted by members of the Ethiopian government. During the conquest of Ennäqor by Menilek's troops under the command of *däjjazmach* Wäldä Ashshagra in 1889, Sugato's elder "sister" (or cousin) was captured by *ras* Wäldä and taken to Ankobär. Later, *blattén* Umär Kisso, the *balabbat* of Azärnät-Bärbäré appointed by Menilek, is said to have paid five horses to *däjjazmach* Ayärad, an *aggafari* at the Imperial court and her first husband or "owner", to free her from slavery. After Ayärad died, she married *fitawrari* Zäwdé Agäño. As a youngster, Sugato lived in the household of his sister until she endowed him with the responsibility over her lands in Jinc'i (Shäwa). There, he is said to have learned shooting and to have gained his "full manhood", according to the old custom, by killing lions and leopards. His sister strongly encouraged Sugato in his ambitions to become a leader. Because of his father's injured leg, he was teased by people who frequently called him "son of the cripple". As family tradition says, it was a strong motivation for him that his sister told him to change his name from "son of the cripple" to that of a hero.

After his years in Jinch'i, *ras* Täfäri's government gave Sugato some authority in Ennäqor in the service of *ras* Adäfras Nadäw[8] who administered other parts of Gurage province (Getahun Watumo 1988: 42). It is a wide-spread tradition that the leading families of the Azärnät-Bärbäré, although they had to acknowledge his military talents, tried to impede Sugato by any means, arguing that he was a "nobody" and that his authority was illegitimate. According to a somewhat odd story, existing in various versions, Sugato was accused by his competitors at the court of *fitawrari* Habtä Giyorgis to have usurped power and to have robbed the Azärnät-Bärbäré people. In order to impress the court, they prepared testimonies bearing false handicaps; *abägaz* Alamu acted as a "blind" man, while Awgéré, fit with a leg cast made of ensete fibre, pretended to be "lame" or to suffer from "leprosy". One version of the story relates that Sugato himself could prove that handicaps and testimonies were false. Mediated through *ras* Adäfras, Sugato applied to the Regent *ras* Täfäri to further legitimize his authority. He was given land and the title of *imam*, which was not a government title and, thus, did question the authority of the other chiefs. However, returning back from Addis Abäba the people of Ennäqor greeted him as a legitimate leader by giving him an expensive welcome and exclaiming "Hébo, hébo!".

The "period of chaos"

In October 1935 the Amhara military of Kämbata Province[9] and the indigenous chiefs allied with them were called to arms by the Ethiopian government to defend their

[8] After the end of the Italian occupation (1940) *ras* Adäfras became the governor of Kämbata *awraǧǧa* (Peter 1999: 201, n. 475 [after Lapisso Dilebo 1975 E.C.])

[9] The Kämbata contingent led to the northern front by *däǧǧazmač* Mäshäsha Wäldä consisted of about 30.000 men (Braukämper 1980: 346f.).

country against the Italian aggression. They left behind in the region a vacuum of power which resulted in the beginning of the "period of chaos" (Slt./Amh. *Egerger*, "chaos"), as it is called in the emic periodization of history.[10] When the news of the Ethiopian defeat at the Battle of Mäych'äw (March 1936) and the breakdown of the northern front reached Kämbata Province, the autochthonous peasants took the opportunity to revenge. Since the conquest of Menilek they were marginalized in their own country, and oppressed and exploited by the merciless taxation system imposed on them. When the peasants of Hadiyya and Kämbata started attacking the city of Hossana, the capital of Kämbata *awrajja*, they could easily overrun the small forces of *fitawrari* Balchäw, who were in charge of the security of the Amhara inhabitants. They attacked the families of the absent soldiers, killed and emasculated the male, killed or captured the women and children, burned down the houses and took whatever booty they could achieve. The cattle, which the Amhara soldiers had given into the care of the peasants during their absence, were expropriated. For short time the ruling class completely lost control over the region. Similar events took place in the Arsi country as well (cp. Braukämper 1980: 346ff., 354ff.; Bustorf 2001: 60f.; Getahun Watumo 1988: 38f.; Peter 1999: 128f.; oral informants).

The revolt was mainly carried out by Hadiyya, Kämbata and Arsi. It is told, that "only few" *Säbät bét* Guragé and Selt'é peasants joined these raids. The reason for this seems to have been that their ties to the Amhara ruling class were stronger than those of other ethnic groups in the region. In other words, the *Säbät bét* and Selt'é peasants were under tight control by their own chiefs who had been completely integrated into the Ethiopian system of rule. While the *balabbat*, and, at that time, most powerful leader of the Azärnät-Bärbäré, *abägaz* Débisso Saléa Golbé and his brothers together with other Selt'é chiefs were obliged to go to the Mäyč'äw front, Sugato stayed behind to guard the country. He exploited the situation for his own sake and quickly improved his military and political position. Coming back from the North, the *näft'ännya* found their families killed and their properties pillaged. *Fitawrari* Tamrat Wäldä Sämayat asked the chiefs and *balabbat* of the Selt'é to support him in putting down the rebellion (Getahun Watumo 1988: 40; oral informants).

While others, even some indigenous war-leaders returning from the front, opted for joining the peasants in their revolt, Sugato and other Selt'é leaders, such as *qännyazmach* Sharaffa Balaka of Selt'i and *qännyazmach* Hamdinno Manamno of Alichcho, built up a strong force and joined a pro-Amhara military alliance called *Gogot*. According to oral sources the *Gogot* consisted of troops from all over the region, including *Säbat Bet* Gurage, Azärnät-Bärbäré, Alichcho-Wuriro, Selt'i, Welbaräg-Mälga as well as Allaaba, Mäsqan and Wällané-Gädäbano. The *Gogot* had started as an alliance whose major aim was to prevent internal conflict. The cohesion of its member groups was very weak. Many of my informants were not sure of the composition of this *gogot*, because it never seems to have acted more than roughly coordinated. It adds to the confusion, that earlier and later alliances which were also called *gogot*, had a different membership composition. For oral historians, the importance of this trans-ethnic *gogot* is surmounted by the so-called *Selt'é Gogot*, consisting only of today's Selt'é groups and acting independently. The *Selt'é Gogot* is interpreted by today's Selt'é oral historians as a kind of prove for the unity and independence of their people. The *Selt'é Gogot* were not led by a paramount leader but by the different district chiefs.

[10] During this period, rebellions against the „Amhara" ruling class were not at all restricted to South-Central Ethiopia (cp. Braukämper 1980: 351-57).

Sugato had to share his authority over Azärnät-Bärbäré with his competitors, *azma* Débisso Saléa Golbé and *qännyazmach* Käbbädä Ali[11]. However, in retrospect, some informants went so far, to make Sugato the leader or "father" of all Selt'é or even the whole *Gogot*. Such exaggerations are rarely accepted outside of Ennäqor but still Sugato even there seems to have the greatest prestige as a war-leader.

After Mäych'äw, the revenge of the ruling class and their allies was terrible. The punitive campaign against the Hadiyya and Kämbata peasants was carried out by the joint forces of the *Selt'é Gogot*, their Gurage allies and the "Tamrat Amhara", as the *näft'annya* troops were called. The major part of the *Gogot* warriors was cavalry with spears, swords and shields. Behind the horsemen followed the infantry with rifles and some machine guns. The troops returning from the Italo-Ethiopian war had brought in a large number of modern firearms and were fitted with new military skills. The pro-Amhara alliance completely devastated the country, burning and looting homesteads, kidnapping women and children, killing men and stealing cattle. After having plundered, the war-leaders (*abägaz*, Amh./Slt. Sg., title of a war leader, "captain") distributed the booty among their warriors, who then feasted in the open field (Getahun Watumo 1988: 41; oral informants).

Asked about their personal activities and motivations, former men of Sugato during interview expressed pride according to the set of martial values learned in the days of their youth and till today transmitted by traditional war-songs:

> Sugato was in Ennäqor, and so was I. Sugato called the people to fight against the Kambaata, Oromo and Léémo [Hadiyya sub-group]. He fixed the day of action and we took our *minisher* guns and gathered. We stole cattle, destroyed the properties of the people and killed the villagers. [Anonymous 1]
>
> I went with Sugato just for fun. I wanted to fight. I went to Ennäqor to fight the Sooro [Hadiyya sub-group] and T'embaro. It was before the Italian time. I wanted cattle and a title. Those who were brave got a title and could wear a leopard skin. Before the Battle of Huullé [against the Shaashoogo-Hadiyya] I put my gun on the ground, danced and clapped hands [to provoke the enemy and to show fearlessness]. Once, in a battle, Sugato came and filled my magazine. He knew me. [Anonymous 2, with the title of *abägaz*]
>
> All fought together as a crowd, in the centre of each group was an *abägaz*. Sugato was in Hossana and sent messengers to the different areas to gather his troops at Hossana. After the fight, the booty was distributed in a fair way. We stole horses and sheep in Léémo and destroyed their villages. [Anonymous 3]

It is impossible to reconstruct the various raids that took place under Sugato's command until the Italians entered into the region. Participants of such campaigns whom I interviewed had problems to recollect the chronology of the battles they fought. It seems that during this time they were constantly on horseback afflicting every corner of Kämbata Province with war. Between the battles they drove home the cattle and the prisoners they had taken and awaited Sugato's call to his stronghold in Ǝnnäqor, or to other gathering places, in order to prepare further enterprises.

[11] Débisso was killed by an Italian stray (?) bullet in a maize field near Qaalishaa, Léémo. Käbbädä Ali became a resistance fighter against the Italian occupation.

The Italian occupation

The terror on the peasants lasted until the Italian army reached the region in February 1937. They entered Sugato's sphere from the South via the district of Sankura and marched to the direction of Hossana. Near Liisana in Shaashogoo-Hadiyya, not far from the town, they are said to have erected a camp of barracks. A message was sent to *fitawrari* Tamrat in which he was warned that the city would be attacked with cannons and air bombs if he would refuse to sign the memorandum of surrender. Sugato, who at that that time had already started open conflict with Tamrat, went to the Italian camp to become the first collaborator with the new lords. The story of Sugato's role in the Italian takeover of Kämbata *awrajja* is widely known among Selt'é elders and some versions of it should be documented here, in order to represent the (exaggerating?) way in which the story is narrated by my informants. The oral accounts emphasize the close relation which developed quickly between Sugato and the Italians. The self-confident attitude which Sugato showed in front of the foreigners is considered a reason to admire him:

> When Sugato heard about the Italian camp, he ordered us to go to Liisana. When we reached there, the Italians told us through the translator, to take our hands up. Sugato came with a translator [Amharic-Tegrennya]. They greeted each other with two hands. The Italians asked Sugato: "Who are you?" "I am Sugato." "Oh, you are Sugato, I heard about you in Rome!" They embraced each other and laughed. Sugato said: "I'll block the Amhara until you come to enter the city." [AsMa]
>
> The Italians invited the Amhara of Hossana to come to them. People were too frightened to talk to the Italians, but then Sugato came with his Muslim warriors and thirty guns. They drew nearer to the Italians, with the guns in their hands, raising the other hand up into the air. They exclaimed: "*Laillah ilallah*!" The Italians said: "Put your guns over there." And they asked Sugato: "Who are you?" He answered: "I am famous everywhere." "What do you want?" "When a government comes I welcome it, if it leaves I say farewell; like to a guest. I want to fight with you against the Amhara. I am on your side." The Italians agreed and said: "Alright, but you have to be on our side afterwards [after the surrender of the Amhara] as well!" [JaRe]

The recitation of the Muslim confession in the second oral text may have had a tactical reason as well. It is likely that the Muslims of the region already were informed that the Italian policy towards Islam was aimed at establishing good relations. One reason why the population of Selt'é country did not show strong signs of resistance against the Italian invaders was that a great part of the soldiers under Italian command were actually Somali Muslims, who belonged to the Somali front of Marshall Rodolfo Graziani. This fact is well known among the Selt'é, because when the most venerated *shayh* of Alkäso ("Alkäsiyye") was imprisoned by "the Italians", their Somali soldiers recognized him openly as a *wäliyye* ("holy men") and openly opted for his release. In the same text, the sentence, "When a government comes I welcome it, if it leaves I say farewell; like to a guest", seems to be a later formula, which tries to explain Sugato's entire policy towards changing governments in a metaphorical way.

After his first encounter with the Italians, Sugato was send to Hossana to negotiate with the Amhara. The anti-Italian moral front in the town had already broken down and, with the imprisonment of *fitawrari* Tamrat, Hossana surrendered on 11 February 1937[12]:

> Sugato went to Wachchamo [i.e. Hossana] with his *Gogot*. There, he told the people: "Tamrat has to surrender to the Italians. If he doesn't, the city will be

[12] Date according to Braukämper (1980: 357).

bombed [...]." Two horsemen went from Wachchamo to inform Tamrat, who was in Endägany, planning to attack Ennäqor, Sugato's home country, from there. Tamrat said: "These people [Sugato and his men] want me to make a mistake which will kill me." He went to Wachchamo and said to Sugato: "I'll never surrender, but I'll go to the Gibe valley [to fight the Italians from there]." The people of Hossana, however, said to him: "If you don't give up, we are lost. Please, give up." [AsMa]

The Amhara begged him to give up, but he refused. The Orthodox priests of the town urged him to give up. They said: "You are not a Christian, if you don't give up." Thus, he gave up and the Italians entered the city. Tamrat was killed. The Italians loved Sugato for what he had done and let him rule over Selt'é." [JaRe]

Thus, Tamrat gave up. His hands were put into chains and the Italians took him to Sidamo Province. Once, the Italians went for lunch. They left him in the car and he fled. When they came back, he was gone. The *balabbat* of that area was forced to bring back Tamrat. He [Tamrat] was captured and killed by the Italians.[13] [AsMa]

The Italians established their headquarter in Hossana on top of Sheeshduuna hill and made the city the administrative centre of the *Residenza dei Cambátta* of the *Governo dei Gálla e Sidáma*. While *fitawrari* Tamrat was killed by Italian soldiers after having fled from custody, other representatives of the Ethiopian state, indigenous and Amhara, had the choice between "going into the bush" and "becoming a *sheft'a* [i.e., in this case, a resistance fighter]" or arranging themselves with the Italian authorities. Sugato became what is popularly known as a *banda* or collaborator with the Italians.

The active opposition against the Italians mainly gathered around the *balabbats*, and other Ethiopian officials, whose exploitative practices towards the dependant local peasantry the Colonial-Fascist administration brought to an end by taking comparatively low taxes and establishing relative equality between the different ethnic groups. It seems that by many peasants in Kämbata Province the Italian rule was not seen as a great disaster. The unbearable harsh system of land taxation and the arrogant and colonialist attitude of the ruling Amhara had alienated the population from their government. The attacks on the families and properties of the ruling class during the "period of chaos" already made obvious how much the Ethiopian state in its "everyday-life appearance" was hated by the people. The reader (and the author) may like it or not, the Italians could win the hearts of many, who in their old age became narrators of oral history. The fact that Sugato was the Italians' watchdog over the former ruling class contributed strongly to their positive feelings towards him.

Before the Italian take-over of Hossana, Sugato officially sided with the *balabbats*, while covertly competing with them. Now, he became the most important supporter of the Italian *residenza* in Hossana, and within his sphere of power suppressed any resistance. Sugato became representative of the *governo* responsible for the people of Azärnät-Bärbäré, Selt'i, Aliччo-Wuriro and Welbaräg, known at that time as the *Selt'é Gogot*. To secure his cooperation and to exploit him for their goals, the Italians appointed him *däjjazmach* and supplied him with machine guns. Sugato distributed these weapons among his *abägaz*, such as *grazmach* Šukrallah who got five machine guns "to fight against the *sheft'a*". While part of the *Gogot* warriors (Selt'é and Gurage) were integrated formally into the Italian battalions, Sugato established an office at the Italian residence and served as a judge and intermediary between the administration and

[13] According to Peter's (1999: 128) informants, Tamrat was killed in Shashämäné.

his people. After his house in Ennäqor had been burned by resistance fighters, for security reasons, he and his family moved to the settlement of the leading *banda* in front of the Italian residence. However, his house in Hossana was attacked and burned as well and he could only flee naked and injured by a bullet.

In the narrations of most of my conversation partners, Sugato's relations to the Italians were characterized by warm feelings. He is said to have regularly brought fat oxen to the Italians and to have provided them with beautiful women, whenever they had asked for them. He was invited to Jimma, the capital of the *Governo dei Gálla e Sidáma* and is said to have received an invitation to attend the celebrations of the Italian victory in Rome. As it is said, he had a foreboding and managed to avoid this voyage, while those who joined the celebrations were forced to defile the Ethiopian national flag.

The Liberation and after

Italian rule in the *Residenza dei Cambátta* came to an end after a two-day-long battle at Mugo in May 1941. The rearguard of the Italian troops gathered on top of the Mount Mugo mountain massive in the territory of the Bärbäré, not far from Sugato's seat at Suloludo in Ennäqor. Already before, the Italians had prepared a kind of bunker system there[14], and had installed cannon positions on the mountain tops. Now, they awaited the advancing British troops. Oral reports on the following events are detailed and shall be summarized here: Sugato, wearing short Italian trousers, and his commanders *qännyazmach* Täshomä and *grazmach* Shukrallah as well as several *baliq* (Slt. "elder") went to the Italian camp. Donated by *gärad* Ordofo, the *ch'eqa shum* of Mount Mugo area, they brought a young cow as a gift. The Italians, who had expected the Ethiopians to have changed fronts, asked Sugato full of distrust,

> "Where are you coming from? *Cosa fare*? [*Che cosa fai?*]". Sugato answered : "*Io fare tale…* [*Io faccio tale...*]". The Italians were happy and invited them for a meal; they brought chairs and *pasta*. [HuMu]

It is likely that the Selt'é delegation was not anymore sure if they should continue to support Italy. An oral account relates that the Ethiopian visitors of the Italian camp at Mugo already knew that the British and their Ethiopian allies were approaching from Wälqit't'e. Thus, when they were asked about the origin of strange lights that could be observed from the mountain top, they explained them as being fires lit by civilians. The British troops draw nearer, and the local officials, such as *qännyazmač* Täshomä and Sahle *basha* Gäbrä Maryam supported their advance. An oral informant reports:

> Everybody feared the modern weapons of the *Ingliz* [British troops] and fled [to the lowlands or to Geta, as they had been advised by the Italians]. The Italians prepared their cannons. [...] The Italians looked through their binoculars and saw people meeting with the *Ingliz*. They said: "Oh, they meet with the *Ingliz*", and opened fire. With their modern weapons they fired on T'onät [today's Mugo Kämp] and a house started to burn. The *Ingliz* became stronger and stronger and bombed the mountain camp until the Italians fled to the Gibe [to reach Jimma, their last stronghold in southern Ethiopia]. The Bärbäré helped the *Ingliz*, Sugato as well. Sugato met the *Ingliz* in Hossana. The battle in Mugo Midačča lasted two days. When Sugato accepted the Italians he was only pretending, but when the *Ingliz* came, he was really happy. [HuMu]

[14] Artificial caves are to be seen still today below the tomb of *hajji* Bilal at Midachcha.

The coming of the British troops was the end of Sugato as a ruler. With them came the faithful defenders of Ethiopian independence and former officials of Amhara rule. The attempt of *shayh* Sharif *shayh* Tamma to capture Sugato and his leading warriors failed because they could manage to flee to *fitawrari* Ch'ärätto in Mugo. *Fitawrari* Ch'ärätto, accepted as an Ethiopian patriot by the British, and even *fitawrari* Käbbädä, Sugato's former enemy, could persuade them to spare his freedom, using the argument, that his military power was necessary for an Ethiopian government to regain control over the country [HamIb].

After the end of the Italian occupation, Sugato and his *Selt'é Gogot* again were the most powerful military grouping in the region. My conversation partners, many of whom were involved into the events in one way or other, reported about a number of small battles and mutual raids in which Sugato's armies were engaged. The last campaign he fought was against the Arsi-Oromo, who refused to pay taxes to the newly establishing Ethiopian government. Sugatos troops entered deep into Arsiland. The fiercest conflicts took place in the area west of Lake Zway ("Dämbäl"), especially in Lokka, Shibibo. Selt'é oral historical transmission relates, that when the *Gogot* started to intrude further into their country, the Arsi asked for peace negotiations. Sugato was guest of *imam* Agalo Isaq in Mänzo in Sankura and received delegations from Arsi and Sidaama, who brought cattle and sheep, Maria-Theresia thalers and other goods to prevent him from continuing the war. A peace treaty was signed and sealed by the sacrifice of black he-goats. In Sankura, Sugato was infected by malaria and, after returning home, he died. Rumours spread, however, that an Oromo magician had put a spell on him, which killed him immediately [AbGo; AdAb; AmSu]. A song was composed after Sugato's death expressing that the people had lost their strongest protector:

Sugato bämota
Ifären aroota
Yaqoden mäbrata

After the death of Sugato,
The night makes us fear.
The light is lit.

The significance of *imam* Sugato in oral history

An important medium for the transmission of historical knowledge are traditional war-songs, which originally were sung before the warriors went to meet their enemies and after they returned to their villages. In most cases such songs were composed by young unmarried women, who sung and danced in files in front of the warriors in order to motivate and praise them. However, also men coming from the front gave accounts of their deeds and boasted by reciting songs. The mnemonitic quality of such war-songs, in contrast to plain narration, lets memory resist better against being grind off through time. Today, songs about Sugato seem to be the best remembered war songs of all. An interesting example of a song of praise dedicated to Sugato is the following[15]:

[15] Translation by Abdella Oumer in cooperation with the author. The *[e]* is a sound added to the word for the sake of rhythm.

Yäsugato indät[e]
Qall' adalat[e].
Sugaton hoosht[e] alnyet[e]
Sheesht alnyet[e]
Ishaw siram aladalat.
Läselt'é gogot
Lazärnät Bärbäré
Lulbaräg Mälga
Sugé hont[e].
Bämängez čalt[e]
Sumaha Sugato batat[e]?

The mother of Sugato
She made a little mistake.
She didn't make two of Sugato[16]
She didn't make three
She never makes mistakes [usually].
For Selt'é Gogot
For Azärnät-Bärbäré
For Welbaräg-Mälga
She became grace[17].
How could she know it,
When she gave you the name Sugato?

The strongest expression for the historical significance ascribed to Sugato among many of today's Selt'é oral historians, or at least those among the Azärnät-Bärbäré, is a kind of monument at the edge of the market place of the village of Duuna in Ennäqor. Enthusiastic about the (re-) discoved Selt'é history in the times of the "Selt'é movement", the local assembly decided to mark the location where Sugato is said to have held court by fenced trees. A local even told me about his personal vision of a "museum" in Lééra (Ennäqor) dedicated to Sugato.

The basic reason of Sugato's popularity may be the traditional concept of the warrior who not only defends his group but accumulates additional merit and economical wealth for himself and his group through "legitimate" military aggression. The brave man who fearlessly attacks the enemy and revenges the deaths of his kinsmen was maybe the most important ideal of a society whose livelihood was based on a combination of mixed agriculture, small scale trade and taking booty. Other such ideals were: being (a) a father of many children, (b) the owner of many cattle and big land, (c) a supporter of Islam, (d) a good rhetoric, (e) a wise judge, (f) a friend of the poor, (f) a good host etc. In the eyes of his admirers Sugato fulfilled not only these criteria but he could show that a "child of Ennäqor" or "one of us" could rule the "whole" country. He stood bold in front of strong traditional enemies as well as foreign invaders, may they have been Italian colonialists, "Amhara" oppressors or British liberators. His opportunistic behaviour is considered not to be cowardice but to show extraordinary cleverness. However, during interview, some left out the fact that Sugato collaborated with the Italians not wanting to depict him as a *banda* (i.e. non-patriot). Others avoided mentioning his support of the "feudal" system during the "period of chaos". In both cases, according to the rules of political correctness they had learned under changing

[16] She did not give birth to one or two brothers alike him.
[17] Suge (abbreviation for Sugato) = Slt. "grace".

governments, my conversation partners avoided to throw any shade on Sugato's fame. The oral historians influenced by the "Selt'é movement" interpret the time of the *Selt'é Gogot* is as a period of relative independence for the Selt'é. It is even claimed, that it was Sugato who for the first time used "Selt'é" (in combination with *Gogot*) as the common name of all Selt'é groups, deriving it from the word *sult'an* and, additionally, referring to the ancient Hadiyya Sultanate.

Oral informants

I express my deep gratitude to the following people who shared their personal memories and their recollections of oral tradition about Sugato with me:

Abdo Gontira, *abägaz*, Ziko-Dololo, Sankura, 1 November 2004.
Adem Abdillah, Adaša, Sankura, 2 and 3 November 2004.
Jamal Réddi, Wogär, Ennäqor, 6 November 2004.
Amatu *imām* Sugato, Č'umata-Qača, Endägañ, 13 November 2004.
Hawi *imām* Sugato, *imām*, Damalla, Ennäqor, 30 November 2005.
Ḫaylä Husayn, *abägaz*, Adaša, Sankurra, 1 November 2004.
Hamdallah Ibrahim, *haǧǧi*, Qoré, Sankura, 3 November 2004.
Huldar Muhammäd, *haǧǧi*, Č'ungo, Mugo, May 2003.
Muhammäd Kemal, *azmač*, Mänzo, Sankura, 2 November 2004.
Saléa (Täzzära) Arega Bärbäré, Wogär, Ennäqor, 12 and 21 November 2004, 30 November 2005.
Asanna Mansaro, Č'umata, Ennäqor, 29 and 31 October 2005.
Muhammäd *šeeh* Ahmäd, *abägaz,* Dodo, Azärnät, 23 October 2004.
Husayn *haǧǧi* Hassän, *haǧǧi*, Duuna, Ennäqor, 6 and 14 October 2004.

Bibliography

Braukämper, Ulrich. 1980. *Die Geschichte der Hadiya. Von den Anfängen bis zur Revolution 1974*. Studien zur Kulturkunde 50. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.
Bustorf, Dirk 2001. *Leemo-Hadiyya und Indagayn-Gurage*: *Zur Geschichte ihrer interethnischen Beziehungen*. M.A. thesis. Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. Unpublished.
Id. 2005. 'Ǝnnäqor.' In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.). *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol. 2. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. pp. 309f.
Consociazione Turistica Italiana (ed.) 1938. *Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana*. Milano.
Getahun Watumo. 1988. *Land Tenure System in Konteb Warada* (*Shoa*). 1893-1975. B.A. thesis. Department of History. Addis Ababa University. Unpublished.
Gutt, Eeva H. M./Hussein Mohammed 1997. *Silt'e - Amharic - English Dictionary* (*with Concise Grammar by Ernst-August Gutt*). Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press.
Peter, Burkhard. 1999. *Kulturelle Identität und religiöses Bekenntnis*: *Synkretismus bei den Hadiyya Südäthiopiens*. Mainz: Verlag an der Lottbek.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

The foreign politics of ləǧ Iyasu in 1915/16 according to newly discovered government papers

Wolbert G.C. Smidt[1]

This paper discusses the administrative correspondence of the Ethiopian foreign minister Bäyyänä Yəmär, which covers the period from his nomination in December 1914 until early 1916. These documents are an extremely important source showing the government of a traditional polity on its way to modernisation. They allow most valuable insights into the functioning of the government of *ləǧ* Iyasu, whose reign is still largely unstudied and obscure, due to the lack of primary sources.

1. Introduction

Recently the full administrative correspondence of *qäñazmach* Bäyyänä Yəmär of 1915 until early 1916, then Foreign Minister of *ləǧ* Iyasu's government, has been made accessible by his family[2]. This comprises very short letters (e.g. concerning the issuing of permits for foreigners travelling to the Ethiopian borders), but also detail correspondence regarding the minister's dealings with foreign powers. They are addressed to foreigners (mainly the ministers of the legations present at Addis Ababa), members of the government, *ləǧ* Iyasu and his father *nəgus* Mika'el.

The letters discuss questions concerning weapons import and other affairs related to World War I, conflicts with Europeans, who broke Ethiopian laws, the introduction of passports in Ethiopia and other measures of modernization, the establishment of an Ethiopian consulate in the Colonia Eritrea etc. These interesting documents, written in Amharic, permit a deep insight into the functioning of the government of Ethiopia, only eight years after its establishment by Emperor Mənilək II[3]. They also shed a new light on the foreign politics of Ethiopia during World War I and help us understanding better the largely mis-perceived government of *ləǧ* Iyasu.

A number of legends, which had been created by Iyasu's enemies, do not find confirmation by these documents. The documents do not suggest any preparation of

---

[1] Wolbert G.C. Smidt, Assistant Editor of the ENCYCLOPAEDIA AETHIOPICA and Researcher at the Asia-Africa-Institute, Research Unit Ethiopian Studies, Hamburg University, Edmund Siemers-Allee 1, D-20146 Hamburg, Germany, and Maître de conférences (professeur invité) at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (ÉHESS), Paris, France.

[2] The exact circumstances how these documents were preserved are not known to me. When the coup d'état against *ləǧ* Iyasu took place on 16 Mäskäräm 1909 Ethiopian Calendar (27 September 1916), i.e. shortly after the Ethiopian New Year, *qäñazmach* Bäyyänä was among those, who joined the putchists (see his name listed in the chronicle of Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas & Molvaer 1994). His exact motives are not documented. Allegedly, Bäyyänä wanted to preserve his Ministry's documentation from destruction and was hiding these documents at home. - I am extremely grateful for the fruitful discussions with Tadele Y. Tesemma and with Yasin Mohammed Yasin, who both greatly helped me in the understanding of the Amharic texts, and I very warmly thank Hailemelekot Agizew, who was the first to show me these documents. I also thank the family deeply for making these documents accessible.

[3] *Aṣe* Mənilək II established a government following the European model in 1907, nominating ministers of justice, interior, foreign affairs etc.

war-alliance with Germany and Turkey against the other powers (but confirm good relations with their representatives); there is no sign for a conversion of *ləǧ* Iyasu to Islam[4]; also the alleged disorder of government, so dramatically underlined especially by the French and British ministers, does not find any ground in this primary source. The documents are an extremely important source showing the government of a traditional polity on its way to modernisation. The following paragraphs discuss some of the aspects of modern Ethiopian history, to which these documents contribute new insights.

2. Technical remarks

The handwritten manuscript, which has more than one hundred pages, bears no title. It contains the handwritten copies of 312 documents, mostly letters, which are separated from each other by the naming of an addressee in the beginning and the naming of the sender and (in most of the cases) a date at the end. Most documents are letters which had been written by the Foreign Minister *qäñazmach* Bäyyänä to other members of the government, to *ləǧ* Iyasu and his father, *nəgus* Mika'el, and to foreign diplomats. There are, however, also copies of other letters, e.g. letters from foreign diplomats to *ləǧ* Iyasu or his father, and very few notes on telephone messages and oral communications. This shows that it is the personal proceedings of the Foreign Minister, containing the quasi-totality of his official correspondence. Such proceedings are not known from previous ministers. Probably the beginning of the exact documentation of government letters predates this manuscript, but it seems probable that this administrative measure had been introduced only with the introduction of ministries by Emperor Mənilək in 1907 or slightly later[5].

The paging is quite disturbed, so that documents dated to quite different periods directly follow each other. In some cases a document, which starts at the end of one page, is not continued on the next page, and - vice versa - the beginning of some documents is missing on some pages. These incomplete documents do not pose a major problem, however, as in most cases the missing part can be found somewhere in the manuscript. Document number 102 (containing the beginning of the text), for example, is completed by document number 282 (containing the end of the text). The period covered by the documents ranges from the 4 Tahsas 1907 Ethiopian Calendar (document number 46, date of the nomination of *qäñazmach* Bäyyänä Yəmär as Minister of Foreign Affairs) until 11 Yäkkatit 1908 Ethiopian Calendar (document number 221), i.e. about 14 Ethiopian months (if we count P'agumen as a month). In European terms this means the period between 13 December 1914 and 18 February 1916[6]. A few documents randomly bear dates outside this time range, but this is evidently due to mistakes in the writing.

The reconstruction of the original order of the documents will take some time. After a first trial to reconstruct it, it seems to me that a part of the original pages are lost (e.g.

[4] For a discussion of the background of Iyasu's alleged conversion to Islam, used in the coup d'état of 1916 against him, see Finke (2007) - with new information based on Turkish sources -, Rubinkowska (2005:1081), Smidt (2008), Id. (2007a).

[5] The memories of the Christian Syrian merchant Ydlibi contain some interesting details on his role in the modernisation of the government's administration; it might well be that the introduction of proceedings, i.e. the exact documentation of records following the example of merchants, is based on an advise given by him (Ydlibi 2006).

[6] This means that the documentation stops more than seven months before the coup d'état against *ləǧ* Iyasu. We do not know what happened to the ministry's proceedings covering the period between 18 February 1916 and 27 September 1916. They might have been destroyed during the coup d'état.

most documents dated to Yäkkatit 1907 are missing), but that the greatest part of the Minister's letters are preserved. It is still unclear, if the manuscript is a secondary (later) copy of the Minister's collection of letters or if it had been made during his time as Minister, in his Ministry.

3. Iyasu and government affairs

Qäñazmach Bäyyänä was nominated Minister of Foreign Affairs by *lə'ul ləǧ alga wäraš* Iyasu *wäldu lä dagmawi* Mənilək *nəgusä nägäst zä*'Ityop'ya ('Highly [or His Highness] Prince Iyasu, heir-to-the-throne, son of Mənilək II, king of kings of Ethiopia') on 4 Tahsas 1907 (i.e., 13 December 1914). The documentation starts with Iyasu's official announcement of Bäyyänä's nomination to the foreign legations, in which it is stated that all the contacts between the foreign and Ethiopian governments should pass through him (document no. 46, originally being the first document in the collection). The second document in the collection (no. 47) is Bäyyänä's own announcement of his appointment to the same legations. The addressees are (in this order) Brice, the French minister plenipotentiary, von Syburg, the German minister plenipotentiary, conte Colli di Felizzano, the Italian minister plenipotentiary, Vinogradoff, the chargé d'affaires of the Russian legation (of the "Moskob" government), and Doughty Wylie ("David"), British chargé d'affaires.

The full title of *ləǧ* Iyasu repeatedly appears in these documents. They are also interesting, as historiography until now has not mentioned this title. It contributes an interesting slight modification to the title normally used in historiography, *ləǧ* ('Infant', 'Prince') or *abeto* ('Prince')[7]. Often it is assumed that the term "*lə'ul*" was only added to princely Ethiopian titles starting from the reign of Haylä Sellasé; the documents presented here, however, abundantly show the usage of it in the official titulature of Iyasu[8]. While keeping the unambitious title of *ləǧ* (thus confirming his own minority and the superiority of his father, *nəgus* Mika'el), the addition of *lə'ul* ('high') clearly underlines his primary position, elevating him above all the other princes. There are a number of variants of the usage of the term *lə'ul* when Iyasu is addressed by Bäyyänä and other notables of his government. It often appears, most of the time as *lə'ul ləǧ* (e.g., no. 37, 175), sometimes only *lə'ul* (no. 61, 108), and also as *lə'ul getaye* ('my high master', no. 20).

We can now also conclude that the historical rumour that Iyasu did call himself *nəgusä nägäst zä*'Ityop'ya ('king of kings of Ethiopia') does not have any basis. The origin of the rumour is clear: It is based on the misreading of his full title and name, which includes the formula 'son of Mənilək II, king of kings of Ethiopia'. The rumour, however, is not without any reason. When Iyasu refers to Mənilək, he does not simply construct a genealogy, but indirectly also claims succession. Also the fact that the full title and name ends with *nəgusä nägäst zä'Ityop'ya* bears this connotation; that he does not claim to already bear the title at present, however, is underlined by the term *algä wäraš*, 'heir-to-the-throne'. It is important in this context, that Emperor Mənilək does appear himself in the documents, too (e.g., no. 153 speaking of *Janhoy*, 'Majesty', referring to him, not to Iyasu). One document speaks of the Emperor's birthday celebration on 12 Nähase 1907, as if the Mənilək was still alive (no. 89). In fact, the documents support the impression that even in 1915 Iyasu maintained the official

[7] As in the chronicle Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas & Molvaer 1994.

[8] The title *lə'ul ləǧ* had already been used by him at least starting from 1913, see another document published by me (Smidt 2007b).

version that he reigned in the name of his (sick) grandfather. Even if references to Mənilək are extremely rare, his death is virtually inexistent in these documents[9]. When one of Mənilək's "famous horses" died, it was announced as an important event (evidently considered as a sad affair, no. 305).

Many of the letters are addressed to Iyasu, to whom Bäyyänä regularly reports on affairs of the ministry. However, Iyasu evidently did not direct the government affairs very actively. But the documents do not suggest that any disorder resulted out of it, they rather suggest that the government, lead by Prime Minister Haylä Giyorgis, functioned on a very orderly basis, based on regular contacts among the ministers and government employees, and with Iyasu and his father.

4. Relations with foreigners and foreign powers

The documents are of greatest importance especially as they reflect Ethiopia's position during World War I. Ethiopia, in fact, never officially participated in the war, which is perfectly confirmed by this documentation. Through its foreign ministry, Ethiopia maintained both formal and cordial relations to all diplomats present at Addis Abäba. Through the reports on specific events, one can sense the tensions in the region, and the efforts of the Ethiopian government to reduce such tensions to a minimum, not to endanger its relations with its neighbours. And, above all, there is not the slightest sign for a formal or informal alliance with the German or Ottoman government, through their envoys, neither any evidence for a formal conversion of *ləǧ* Iyasu to Islam.

To start with the latter: The Ottoman consul, who is indeed one of the active correspondents of the ministry, himself sends a congratulation message to the Christian Christmas celebrations to Iyasu (no. 270, 29 Tahsas 1908). All the other letters written by him to Iyasu or to the ministry treat matters of diplomacy (e.g., his condoleances for the death of *nəgus* Mika'el's grandson Haylä Maryam, no. 93) or administrative matters concerning Ottoman subjects (e.g., no. 291 an exchange of notes concerning an arrested Ottoman citizen, or no. 275, debts left by the Turkish citizen Sarkis Terzian, an Armenian, no. 275). Only in one context World War I appears: Armenians, often regarded as Ottoman citizens, are mentioned as enlisting themselves as volunteers (no. 92).

Cross-border raids and conflicts were a problem for the maintenance of peace in the situation of a world war. The Ethiopian government tried to diminish effects of a great raid undertaken by a Təgrayan local governor near the Täkkäzä river. That noble had destroyed a bridge connecting Ethiopia with Eritrea, collected taxes in Eritrea and killed many locals during his raid. The government strongly warned him having damaged the good relations between "the two countries", and simultaneously let the Italian side know of the friendly intentions of the Ethiopian government (no. 286, similar no. 217, 218). Other cross-border raids are mentioned with similar concern, like over the "French border" (into today's Djibouti, no. 223), and the killing of a Sudanese guard in Gallabat, against which the British minister protested (no. 286). There is also a British consul in

[9] Even if both foreigners and Ethiopian nobles heard of Mənilək's death already in December 1913 (Marcus 1995:261), this was not officially announced; the first official announcement of Mənilək's death was done only in 1916, on the occasion of the coup d'état. One has very much attacked Iyasu for the secrecy he built around his grandfather's death; the exact reasons for this still need thorough historical study. It is clear, however, that it should not be linked with his youthful arrogance and irresponsibility, as the putchists claimed in 1916 (in order to add one more point to their catalogue of deadly sins), but rather with an idea of a smooth transition of power when the best moment presented itself, both pragmatically and symbolically.

Boorana (no. 279). The problem of Afar territory annexed by France is discussed (no. 219). An Ethiopian consul is established in Asmara, Eritrea, who had to both maintain good relations with the Italian government and deal with problems relating to Italian subjects (no. 121, 204) - thus continuing the tradition of Ethiopian consuls established in Asmära since the time of Mənilək II. His reports to the Foreign Ministry are written in a secret code (no. 245). The culmination of cross-border relations in the positive sense is the official visit of *ləǧ* Iyasu of Djibouti, followed by the decoration of the French governor by Iyasu (no. 274). Even if details of discussions with the foreign counterparts can often only be detected indirectly, one can conclude that the greatest efforts of the ministry lied on the (a) protection of Ethiopian interests (both economic and questions related to Ethiopian sovereignty), (b) the maintenance of good relations with all the countries involved in the region.

International treaties are mentioned on several occasions (e.g. no. 171). A great preoccupation of the ministry is the maintenance of treaties, both economic and political, and their respect by the European powers. The British minister is reminded, that the Ethiopian government possesses a monopoly in telegram services and is asked to explain himself why he established his own telegram services without prior permission by the Ethiopian government (no. 295). Discussing a treaty with France, the Ethiopian ministry underlines that the Ethiopian government fully owns the salt in the country (no. 258, the salt monopoly of the Ethiopian government is also mentioned in no. 21).

A delicate aspect was the delivery of weapons, which is to be seen in the context of World War I. Weapons trade is repeatedly mentioned in the letters. The French weapons trader Savouré ("*muse* Sabure") has organised the delivery of Russian weapons to Ethiopia (no. 292), but there are many complaints about the quality of the "Moskob" guns. The Russian chargé d'affaires is even asked to explain the great percentage of non-working guns (no. 151, 157). Even if weapons, therefore, play a role in the correspondences, there is not the slightest hint to their planned use in the war. No conclusion, that a direct participation in the war was prepared, can be drawn from these documents.

A great part of the ministry's correspondence deals with the issuing of passports and pass permits. The ministry discusses with foreign legations to introduce standardized passports, following the European system (no. 146). There is already a degree of standardisation introduced in the course of the work - a pass permit contains detailed descriptions of the travelling persons (no. 300). The documentation is a rich source for the journeys undertaken by foreigners in Ethiopia; especially "postmen" of the foreign legations were regularly sent to the border, with gunmen accompanying them. The British Legation often sends messengers to Moyale in Boorana. The person issuing these pass permits is the Minister of Justice and Interior T'elahun; every time when a pass permit for a foreigner (or an Ethiopian working for a legation) is needed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs writes to him, asking for issuing the permit (e.g., no. 302, 306). It is interesting, that neither the German nor the Ottoman legation were sending such messengers - both legations being isolated from the contact with their respective governments because of the war; the surrounding territories were controlled by the allies. It is also interesting to note, that the case of the pass permits illustrates well two typical features of the government of that period: (a) Even if the proceedings were not very formalized and detailed (no bureaucratic forms to be filled in!), one has to note (b)

that the ministry was routinely doing its work, assuming the normal functions of a ministry responsible for contacts with foreigners and foreign diplomats.

5. Nəgus Mika'el - a virtual co-regent

A historically interesting result of these documents' analysis is *nəgus* Mika'el's central position in the state as a de facto co-regent. Officially, as we know, *ləǧ* Iyasu refused to appoint a new regent in 1911, after the regent's death, *ras* Täsämma, who also was his personal tutor (cp. Marcus 1987:11-21; Marcus 1995:270). This was often interpreted as a sign for his unwillingness to accept anyone above himself, and a lack of maturity. These documents, however, show that *nəgus* Mika'el had assumed an important role in the administration of the government. It might, therefore, be appropriate to partially change the vision of Iyasu's refusal of 1911. In case he had accepted another regent (not foreseen by Mənilək) this would also have meant the reduction of his own father's influence in government affairs. The then *ras* Mika'el could not officially claim the regency for himself, given his marginal position as a converted Muslim and leader of Wällo of Oromo origin. The refusal to nominate a new regent therefore would mean an increase in his influence, and even more, give him the possibility to act as a "hidden" regent where deemed necessary by him. This is confirmed by the upgrading of Mika'əl's rank from *ras* to *nəgus* ('king') a few months only after Emperor Mənilək's death, in May 1914 in Däse, Wällo. His new rank was accompanied by the formal transmission of the supreme power over Tegray (with the title of king of "Ṣəyon" = 'Zion' = Aksum Ṣəyon, i.e. the religious centre of the Empire and simultaneously standing for the government of Ethiopia itself[10]), the transfer of the imperial crown to Däse and, probably later (see Rubinkowska - Smidt 2007), the inclusion of Goǧǧam and Gondär (Bägemdər) into his title[11].

The documents of *qäñazmach* Bäyyänä do not show any trace of a formal nomination of Mika'el as a regent. This was evidently not necessary, given his formal power over his son as his "natural" tutor while he was still a minor[12]. The most clear confirmation of *nəgus* Mika'el's position lies in the fact, that Bäyyänä shortly after his nomination insisted that Mika'el's formal approval of his nomination as Foreign Minister be sent to him (document no. 5, dated 25 Tahsas 1907): This letter is addressed to *hakim* Wärqənäh (also known as "Dr. Martin"), and Bäyyänä asks him to let him know by telegram when he could expect the formal approval of his nomination by *nəgus* Mika'el.

The titles used to address Mika'el in these documents are regularly *nəgus*, but also sometimes *nəgusä Ṣəyon* ('king of Zion', no. 117, to be printed in gold: no. 147) and *nəgusä Wällo wäTəgre* ('king of Wällo and Təgray', no. 22). This shows, that he did not claim formal jurisdiction over Gojjam and Gondär still in 1915.

Qäñazmach Bäyyänä reports to him, not as regularly as to Iyasu himself, but still on a constant basis. Apart from the other ministers and government employees, foreign diplomats and Iyasu he is the only addressee of the letters not falling into the former categories (no letter is addressed to any other grand noble of the Empire who is not directly involved in the government - except to Täfäri in a great affair in which he

[10] The symbolic reference of the title "king of Zion" was understandable for the Ethiopian public in that time - only one generation before, *aṣe* Yohannəs IV. had called himself "king of Ṣəyon" (a title inscribed on his seals), when he first claimed the government of Ethiopia.

[11] A detailed discussion of this coronation and its implications see in Smidt 2008; see also Smidt 2001.

[12] A photograph of 1914/15 shows Iyasu in a symbolic position which is underlining this relationship, with his head on the knees of his father, and Mənilək's crown besides them, Pankhurst - Gérard (1996).

seemingly refused obeyance to the government[13]). In a few cases Mika'el's decision is required - or at least his involvement - in delicate political affairs. This is the case in the highly sensitive affair of Friedrich Hall (alias Solomon), a half-cast Ethio-German envoy and spy sent by the German government to Ethiopia during World War I in 1915. Hall, who perfectly spoke Arabic, German, Amharic and other languages, was sent by the German government to transport messages and money to the Ethiopian government, with the aim to win Ethiopia over to the German side in World War I. Hall, however, got arrested in Eritrea and never reached Ethiopia. Document no. 180 (18 Mäggabit 1907) mentions that the letter which he wishes to be sent to the Ethiopian leadership, should be delivered to *nəgus* Mika'el.

Other letters shows, that Mika'el could use the services of the Ethiopian government. The Minister of Post Täsämma Ešäte is, for example, involved in the delivery of a letter of him (no. 76). In the whole, one can sense his high position as a power behind the official ruler, Iyasu, even if the documents do not contain information on political decisions taken by him. This is a general feature of these documents: They often rather contain formalities, formal details, the real decisions being discussed orally. The approach to decipher Mika'el's position through his formal appearance in the letters, as a repeated addressee, as co-responsible for the Minister's nomination, as "king of Zion", however, allows to detect his central role in the state.

6. References

Aby Demissie. 1964. *Lij Iyasu*: *A Perspective Study of His Short Reign*, B.A. thesis, History Department, Haile Sellassie I University, Addis Ababa.

Bahru Zewde 1991. *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1974*, Addis Ababa.

Id. 2007. 'Iyasu'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. 3. Wiesbaden. Harrassowitz, pp. 253-56.

Bartnicki, Andrzej – Mantel-Nieçko, Joanna. 1978. *Geschichte Äthiopiens,* ed. by Renate Richter, tr. by Waldemar Hein. Berlin.

Berhanou Abebe. 1998. *Histoire de l'Ethiopie d'Axoum à la révolution*, Paris.

—— 2001. 'Le Coup d'Etat du 2 septembre 1916'. *Annales d'Ethiopie* XVII, pp. 322-325.

Ficquet, Eloi. 2002. *Du barbare au mystique*: *Anthropologie historique des recompositions identitaires et religieuses dans le Wällo* (*Ethiopie centrale*). Ph.D. thesis, Paris: EHESS.

—— 2007. "Mammädočč dynasty". In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 3, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 715-17.

Finke, Detlef. 2007. "Mazhar bey, Ahmed". In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 3, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 894-96.

Fusella, Luigi. 1987. 'Le Biografie del blattengeta Heruy Walda Sellase (= *yäheywät tarik*, Addis Abäba 1915 A.M. = 1922/23)'. *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici* XXX, 1984-1986, published 1987, pp. 15-52.

Gebre-Igziabiher Elyas & Molvaer, Reidulf (transl., ed.). 1994. *Prowess, Piety and Politics. The Chronicle of Abeto Iyasu and Empress Zewditu of Ethiopia (1909-1930).* Studien zur Kulturkunde, 104. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

[13] This concerned the conflict between the Ethiopian government official Ydlibi in Harar and Dirredawa and Europeans (cp. Ydlibi 2006), Täfäri siding with the Europeans; because of the implication of Europeans, the foreign ministry was involved (no. 240, 241).

Gobäzé T'afät'ä (Gobezé Taffete). 1996. *Abba T'éna Iyasu*. Addis-Abeba
Haile Sellassie I. 1976. *The Autobiography of Emperor Haile Sellassie I, 'My Life and Ethiopia's Progress', 1892-1937*, transl., annot. by Edward Ullendorff. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Käbbädä Täsämma. 1969/70. *Yätarik mastawäša* ('Historical Memoirs'). Addis Abäba 1962 A.M. [1969/70 A.D.].
Leslau, Wolf. 1987. *Comparative Dictionary of Geez. Geez - English, English - Geez.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
Marcus, Harold. 1995. *The Life and Times of Menelik II, Ethiopia 1844-1913*, 2nd ed., Lawrenceville, NJ.
—— 1987. *Haile Sellassie I*, *the Formative Years, 1892–1936*, Berkeley, CA, pp. 11–21
Mers'é Hazen Wolde Qirqos 2004. *Of What I Saw and Heard: the Last Years of Emperor Menelik II & the Brief Rule of Iyassu*, Addis Abeba, pp. 173-177.
Morin, Didier. 1999. *Le texte légitime, Pratiques littéraires orales traditionelles en Afrique du nord-est*, Paris: Peeters (Langues et cultures africaines, 25), p. 260 (translation pp. 78-79)
Nosseir, Abdul-Halim Elias. 1928. *Ityopya, Les Richesses de l'Ethiopie*, Nancy, pp. 235-40.
Pankhurst, Richard & Gérard, Denis. 1996. *Ethiopia photographed, historic photographs of the country and its people taken between 1867 and 1935*. London / New York: Kegan Paul International
Prouty, Chris. 1996. *Empress Taytu and Menilek II. Ethiopia 1883-1910*, London – Trenton NJ.
Rubinkowska, Hanna. 2005. 'Coup d'état 1916'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. 2. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, p. 1081 [Corrigendum of vol. 1].
Id. - Smidt, Wolbert G.C. 2007. 'Mika'el Ali'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 957-59.
Smidt, Wolbert G.C. 2001. 'The coronation of negus Mikael in Desse in May 1914: A photograph from the Nachlass Jensen and its historical background'. *Annales d'Éthiopie,* Vol. XVII, pp. 359-371.
—— 2005a. 'Gaš'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag 2005, vol. 2 (D-Ha), pp. 710-12.
—— 2005b. *Ethiopia and Germany, 100 Years Diplomatic relations. Äthiopien und Deutschland, 100 Jahre diplomatische Beziehungen.* Addis Abeba: Goethe-Institut Addis Abeba – Deutsche Botschaft Addis Abeba.
—— 2007a. 'Menilek Iyasu'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 3. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 927-28.
—— 2007b. 'Ein erster Beleg für den Titel *le'ul* unter *leǧ* Iyasu', in: *Aethiopica. International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies* 10, 2007, pp. 194-98.
—— 2008. 'The coronation of *negus* Mikael, king of Wollo and Tigray, in May 1914: New findings'. *Annales d'Éthiopie* 23, 2007-2008, pp. 413-39.
T'elahun Berhanä Sellase. 2003/04. *Yä20ñaw keflä zämän Ityop'ya, andäña mäṣhafu (1900 eskä 1966 `A.M.)* ('Ethiopia in the 20th century, vol. 1: From 1900 to 1966 Ethiopian Calendar'), Addis Abäba 1996 `A.M. [= 2003/04 A.D.].
Tornay, Serge - Sohier, Estelle. 2007. *Empreintes du temps, Les sceaux des dignitaires éthiopiens du règne de Téwodros à la régence de Täfäri Mäkonnen*. Addis Abeba: CFEE.

Tornay, Serge. 2006. 'A Hundred and One Pictures of Ethiopian Royal and Noblemen's Seals Collected by the French Consul Boucoiran: A New Document in Sigillography from the Time of Tewodros to the 1920s'. In: Siegbert Uhlig (ed.): *Proceedings of the XVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies Hamburg July 20-25, 2003*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, pp. 496-506.

Ydlibi, May. 2006. *With Ethiopian Rulers*: *a Biography of Hasib Ydlibi*, ed. by Bahru Zewde, Addis Ababa.

Zäwde Rätta. 2004/05. *Täfäri Mäkwännən räzămu yäśəlṭan guzo bämənilək bä'iyasunna bäzäwditu zämän 1884-1922* (‘Täfäri Mäkwännən, the long journey to power, from the periods of Mənilək, Iyasu to Zäwditu, 1884-1922’), Addis Abäba 1997 A.M. [2004/05 A.D.].

In: *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009

Exploring Landscape Change in Ethiopia: Evidence from Imaging and its Interpretation

Donald Crummey[1]

The debate about population growth and environmental change, a central question for Ethiopia, has proceeded without adequate reference to the concrete information, which is contained in images derived from photographs and remote sensing. A review of the literature, which has made use of this material, reveals numerous insights. While sometimes contradictory, these insights suggest that this promising line of research warrants further pursuit.

The debate about landscape change in Ethiopia is proceeding, if at all, slowly and indirectly. The claims, for example, of the 1997 *National Action Plan to Combat Desertification*, are more sophisticated than earlier claims, but the plan still maintains that "Ethiopia's largely poor rural population, driven by poverty, attempt to satisfy their survival needs through the clearing of more forest land for agricultural purposes;" and, further, that customary practice which considers "woody plants open property resources for the taking by anyone has deterred peasants from planting trees." Underpinning these observations is a narrative of environmental degradation, which avers that "most of the highlands are highly degraded." [2] These judgments assume what has yet to be established—the scope and direction of environmental change. Rich sources of evidence, on which to base such an assessment—photography and other forms of imagery—are still inadequately used.[3]

Photography in Ethiopia dates to the missionary activities of Henry Stern in 1860.[4] However, the earliest photographs to contain landscape information were recorded eight years later by the British military expedition to Mäqdäla, which photographed a handful

---

[1] University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 309 Gregory Hall, Urbana, IL 61801

[2] *National Action Plan to Combat Desertification* (Addis Ababa, 1997), pp. 29, 40, and 26; posted on-line at http://www.unccd.int/actionprogrammes/africa/national/2000/ethiopia-eng.pdf, visited April 2, 2007.

[3] A great deal of landscape information may be gleaned from literary sources. Alfons Ritler has produced the most comprehensive and exhaustive analyses of these materials: Alfons Ritler, *Land-use, Forests and the Landscape of Ethiopia, 1699-1865. An enquiry into the historical geography of central-northern Ethiopia. Research Report 38* (Bern: Soil Conservation Research Programme, 1997). See also Ritler's doctoral dissertation, "Wald, Landnutzung und Landschaft im Zentralen und Nördlichen Äthiopien 1865-1930," Centre for Development and Environment, Geographisches Institut Universität Bern, 2 volumes, 2001; and the abbreviated version of his dissertation now available as Alfons Ritler, *Forests, Land-use and Landscape in the Central and Northern Ethiopian Highlands, 1865 to 1930* (Berne, 2003), Institute of Geography, University of Bern, Geographica Bernensia, A19. The published version does not include the dissertation's appendix, which quotes *verbatim* the primary source accounts organized on a regional basis. The most influential use of literary sources for landscape analysis is James McCann, *People of the Plow. An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), Chapters 4 and 5.

[4] R. Pankhurst, "The Genesis of Photography in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa," *The British Journal of Photography*, Oct. 1976, pp. 878-882, 910-913, 933-935, and 951-953.

of scenes, most notably views of Lake Ašangi and a panoramic view of Sənafé, on the Eritrean-Ethiopian border.[5] Such landscape information as they contain has yet to be extracted from the British Mäqdäla photos. While numerous travelers carried cameras on their journeys through Northeast Africa in the later 19th and earlier 20th centuries, scholarly analysis of photographs for their landscape information takes as its starting date 1930.[6]

By its very nature photography is time-specific and a photograph, in and of itself, tells nothing about change. Moreover, like all human artefacts, photographs are shaped by intentionality and limited in scope and focus.[7] They leave out more than they include. They are open to manipulation. Nonetheless, the photograph has a special relationship with a particular moment in the past, and, therefore, contains information available in no other way.[8] This information can be established to a high degree of reliability when full attention is paid to the photograph's authenticity and to the circumstances and intentions of the photographer. In particular, the technique of *repeat* photography is now highly developed.

Repeat photography starts with useful historical photographs. It then locates the exact position from which the originals were taken as well as the time of year and the technical specifications of the original camera and seeks to reproduce these circumstances as closely as possible. *Re*photographing the original landscape results in a *matched pair* of photographs, which allow a comparison between past conditions and those recorded in the contemporary photograph, thereby establishing parameters of change.[9] Repeat photography is particularly valuable for assessing vegetation change.[10] The technique of repeat photography is particularly associated with ground photographs, which, even at their most panoramic, can still show only a very limited portion of the landscape. This, to a degree, may be compensated for when a series of photographs is concentrated in space.[11]

---

5 Pankhurst, pp. 879, 952.

6 P. Boerma, "Seeing the Wood for the Trees: Deforestation in the Central Highlands of Eritrea since 1890," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1999; and Dino Scheidegger, *Äthiopien rekonstruiert. Landschafts-, Landnutzungs- und Walddynamik im Hochland von Äthiopien zwischen 1930 und 1998 anhand von Photovergleichen* (Bern: Centre for Development and Environment, Geographisches Institut, 1999). Although Boerma's starting date is 1890, her systematic analysis of photographic evidence rests on photos from 1930.

7 A useful discussion of photography and history in Africa, which engages issues of interpretation, is A. Triulzi, *Fotografia e storia dell'Africa. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Napoli-Roma 9-11 settembre 1992* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1995).

8 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. By Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

9 I am indebted to Don Johnson, Professor Emeritus, Department of Geography, University of Illinois, for first drawing my attention to the opportunities offered by matched photography. A classical American source is J. R. Hastings and R. H. Turner, *The Changing Mile. An Ecological Study of Vegetation Change with Time in the Lower Mile of an Arid and Semiarid Region* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1963); now carried one chronological layer deeper in R. M. Turner, R. H. Webb, J. E. Bowers and J. R. Hastings, *The Changing Mile Revisited. An Ecological Study of Vegetation Change with Time in the Lower Mile of an Arid and Semiarid Region* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003). A classical source for Africa is H. L. Shantz and B. L. Turner, *Photographic Documentation of Vegetational Change in Africa over a Third of a Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona, College of Agriculture, Report 169, 1958), which anticipated further use of the technique in Africa by four decades.

10 Relevant African cases are: M. Tiffen, M. Mortimore and F. Gichuki (eds.), *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons for the Overseas Development Institute, 1994); and R. F. Rohde, "Nature, Cattle Thieves and Various Other Midnight Robbers. Images of People, Place and Landscape in Damaraland, Namibia," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1997.

11 The value of the photographs in Shantz and Turner is somewhat mitigated by the fact that they are

Aerial photography, which may also give rise to a series of matched photographs, provides a much wider view of the landscape, ultimately, as in the case of Ethiopia, of the entire territory of a country. Aerial photographs are typically coarser in resolution than ground photographs. Complete aerial photographs of Ethiopia at an approximate scale of 1:50,000 were made in the years between 1957 and 1965 and again in 1986 and thus provide exhaustive inventories of the country's landscape resources at those points in time. Only a handful of studies, which are reviewed below, have exploited these inventories. Finally, satellite imagery, which at its outset in 1972 (the launching of the US satellite Landsat) could provide only the coarsest of information, now rivals the detail of aerial photographs.

Integrating different kinds of imaging data presents challenges, but, providing that they document the same landscape, through allowing access to more than two points in time, permit a more nuanced grasp of the pace and pulse of change. As we will see there have been several productive attempts to integrate aerial photos with remote sensing data, although, as yet, little integration of terrestrial photos with either aerial photos or remote sensing. Interpreters of aerial photographs talk of *ground-truthing*, the need to relate information in the photographs to other known sources of information such as maps specifying latitude and longitude. This is equally true of ground photographs, the information from which is of little use unless one can establish the location to which it refers. However, establishing location is only the point of departure for interpretation, which depends on multiple sources of information.

To such sources we must turn for information about the *dynamics* of landscape change. Two points in time allow one to discern only the parameters of overall change, not its pace.[12] For example, the study of vegetation change requires onsite identification of the botanical inventory, which can rarely be adequately inferred from the photographs themselves. More importantly, it is very difficult to conceive of interpretation, which does not include socio-economic, historical and cultural data, data derived from social surveys and inventories, from historical documents and informant memories and from anthropological study. The very concept of *environment* is a human construct so environmental analysis is always connected to human activity—whether we are concerned to establish the extent to which environmental change affects humans, or, alternatively, how human activity brings about environmental change. Moreover, the utility of most information is its relevance to "policy," which is intended to modify the environment-human relationship in some desired direction. That direction invariably is determined by human values and policy itself emerges from a political nexus.

There have been a number of studies growing in frequency, which use photographic images and remote sensing of the Ethiopian landscape to document environmental change and relate it to human activity. All are motivated by a common concern to understand landscape change and the forces shaping it. However, they do fall, broadly, into two schools—the one, "conservationist" in inspiration, takes as its point of departure, natural resources, such as wildlife or woody vegetation, and seeks to document human "encroachment" on those resources; the other starts with human activity and seeks to understand its environmental impact, most commonly with a concern for "sustainability." At the most general, public level, these studies feed into debates shaped around "deforestation," a concept intended to connect local change to

scattered across very wide stretches of the continent.

[12] The Ethiopian aerial photographs are obtainable from the Ethiopian Mapping Agency.

transnational processes, a concept which, in turn, is profoundly shaped by transnational institutions.[13]

The foundational work in the use of photographic images for the interpretation of landscape change in Ethiopia is Stähli's 1978 study of settlement and land-use in and around Səmén National Park between 1954 and 1975.[14] It is situated firmly in the "conservationist" camp. It offers a meticulous reading of the evidence available from terrestrial photographs taken in 1954 and aerial photographs taken in 1964, a field survey in 1975, and traveler accounts from the late 18th to the beginning of the 20th century.

A central concern for Stähli, as for all the studies under review here, is the relationship between environmental change (clearly "degradation" in his eyes) and population growth. He distinguished highland from lowland regions and used the number of farm buildings to read population change from the landscape. Within the highlands he discerned an upward shift in farmland the upper limit of which climbed around 100 meters to 3750 meters a.s.l. (p. 34). His evidence on changes in lowland farmland is puzzling, since it revealed on the one hand relatively large areas of abandoned fields, and on the other the opening of new fields on "extremely steep slopes." Overall, population was consistent with national rates with some indication of a shift from highland to lowland (p. 69).

Stähli found the landscape impact of population growth in the clearance of woody vegetation and the farming of increasingly steep slopes. He buttressed the first observation with reference to the now-questioned claim that "85% of Ethiopia's original forests have been destroyed," leaving only 5% of the country's surface covered by trees.[15] This he attributed to "the age-old agricultural tradition of clearing the land by burning and the lack of understanding on the part of the native farmers and the local public authorities of the ecological problems …"[16] With reference to the cultivation of steep slopes he observed fields with gradients of 30 degrees and more, the steepest being 43 degrees.[17] Informant testimony indicated that, while in some lowland areas

[13] For a discussion of "deforestation" and "desertification" as concepts shaping the understanding of environmental change in sub-Saharan Africa see, Thomas. J. Bassett and Donald Crummey, *African Savannas. Global Narratives and Local Knowledge of Environmental Change* (Oxford/Portsmouth, NH: James Currey/ Heinemann, 2003), pp. 8-13.

[14] P. Stähli, "Changes in Settlement and Land-use in Simen, Ethiopia, especially from 1954 to 1976," pp. 33-70 in B. Messerli and K. Aerni (eds.), *Simen Mountains. Ethiopia. Volume I. Cartography and its application for geographical and ecological problems* (Bern, 1978), Beiheft 5 zum Jahrbuch der Geographischen Gesellschaft von Bern; and P. Stähli and M. Zurbuchen, "Two Topographic Maps 1:25000 of Simen, Ethiopia," pp. 11-31 in Messerli and Aerni, *Simen Mountains*. I have not had access to the 1:25000 topographic maps, nor to a color-coded map, perhaps the same one, to which Stähli refers in his article. I have had access to related maps, two of them at 1:100,000 by Hans Hurni, "Climate and Dynamics of Altitudinal Belts from the last Cold Period to the Present Day," *Simen Mountains—Ethiopia, Vol. II*, which appear to have been published in 1982 as Vol. II of B. Messerli and K. Aerni (eds.), *Simen Mountains. Ethiopia.* (Bern, 1978), Geographica Bernensia G 13; along with another map, 1:50,000, also by Hurni, "Harvesting Areas and Cultivation Belts in and around the Simen Mountains National Park—Ethiopia." The "Harvesting" map is based, topographically, on the Stähli and Zurbuchen 1:25,000 map and reports data collected in field work from 1975 to 1977.

[15] Stähli, "Changes in Settlement," p. 51. Stähli cites Mesfin Wolde Mariam's *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1972) as his source.

[16] *Idem*., p. 36. The accusation that local farmers lack understanding of ecological problems belittled generations of practical knowledge: Bassett and Crummey, "*Contested Images, Contested Realities*. Environment and Society in African Savannas," the introduction to Bassett and Crummey, *African Savannas*. For the distinction between local, practical knowledge and "scientific" knowledge, see James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).

[17] Stähli, "Changes in Settlement," p. 56.

fallowing was still practiced, in the highland it had been abandoned altogether. Stähli concluded that the situation "will lead inevitably to a catastrophe." He foresaw no capacity for adaptation in "traditional agriculture," and advocated external intervention to improve both agriculture and forestry.[18]

A follow-up study to Stähli's is a survey of the flora and fauna of the Səmén National Park published in 1998 by the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society.[19] Like its predecessor the survey was intended to promote conservationist goals. The study's methodology of relevance here is its use of matched photographic pairs to document long term landscape changes. The originals for the photographic pairs date from different years (1966, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1974 and 1983). Most of the repeats were taken in 1996, a few in 1994. Field study supported the reading of the photographic pairs.

The researchers judged that afro-alpine grassland had suffered "an absolutely devastating effect" from the grazing of cattle and other domestic animals (p. 10 and figure 2.2 on p.9). The matched photographs (Figures 2.5 to 2.10) provide persuasive evidence that tree-heather forest has been cleared and the incidence of a hitherto dominant species of long-grass greatly reduced. Matched photographs (Figure 2.10) establish the thinning of ground vegetation in the tree-heather forest along the Jinbar River, although another matched pair (Figure 2.13) indicates the *expansion* of tree-heather forest in another part of the park. The matched photographs of forested landscapes in lowland areas (Figure 2.16) show clearing of the lower elevations of a heather-tree forest and, at the same time, expansion at higher elevations. Figures 2.17, 2.18 and 2.21 bear testimony to the loss of forest. However, Figures 2.19 and 2.20 bear equal testimony to forest *recovery*, following, in the one case, fire, and, in the other, the moving of a village. Finally, a matched pair of photographs (Figure 3.1) documents a striking expansion of lobelias across the landscape.

The study's conclusions and recommendations rest on field observations in addition to the matched photographs. Its general conclusion is that "… the overall human impact and especially the use of the grassland as pasture … have to be drastically reduced" (p. 31). Its leading recommendation is that "the extensive impact of man and his livestock in the afroalpine ecosystems of the Gich plateau … must drastically be reduced" (p. 92). This recommendation is accompanied by a patronizing attitude toward local farmers. Photographs of local people are captioned, "It is sad to see the warm and friendly Simen inhabitants are causing serious damage to their surroundings" (p. 88). The remaining studies reviewed here are less animated by conservationist goals.

The first scholar to use aerial photographs to explore human-landscape interactions in Ethiopia was Paolo Marcaccini, whose study of the agrarian countryside of the Č̣oqé region of Goğğam, appeared in 1978, the same year as Stähli's article.[20] The

[18] *Idem*., p. 69. While the subsequent occurrence of famine in 1984 was, indeed, catastrophic, it is much less clear that it was caused by indigenous agricultural practice.

[19] Nievergelt, B., T. Good and R. Güttinger (eds.), *A Survey on the Flora and Fauna of the Simen Mountains National Park Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa and Zurich: Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society, 1998). This volume, which involved research by numerous natural scientists, Ethiopian and Swiss, was a special issue of the society's journal, *Walia*, and was produced in association with the Group for Wildlife and Conservation Biology, Institute of Zoology, University of Zurich. I am very indebted to Professor Shiberu Tedla, who first drew this publication to my attention, and then provided me with copies of it, and to Shiferaw Bekele, who helped.

[20] Paolo Marcaccini, "Osservazioni aerofotografiche sul paesaggio agrario nella regione del Ciocchè (Goggiam, Etiopia)," *Rivista geografica italiana*, (1978), pp. 234-261.

photographs came from the first national aerial survey and were at 1:50,000.[21] Marcaccini was primarily interested in the morphology of agricultural fields and settlement patterns and their variation according to agroecological zone. He found that the landscape was predominantly marked by strip fields, concentrated hamlets, and only modest woody vegetation. This he contrasted with more lightly used areas in which the fields were more rectangular, settlement more dispersed, and woody vegetation more prevalent. Using only one set of photos meant he was unable to record change. Marcaccini's principal environmental observation was that soil erosion was closely associated with strip fields.

Focused on rural landscapes and directly engaged with environmental change over time was Halvor Wøein's use of aerial photographs to study woody vegetation on the Mafud escarpment of northern Shäwa between 1957 and 1986.[22] The modest scale of this publication—9 pages plus one table and four maps following the text—belies its value. The project involved no local collection of data. It is the first of the studies under review to use micro-computer technology. Wøein's principal finding was that "natural vegetation" *increased* from 4.4% of the landscape to 9.2%. This he attributed primarily to government closure of hillsides to grazing. He perceived a decline in individual trees, possibly as a result of the land reform of 1975, which created ambiguity in ownership of this resource. Finally, he noted that eucalyptus plantations increased from 1.1% of the landscape in 1957 to 4.6% in 1986 (pp. 6-7). With regard to the impact of population growth on the environment his results harmonize with the Səmén results in showing that population growth took place more rapidly at altitudes below, rather than above, 2500 meters. This he took as an indication that population increase had not necessarily "affected the marginal land on the higher elevations of the Highland" (p. 8). Wøein was unable to determine whether or not expansion of agricultural land had taken place on "marginal steep land."

The appearance of Wøein's study was a harbinger of an increased use of photographic images in the study of human-environmental interactions. 1999 saw the defence of two theses using matched ground photographs to study landscape change in Ethiopia: Pauline Boerma's Oxford Ph.D. thesis on deforestation in the central highlands of Eritrea; and Dino Scheidegger's Bern diploma thesis on landscape, land-use and woody vegetation change in highland Ethiopia.[23] Boerma's work explored at some depth the divergence in Eritrea between perceptions of large-scale deforestation and the realities of change in woody vegetation. She deployed a multi-pronged strategy involving archival research, informant interviews, onsite observation and historical photographs. The last is relevant here and is presented in Plates 4.1 through 4.17, inserted between pages 108 and 109 of the dissertation. They include, in all, 14

[21] Marcaccini credits P. Dainelli, for his access to these photographs. See Dainelli's article, "Photogeology of the Debra Marcos-Blue Nile Area, Southern Gojjam, Ethiopia," *Memorie della Società Geologica Italiana*, IX, 1 (1970), pp. 779-791 plus two color-coded maps at 1:250,000. Marcaccini locates his study in a tradition of human geography to which Kuls [W. Kuls, *Bevölkerung, Siedlung und Landwirtschaft im Hochland von Godjam (Nordäthiopien)* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1963), Frankfurter Geographische Hefte 39] and Stitz [V. Stitz, *Studien zur Kulturgeographie Zentraläthiopiens* (Bonn, 1974), Bonner Geographische Abhandlungen, Heft 51] had notably contributed. Unlike Kuls and Stitz, Marcaccini was unable to support his inferences from the photographs with on-the-site ground observations.

[22] Halvor Wøein, *Woody plant cover and farming compound distribution on the Mafud escarpment, Ethiopia. An aerial photo interpretation of changes 1957-1986* (Trondheim: University of Trondheim, Centre for Environment and Development, 1995), Working Paper on Ethiopian Development No. 9.

[23] Boerma, "Seeing the Wood for the Trees;" and Scheidegger, "Äthiopien rekonstruiert."

matched pairs. Figure 4.2 precedes the photos and maps their locations. With one exception, the original photos were all taken in April 1930 and the repeats in January, 1997, and February, 1998. The photos sustain the claim, made in her abstract, that change in tree cover has by no means been uniform or unilinear, but rather a kaleidoscope of different processes both in time and space, with both loss and gain in tree cover being experienced at different points in Eritrea's recent history (p. 1).

Boerma explains the divergence between perceptions and reality in the utility of the myth of large-scale deforestation to the succession of governments which controlled Eritrea from its creation in 1890 down to the present. She notes how deforestation has evolved into a powerful metaphor of past traumas and injustices suffered by Eritreans … to the extent of constituting a collective memory to which everyone subscribes regardless of their actual experience of deforestation (p. 2).

Scheidegger organized his thesis around case studies of ten different locations drawing his evidence from 18 matched pairs of ground photographs, the originals of which date mostly from the 1930s (with one from the Mäqdala collection dating to 1868) and the re-photographs from 1998. He sought representative landscapes and drew his examples from across the Ethiopian highlands, from Mayčäw and Ašangi in the north, to Mänagäša, Däbrä Libanos and Mt. Wančit in the south. In most of his case studies he found evidence of rapid population increase, but, recurrently, he also found that "an increase in woody resources is evident" (p. xiii). Much of this increase Scheidegger attributed to the planting of eucalyptus.

I used the methodology of matched photographic pairs for my 1998 study of landscape change in Tähuladäré Wäräda in Wällo.[24] The originals date to Feb., 1937, the matches to Feb., 1997. I argued that despite very evident population growth there had been little expansion of the area under cultivation and an apparent increase of woody biomass, the result, predominantly, of the planting of eucalyptus trees. It was impossible, from the two time points available, to determine a pace for this putative increase in trees. Factors influencing the dynamics at work were a major government tree-planting campaign of the early and mid-1980s and wide-spread cutting down of these plantations following the political changes of 1991. However, the photographs did suggest that farmer tree-planting was also an operative factor. This was confirmed by informant interviews.[25] A richer understanding of landscape change between 1937 and 1997 awaits the study of the aerial photographs of 1958-1965 and 1986.

In 2000 Kebrom Tekle and Lars Hedlund published a study of land cover change in Qallu district immediately to the south of Tähulädäré and the town of Dässé. They compared, as had Wøein, the 1:50,000 aerial photographs of 1958 and 1986.[26]

---

[24] Donald Crummey, "Deforestation in Wällo: Process or Illusion?" *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, XXXI, 1 (1998), pp. 1-41. Five photographic pairs accompanied this article. An additional three pairs were included in: Donald Crummey, "Ambiente, Carestia e non Sviluppo in Etiopia in una Prospettiva Storica: Il Caso del Wällo," pp. 45-70 in *Storia Urbana*, XXV, No. 95 (2001). This was a special issue, edited by Irma Taddia, with the sub-title, "Il Corno d'Africa: storia, ecologia, ambiente."

[25] Donald Crummey and Alex Winter-Nelson, "Farmer Tree Planting in Wällo, Ethiopia," Ch. 5 (pp. 91-120) in Bassett and Crummey, *African Savannas*. Also confirmatory was a study by Woldeamlak Bewket, "Household level tree Planting and its Implications for Environmental Management in the Northwestern Highlands of Ethiopia: A Case Study in the Chemoga Watershed, Blue Nile Basin," *Land Degradation and Development*, 14 (2003), pp. 377-388.

[26] Kebrom Tekle and Lars Hedlund, "Land Cover Changes Between 1958 and 1986 in Kalu District, Southern Wello, Ethiopia," *Mountain Research and Development*, XX, 1 (2000), pp. 42-51. Kebrom and Hedlund visited their site prior to analysing their photographs and ground checked their land cover categories. Unlike Wøein they were able to draw on additional sources of information including informant interviews. Kebrom and Hedlund cite a study by Gete Zeleke of the Dämbäča area of

Advances in microcomputer GIS technology allowed them a more sophisticated analysis of change. They distinguished nine categories of land cover, three distinctly human—cultivated, rural settlement and urban settlement—the remainder more "natural"—shrubland, forest, riverine vegetation, remaining open areas, flood plain and water body (p. 45, Table 1). They discerned changes within each of their categories, with the largest changes evident in the decrease of shrubland by 51% and an increase in "remaining open areas" by 333% (p. 42). Population in Qallu increased by 212% between '58 and '86, and population density is at the very high level of approximately 250 persons per square kilometer, nevertheless Kebrom and Hedlund confirmed my inference of little increase in area under cultivation, which they calculated to be only 1.2% during these years (from 49.6% of total land cover to 50.8%; p. 47 and Table 2, p. 46). They discovered the principal impact of population growth on the landscape in the conversion of shrubland to "open areas," probably because of the harvesting of fuelwood (p. 48). Unfortunately, they were unable to distinguish pasture from other open lands, and, hence, could not assess the implications of change for herding.

My 1998 article was produced as a contribution to a collaborative research project sponsored by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.[27] Another team member, Belay Tegene, used matched aerial photographs and remote sensing data to assess vegetation and land-use change in the Derekolli catchment area of Tähulädäré Wäräda, Wällo.[28] The area is about 35 km. east of Kombolča town, which lies at the northeast corner of Qallu. Belay's 2002 article drew on the 1957 and 1986 aerial photographs plus satellite imagery from 2000. He used the same microcomputer-based technology as Kebrom and Hedlund. He used different land-use categories: shrubland, shrub-grassland, grassland, valley-rim vegetation, cropland, all-weather road, dry-weather road, town (p.9). His general conclusions align closely with those of the Qallu study. While population growth in the area was considerable, cropland as a proportion of the total land surface increased by only 7% between 1957 and 1986 and imperceptibly between 1986 and 2000; quite simply, "most of the land suitable for cultivation was already in use" (p.1).[29] Rather than areal expansion, farmers abandoned

Goğğam based on aerial photographs, which indicates a "dramatic" loss of forest cover, "with a matching increase in cultivated land" (p.49): "Land-use/land-cover dynamics and its implications on resource management: A case study in Dembecha area, Gojjam," unpublished paper presented at the workshop on Access to Land and Resource Management in Ethiopia, 28-29 November, 1997, Addis Ababa, referencing details from Belay Tegene, in the work cited in the following footnote. I regret that I have not had access to this paper, which is based on the analysis of aerial photographs.

[27] I am deeply indebted to the foundation for its support. The project was entitled "The African Environment: Experience and Control," and ran from 1993 to 1998.

[28] Belay Tegene, "Land-Cover/Land-Use Changes in the Derekolli Catchment of the South Welo Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia," *EASSRR*, XVIII, 1 (2002), pp. 1-20. For issues concerning soil conservation, see *Idem*., "Potential and Limitations of an Indigenous Structural Soil Conservation Technology of Welo, Ethiopia," *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*, XIV, 1 (1998), pp. 1-18. Derekolli catchment is largely coincident with the Gerba Peasant Association, one of three PAs on which the MacArthur Project focused.

[29] Like Stähli, Belay (p. 17) remarked on the steepness of cultivated slopes: 14% of cultivated land in Derekolli took place on slopes with gradients above 27% and 4% on gradients above 47%. Belay noted that cultivation of most of these slopes was already underway in 1957 and could not have been a response to population growth in subsequent decades. Belay cites the same paper by Gete Zeleke as do Kebrom and Hedlund. In 2003 Belay published an additional study drawing on data derived from a combination of aerial photographs and remote sensing, analysed with GIS tools. This article is a model of the application of GIS technology to rural Ethiopia, but is directed to categorizing land-use with respect to soil conservation and does not discuss vegetation change through time: Belay Tegene, "Combining Land Capability Evaluation, Geographic Information Systems, and Indigenous Technologies for Soil Conservation in Northern Ethiopia," *East African Social Science Research Review*, XIX, 2 (2003), pp. 23-53. Belay's 2003 study was of the Gido watershed, about 4 kms. east

fallowing. Shrinkage in shrubland and its conversion to shrub-grassland and grassland was widespread. Between 1957 and 1986 shrubland shrank by a total of 58% (an annual rate of 2% p.a.) and between 1986 and 2000 by 63.2% (4.5% p.a.). Belay accounts for the loss primarily by corresponding increases in shrub-grassland and grassland (p. 10). The implication, in contradiction to my inference, was a major decrease in woody biomass, which Belay attributed to the demand for fuel, both as wood and as charcoal (pp. 14-15). This demand, he noted, was generated by growing urban populations as well as by local farmers.

Another study, which appeared in the same year as the one by Kebrom and Hedlund, was the most sophisticated and complex use of imagery for identifying landscape change with reference to farming and woody vegetation carried out in Ethiopia to date.[30] It is not possible here to do full justice to this study of the Gibé River valley, which set a very high mark for subsequent research on these issues. It integrated data from two aerial photographs (1957 and 1973 [*sic*]) with data from two high resolution satellite images (1987 and 1993), with ground observation and informant interviews. The multiple time points provided the researchers with examples of non-linear change, which varied from place to place within the research site. This project identified four land-use categories of relevance to the study: smallholder cultivation; largeholder cultivation; riparian woodlands; and wooded grasslands. Factors contributing to the ebb and flow of these categories across the landscape included the advent of trypanosomosis sometime between 1979 and 1985, which had a devastating impact on plow oxen, and, hence on the area under cultivation; land reform following the edicts of 1975; villagization in the mid-1980s; and drought in the 1970s and 1980s at the national level, which caused immigration of farmers from other parts of Ethiopia.[31] The natural growth of local human population was not an evident factor, although, as the authors note, this was certainly operative at the national level and a contributor to immigration. The authors conclude with an implicit call for additional case studies, which will allow "systematic comparison of the causes and consequences of land-use/land cover change … so that factors that cut across sites can be distinguished from others that are site specific" (p. 353).

The call is timely. While some may have judged the debate over landscape change as inconclusive and possibly arid, the studies under review suggest the opposite. It is true that conclusions do seem contradictory. But themes are emerging. Photographic imagery and remote sensing provide evidence of change in both population and landscape. The Gibé study makes clear how varied and multi-directional may be both that change and change in the relations between the two. It is also evident that the more time points a study can establish the richer its findings will be. A greater awareness of existing studies should enrich new studies and facilitate more productive engagement between divergent strands of interpretation.

A number of the studies under review have established that, under certain circumstances, farmers may become tree planters. Most tree-planting involves eucalyptus. Many ecologists deplore its use. This deserves closer examination.

---

of the town of Häyq. This watershed is contained within the G^{w}obəya PA, a second of the 3 PAs on which the MacArthur project focused.

30 Robin S. Reid, Russell L. Kruska, Nyawira Muthui, Andualem Taye, Sara Wotton, Cathleen J. Wilson and Wondyalew Mulatu, "Land-use and land-cover dynamics in response to changes in climatic, biological and socio-political forces: the case of southwestern Ethiopia," *Landscape Ecology*, XV (2000), pp. 339-355.

31 The authors discuss these factors with reference to a broad comparative literature on pages 349-351.

Ethiopian farmers themselves perceive problems, yet they have been planting the trees for over 50 years and have devised strategies for mitigating their impact. The most productive way forward would appear to be an exploration of the factors both contributing to and inhibiting farmer tree-planting. Photographic and remote sensing images may help establish the relative landscape impact of both government versus local initiative in tree-planting and the destruction of public woodlands following the collapse of the Därg in 1991.

One of Ethiopia's most pressing questions is the relationship between population growth and environmental change. As we have seen, images from aerial and terrestrial photographs and remote sensing contain a great deal of relevant information. At the very least they can show how population growth plays itself out on the rural landscape and establish the parameters of landscape change with a degree of precision unavailable from other sources. We have seen that different scholars have drawn different conclusions. In part the divergences arise from different preconceptions. Surely they also reflect the very real differences, which mark different parts of a large, varied and complex human landscape.

I believe that we would benefit from many more studies drawing on the imaging material. It would be good if such studies were attentive to the impact of population/landscape change on pastureland, since animals are a vital component of rural life. Some convergence in land cover classification would be useful, as would more careful attention to the influence of agro-ecological zone—*dägga*, *waynä dägga*, *q*^{w}*olla*—on the human-environment nexus.

To be of value future studies will have to have a solid grasp on the intentions and strategies of local farmers, which will mean an integration of image analysis with historical and socio-economic information. Identifying the creative and positive ways in which farmers have responded to population growth and environmental change will be essential in establishing effective points of intervention. For over a century the conservation strategies of modern states have proceeded by limiting the access of local populations to resources deemed worthy of protection. The moral foundations of this strategy are questionable, at best.

References

Barthes, Roland, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. By Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981)

Bassett, Thomas. J., and Donald Crummey (eds), *African Savannas. Global Narratives and Local Knowledge of Environmental Change* (Oxford/Portsmouth, NH: James Currey/ Heinemann, 2003)

Bassett, Thomas. J., and Donald Crummey, "*Contested Images, Contested Realities*. Environment and Society in African Savannas," introduction to Bassett and Crummey, *African Savannas*

Belay Tegene, "Potential and Limitations of an Indigenous Structural Soil Conservation Technology of Welo, Ethiopia," *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*, XIV, 1 (1998), pp. 1-18

Belay Tegene, "Land-Cover/Land-Use Changes in the Derekolli Catchment of the South Welo Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia," *EASSRR*, XVIII, 1 (2002), pp. 1-20

Belay Tegene, "Combining Land Capability Evaluation, Geographic Information Systems, and Indigenous Technologies for Soil Conservation in Northern Ethiopia," *East African Social Science Research Review*, XIX, 2 (2003), pp. 23-53

Boerma, Pauline, "Seeing the Wood for the Trees: Deforestation in the Central Highlands of Eritrea since 1890," unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Oxford, 1999)

Crummey, Donald, "Deforestation in Wällo: Process or Illusion?" *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, XXXI, 1 (1998), pp. 1-41

Crummey, Donald, "Ambiente, Carestia e non Sviluppo in Etiopia in una Prospettiva Storica: Il Caso del Wällo," pp. 45-70 in *Storia Urbana*, XXV, No. 95 (2001)

Crummey, Donald, and Alex Winter-Nelson, "Farmer Tree Planting in Wällo, Ethiopia," Ch. 5 (pp. 91-120) in Bassett and Crummey, *African Savannas*

Dainelli, P., "Photogeology of the Debra Marcos-Blue Nile Area, Southern Gojjam, Ethiopia," *Memorie della Società Geologica Italiana*, IX, 1 (1970), pp. 779-791

Hastings, J. R., and R. H. Turner, *The Changing Mile. An Ecological Study of Vegetation Change with Time in the Lower Mile of an Arid and Semiarid Region* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1963)

Hurni, Hans, "Climate and Dynamics of Altitudinal Belts from the last Cold Period to the Present Day," *Simen Mountains—Ethiopia, Vol. II* (1982), ? Vol. II of B. Messerli and K. Aerni (eds.), *Simen Mountains. Ethiopia.* (Bern, 1978), Geographica Bernensia G 13

Hurni, Hans, "Harvesting Areas and Cultivation Belts in and around the Simen Mountains National Park—Ethiopia" map at 1:50,000

Kebrom Tekle and Lars Hedlund, "Land Cover Changes Between 1958 and 1986 in Kalu District, Southern Wello, Ethiopia," *Mountain Research and Development*, XX, 1 (2000), pp. 42-51

Kuls, W., *Bevölkerung, Siedlung und Landwirtschaft im Hochland von Godjam (Nordäthiopien)* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1963), Frankfurter Geographische Hefte 39

Marcaccini, Paolo, "Osservazioni aerofotografiche sul paesaggio agrario nella regione del Ciocchè (Goggiam, Etiopia)," *Rivista geografica italiana*, (1978), pp. 234-261

McCann, James, *People of the Plow. An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995)

Mesfin Wolde Mariam, *An Introductory Geography of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1972)

Messerli, B., and K. Aerni (eds.), *Simen Mountains. Ethiopia. Volume I. Cartography and its application for geographical and ecological problems* (Bern, 1978), Beiheft 5 zum Jahrbuch der Geographischen Gesellschaft bon Bern

National Action Plan to Combat Desertification (Addis Ababa, 1997)

Nievergelt, B., T. Good and R. Güttinger (eds.), *A Survey on the Flora and Fauna of the Simen Mountains National Park Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa and Zurich: Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society, 1998)

Pankhurst, Richard, "The Genesis of Photography in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa," *The British Journal of Photography*, Oct. 1976, pp. 878-882, 910-913, 933-935, and 951-953

Reid, Robin S., Russell L. Kruska, Nyawira Muthui, Andualem Taye, Sara Wotton, Cathleen J. Wilson and Wondyalew Mulatu, "Land-use and land-cover dynamics in response to changes in climatic, biological and socio-political forces: the case of southwestern Ethiopia," *Landscape Ecology*, XV (2000), pp. 339-355

Ritler, Alfons, *Land-use, Forests and the Landscape of Ethiopia, 1699-1865. An enquiry into the historical geography of central-northern Ethiopia. Research Report 38* (Bern: Soil Conservation Research Programme, 1997)

Ritler, Alfons, "Wald, Landnutzung und Landschaft im Zentralen und Nördlichen Äthiopien 1865-1930," unpublished doctoral dissertation (Bern: 2 vols., 2001), Centre for Development and Environment, Geographisches Institut Universität Bern

Ritler, Alfons, *Forests, Land-use and Landscape in the Central and Northern Ethiopian Highlands, 1865 to 1930* (Bern, 2003), Institute of Geography, University of Bern, Geographica Bernensia, A19

Rohde, R. F., "Nature, Cattle Thieves and Various Other Midnight Robbers. Images of People, Place and Landscape in Damaraland, Namibia," unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1997)

Scheidegger, Dino, *Äthiopien rekonstruiert. Landschafts-, Landnutzungs- und Walddynamik im Hochland von Äthiopien zwischen 1930 und 1998 anhand von Photovergleichen* (Bern: Centre for Development and Environment, Geographisches Institut, 1999)

Scott, James, *Seeing Like a State: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998)

Shantz, H. L., and B. L. Turner, *Photographic Documentation of Vegetational Change in Africa over a Third of a Century* (Tucson: University of Arizona, College of Agriculture, Report 169, 1958)

Stähli, P., "Changes in Settlement and Land-use in Simen, Ethiopia, especially from 1954 to 1976," pp. 33-70 in Messerli and Aerni, *Simen Mountains*

Stähli, P., and M. Zurbuchen, "Two Topographic Maps 1:25000 of Simen, Ethiopia," pp. 11-31 in Messerli and Aerni, *Simen Mountains*.

Stitz, V., *Studien zur Kulturgeographie Zentraläthiopiens* (Bonn, 1974), Bonner Geographische Abhandlungen, Heft 51

Tiffen, M., M. Mortimore and F. Gichuki (eds.), *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons for the Overseas Development Institute, 1994)

Triulzi, Alessandro (ed.), *Fotografia e storia dell'Africa. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Napoli-Roma 9-11 settembre 1992* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1995)

Turner, R. M., R. H. Webb, J. E. Bowers and J. R. Hastings, *The Changing Mile Revisited. An Ecological Study of Vegetation Change with Time in the Lower Mile of an Arid and Semiarid Region* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003)

Woldeamlak Bewket, "Household level tree Planting and its Implications for Environmental Management in the Northwestern Highlands of Ethiopia: A Case Study in the Chemoga Watershed, Blue Nile Basin," *Land Degradation and Development*, 14 (2003), pp. 377-388

Wøein, Halvor, *Woody plant cover and farming compound distribution on the Mafud escarpment, Ethiopia. An aerial photo interpretation of changes 1957-1986* (Trondheim: University of Trondheim, Centre for Environment and Development, 1995), Working Paper on Ethiopian Development No. 9

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

The Ethiopian Salt Trading System in the 20th Century: A View from Mäqäla, Northern Ethiopia

Tsegay B.Gebrelibanos[1]

An Ethiopian perspective of rural sectors, such as the salt industry could be a key to the study of Ethiopia's economic history. The Ethiopian rock salt, commonly known as *amolé* or *ganfur*, once functioned (or malfunctioned) as food commodity; a medium of exchange, mode of tax/tribute payments, a form of salary, capital, and luxury gift to social elites simultaneously. *Amolés* wider demands were often at odds with its supplies. In the 20th century, *amole* still command greater demands. Produced in the Arho semi desert plains, amole was widely distributed to different Ethiopian regions. Mäqälä, the current capital of Tegray Region, northern Ethiopia, was the principal market and centre of *amole* distributions from the late 19th through the 20th centuries. This paper attempts to give a general picture of amole trade from the side of Mäqälä.

1.0. The Problem

Historical studies of Ethiopian commerce hitherto focused on export items such as gold, ivory, slaves, coffee, and, recently of khat. However, the roles of indigenously produced and distributed items, such as salt, have been overlooked. This study seeks to appraise the roles of salt trade in the economic life of northeastern Ethiopians where it still constitutes a composite source of livelihood to the basics of peasant agriculture and agro-pastorlaism. While historically more active within the Ethiopian domestic transactions; salt had also extensively interacted with those export commodities and other items channeled into the regional economies of Ethiopia and the Horn in the period 19th and 20th centuries. This paper seeks to give some reflections upon the history of salt; its broader economic significances to rural economy and impacts on social change as could be viewed from Mäqäla, capital of Təgray (north eastern Ethiopia). Mäqäla used to be a prominent market centre of the Ethiopian rock salt, locally called *amolé,* in the 20th century. A preliminary oral recollection of the operations of salt trade from the perspectives of this city complemented by secondary literature can give us insights about the regional socio-economic interactions in the period. A couple of fieldworks conducted during the summers of 2003-2004 constituted the basis of this paper.

Salt in 20th Century Ethiopian Economy: A Historical Overview of Roles, Access and Spatial Distribution

Access to salt resources was an important factor in the political economy of Ethiopia. The urge to control salt in some cases triggered protracted conflicts in the 19th and 20th Century Ethiopia where society attached multiple roles to salt. Salt had various uses in

[1] Tsegay B.Gebrelibanos is a PhD Fellow in the Department of History & Classics, Faculty of Arts, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway. Address:tsegay.berhe@hf.ntnu.no

Ethiopia. It was an important culinary item and crucial ingredient for animal nutrition to facilitate digestion, fertility and reproduction. Salt was also serving as a change to fractions of the imported Austrian Maria Theresa thalers (which had no small change) until the early decades of the 20th century.[2] The supplies, access and circulation of Maria Theresa thalers were, nevertheless, fairy limited. This made salt as an even more acceptable medium of exchanges amongst many rural northern Ethiopians.[3] Governments and chiefs also used to collect tributes and taxation in the forms of salt and dispense this salt as salaries for services. One can easily prove this from the tax records of the reign of Tewodros II (r.1855-68).[4] Further, salt has been a form of salary and a luxury item to be offered as a gift to social elites, favorites and visitors. It also served as a means of accumulation of capital.[5] This versatile type of salt with multifunction is variously known as 'common salt', 'rock salt', or locally *amolé,* mined in the Afar lowlands, in northeastern Ethiopia. By the early 20th century, the Italian consul in Mäqälä, M.A. Tancredi, witnessed that *ghiela (*then weighing about 0.7kg) and *amolie (c.*1.68kg*)* were the divisional money and used for payment at customs posts.[6] Until 1991, the widely demanded *amolé* salt bearing districts of Afar were largely part of Təgray province.[7]

Afar lowlands were not the only sources of Ethiopian salt though. Studies indicate the existence of alternative salt deposits in the Red Sea coast (Eritrean sea salt), the bay and hinterlands of Tajura; small salt lakes of Ogadén, the crater lakes of Dillo and Sogida, near Méga (Sidamo), and inland Wabi Valley. And each of these deposits catered to local needs in northern Ethiopia (up to the Täkkazé valley), the Sultanate of Aussa and parts of eastern Shäwa , the Ogadén Somali (up to Harar), and the Boräna-Sidamo (southern Ethiopia) and parts of southern Ethiopia (up to southern Shäwa) respectively.[8] Local salt mining sites in Benishangul also serve local demands in Wälläga.[9] Many small salt-water springs are identified in former Balé and Harargé provinces that apparently originate from salt layers of the Mesozoic system. Besides, most of the Rift valley lakes are reputed for their saline waters, which herds of cattle frequently lick them. More geological studies may still reveal further salt deposits in Ethiopia.

The Afar *amolé* was historically widely circulated than any other salt items; used to play multitudes of socio-economic functions and integrated various social or trading networks across Ethiopia and the Horn. The quest for controlling *amolé* salt markets,

---

2 Tancredi, A.M. " Sui mercati e sui prezzi del sale in Abissinia", *Bollettino Della Societa Geografica Italiana*, Serie IV-Vol.VIII, Parte I, Anno XLI-Volume XLIV(1907); pp.40-41.

3 Pankhurst, R.K. *Economic History of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie I University Press, 1968), pp.242,460-462.

4 Tsegaye Tegenu, "The Evolution of Ethiopian Absolutism: The Genesis and making of the Fiscal Military State, 1696-1913," PhD dissertation, University of Uppsala, 1996; pp.136-139; Abir, M. *Ethiopia:Era of Princes*(London, Longman Ltd,1968),pp.44-47.

5 For similar historical functions in salt as currency, mode of tribute, luxurious gift item and form of capital on other pre-colonial African societies, see: Lovejoy E.Paul, *Salt of the Desert Sun: A History of Salt Production and Trade in the Central Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.1-3; Ann .McDougal, "Salts of the Western Sahara: Myths, Mysteries and Historical Significance" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 23(2), 1990, pp.231-233.

6 Tancredi, "Sui mercati…", P. 41.

7 Tsegay Berhe "A History of Agamä (Təgray),1822-1914", M.A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1996: p.34. As a historical geographical entity, Təgray even extended to include parts of present day Eritrean highlands during the 19th century.

8 Pankhurst, *Economic History..,* p.243.

9 Alesandro Triulzi, *Salt, Gold and Legitimacy: Prelude to the History of No Mans Land:Bellashangul,Wollega(Ethiopia)*(Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale,1981), p.3.

taxation and mining sites partly triggered internecine conflicts among several northern Ethiopian chiefs.[10] Regarding its circulation during early 20th Century, Tancredi again clearly states *amolé* used to be channeled to many markets in Tsegede(northwestern Ethiopia), Goğğam and Amhara, via from Təgray via Lasta.[11] This indicates how salt then appears to have been a very critical item in the regional (and even national) economic transactions. One can find several traveler reports for the 19th Century as well.

The desire to monopolize its tax revenues even attracted the attention of foreign powers. Belgium, Egypt and Italy tried to control the Arho salt mines in the 1830s, 1870s and 1890s respectively mainly in search of salt taxes.[12] Neither the introduction of Maria Thresa Thalers (19th century) nor those of Ethiopia's own modern dollars (early 20th Century) could displace the popularity and convertibility of *amolé* in the domestic market transactions.[13] Emperor Menelik (r.1889-1913) had initial difficulties of displacing salt currency in favor of his own minted currency. In effect, in the years 1897-98, the Emperor resorted to introduce a new type of *amolé* to replace the salt coming from Təgray and control the trade of northern Ethiopia. Tancredi calls this "*Ichelie amolie*" which was of superior quality, purity, portability (compactness) for which it commanded better price than the *amolé* coming from Təgray. The problem with this piece of data is that the author never cites the identity or source of this *Ichelie amolie.*

The domestic economic and commercial significance of salt continued unabated during the subsequent periods. Even more significantly, salt featured prominently in the modern history of Ethiopia's external trading interactions. The flow of European trading items (from neighboring colonies) into Ethiopia was first demonstrated in the huge exports of salt in the period 1900-1935.[14] Studies show that salt transactions took the lead in volume in European exports (from colonies) into Ethiopia which was comparable to their huge volume of coffee imports in return.[15] Its legacy seems to have lingered thereby delaying the development of local salt industries. Ethiopia has paid the price by totally depending on the salt exports of Eritrea (1991-1998) and Djibouti and Yemen (1998-2003).This is more striking as one realizes the country's over 3billion tones of proven reserves.[16]

The existence of a regional market in the 20th century in which different salts interacted and competed could allow us to consider the industry as single unit of analysis (rather than in piece meals). The principal purpose of this regional approach (even where the focus lies on Mäqäla) has been to demonstrate how people responded to market demands and how the forces of production varied in the wider Ethiopian region. The metaphor of 'commodity net work', interlinking the structures of salt production,

---

10 Medhane Taddesse, "Salt, Trade and Urbanization: The Story of Maqala Town, 1872-1935", MA. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1995, pp.56-57.

11 Tancredi, "Sui mercati…" p.40.

12 Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence (*Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University, 1976), pp.43-44, 313, Tsegay, "A History of Agamä," P.89; Medhane, "Salt, Trade and Urbanization", P.58; Pankhurst, *Economic History*, p.242.

13 Abdussamad H.Ahmad, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital and the World Economy, 1901-1935", PhD Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1986, pp.10-16; Pankhurst, P.243.

14 Bahru Zewde, "An Overview and Assessment of Gambella Trade,1904-1935",*The International Journal of African historical Studies ,V*ol.20,No.2(1987),P.83;Abdussamad, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital,"pp.9-10.

15 *Ibid.*

16 http://minerals.er.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2003/djeretsombyb03.

distribution and consumption along typical patterns of 'webs of interdependence'[17]could also complement the regional approach. Because this can better capture the multidimensional relationships and transactions characterizing different sets of actors both within and outside the indigenous salt industry system. An overview of the Ethiopian salt trading system from Mäqäla illuminates the dynamics of an indigenous industry in northern Ethiopia when properly approached from such diverse 'networks' of production, transportation, taxation and marketing and distributions.

Salt Production

The Afar Region is still in a constant state of geologic turmoil and volcanic eruptions. It was in this region that the earliest human remains of Lucy (3.18million years old), Ramidus(4.5million old) and recently Sälam (4.18 million old) have already been explored. In the pre-1991 systems of administration, the Afar Region was divided into four Ethiopian provinces: Eritrea, Təgray, Wällo and Shäwa. The Afar people are predominantly pastoralists or agro-pastoralists, though some of them also earn par time income from petty trading, camel based cargo services and salt production/mining. The source of traditional *amolé* salt supplies for the whole Ethiopia was the Dalul Depression, within the northern Afar; at least about 120 miles of its plain hosts pure sodium chloride /salt/.[18]

Tradition attributes the origins of the Afar rift and of salt to the wrath of God. He once destroyed the ex- cultivation field by volcanoes and leveled it. As the people yelled repenting their sins, He subsequently drained it by pouring flood from highland Agama and endowed it with new resources.[19] Geologists, on their part, explain the Afar mineral salt deposition as the product of the Quaternary era's geological processes of intensive sedimentation. This process ultimately left huge mineral deposits (of sulpher, nitrates, iron, magnesium and potassium) that blossom the area, though salt still dominates the plains. Geologists saw an immense potential in geothermal and hydropower energy development to sustain huge chemical industry dependent on salt supplies.[20] Whether the creationist view holds an alternative explanation to the scientific theory of rift, volcanic action and salt sedimentation may be less important. The fact remains that Afar salt producers intuitively understood the geological endowments of their region. Indigenous wisdom let them exploit the mines by shifting sites annually thereby developing specific techniques of extracting salt layers.

The Təgrayan cultivators inhabiting the immediate Afar hinterland, on the other hand, largely engaged in the salt transport services (often in contest with the Afars). The peasant salt traders are locally called *arhotays*. They responded to the growing demands of the *amolé* salt in Ethiopia, demand that the Afar pastoralists could hardly met alone. The *arhotays* (from Endärta, Agamä, Kəltä-Awlaelo, Tämbién and Rayya Azäbo) shuttled between the strings of highland salt market centers, such as Mäqälä, and Arho, in the low lands. In the course, one can comprehend the evolution of a symbiotic

[17] Alex Hughes and Suzanne Reimer (eds.), *Geographies of Commodity Chains* (London & New York: Routledge, 2004), P.4.

[18] Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Planning and Development, "Regional Aspects of National Planning in Ethiopia", Part II(Addis Ababa,1967),Appendix P.15;Abir,pp.23,46.

[19] Informants, *Ato* Gässässäw Gäbrägziabhér (salt whole seller), Age-78, Mäqälä; *Ato* Assäfa Kahsay (salt retailer), Age-76, Mäqälä, *Hajji* Kahsay Ahmad (salt whole seller), Age-77, Mäqälä.

[20] Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Planning and Development, "Regional Aspects of National Planning", p.259.

economic interdependence between two ecological zones/or communities, that of Afar (lowlanders) and Təgray (highlanders) communities in their shared social history.[21]

Informants unanimously stress that salt mining was the preserve of the Afar in the 19th and 20th centuries. Put it differently, the salt industry in northern Ethiopia essentially depended on hiring Afar salt workers on contractual wages. This is significantly different from the rock salt mining traditions in the Saharan Africa (such as Ijil) or brine salt production in the Oases of Central Sudan (such as Bilma, Bornu, Khawar, Dallol Fogha) in the same period. In both cases, salt working largely relied on the labour mobilization of marginalized (or dependent) social classes of slaves, castes and migrants rather than independent wage labour**.** [22]

How does the actual process of salt mining/ production function in Ethiopia? Salt bricks are, of course, a product of team work involving Təgrayan *fokolo or fänqalo*(literally -breakers) pick up the salt flats/layers. In the last half a century, most *fokolo* were *arhotays*. They produced *amolé* salt in collaboration with the *hadäli* or *tsäräbti* (literally-hewers or masons) group who fix the proper size of each brick. The third group of workers constitutes the *t'äräfti*(literally packers) and the *tsäanti* (loaders), a task often done by the respective caravans. Each salt production team of breakers and hewers operates as a company in dealing with chief organizers of the caravans to settle the often-contractual labour arrangements. In most cases wage is paid in kind. Thus, the Afar salt workers often demand payments in bread and the saline free water fetched from cleaner highland water streams.[23] Currently, however, the *fänqalo* and *tsäräbti* charge caravans in cash at the rates of Eth $7 *Birr* per a chunk that can be further cut into 60 salt slabs. These slabs can be carried on three strong mules, each carrying at the rate of 20 slabs per head**.**[24] But camels could carry as much as 24 slabs**.**[25]

The salt technology hardly witnessed any breakthrough until the recent introduction of commercial salt plants in Lake Afdéra, adjacent to the indigenous Rägäd/Arho salt mines. This lag in the technology of rock salt production explains the persistence in the divisions of labour. The natural process of salt formation and replenishments further contributed to the problem. In the 1970s, the Catholic priest cum traveler (and historian), Kevin O'Mahoney vividly observes and graphically describes this process:

> At any one time the salt workers hack out the shape of the slab of salt to be removed. Four men then lever out whole slab which may be three or four feet square. Other squads are then ready to cut the large slab into for loading onto the waiting camels. The hole left by the slab quickly fills up with intensely salty water; under the radiation of the sun the water evaporates and new salt crystals congeal. In this way the whole plain is self-perpetuation.

Apparently the team of salt workers used to employ simple tools including *erfi(*sticks fitted into sharp edged metal bars), axe, and adze. The team of *fänqalo* employs the sticks to break up large slabs out of the upper salt layer. Then using axes, the slabs are broken into fragments of a few square feet in area. Subsequently, the *tsäräbti* overtake

---

[21] Informants: *Fitawrari* Dämäwoz Seyoum*,Age-92(Wuqro),*Ex-Senate member

[22] Lovejoy, *Salt of Desert Sun*, PP.128-142; McDougal, "Salts of the Western Sahara",pp.235-36.

[23] Informants: *Alaqa* Tasfay Mebrahtu, Age 65(whole seller), Mäqälä; *Ato* Gedäy Mängeste, Age-71;*Ato* Assäffa.

[24] Informants: *Ato* Gässässäw, *Hajji* Kahsay ; *Ato* Alämu Kihisen*,*Age 45,Abbəyi Addi / Mäqälä,(ex-salt Retailer , Manager of the Tigray Cultural Association.); Also O'Mahoney,Kevin, "The Salt Trail" (source material),*Journal of Ethiopian Studies*,VIII(1970);149-51;Haile Mikael Misgina, "Salt Mining in Enderta,", IV(2),1966,pp128-29.

[25] Hailu Gässässä, "*Magadi Arho:Haqana Tarik*", Documentary Text of TV broadcast.

the tasks of chopping the fragments into bricks of uniform area along two standard thicknesses: thin or thick.[26] O'Mahoney recounts that at any one time a maximum of 600 men may be working on the salt plain.[27]

Standardization in the absence of scales (being only recently introduced) often requires skills of careful craft with the adze. Accordingly, through most of the 20th century, there were three major categories of *arho* salt in order of size including: *gäl'o*, *gäräwäynay* and *amolé.*[28] All of them appeared in rectangular shapes. Standardization not only simplifies portability but also remains a key factor in determining prices of salt items during marketing. This is not with- standing rock salt's crudity for establishing prices in comparison to industrial salts. *Gäl'o,* in effect, remains the biggest salt form weighing about 8 kilograms, while *gäräwäynay* weghs about 5 kilograms. *Gäräwäynay* are often subdivided into 3-4 bars of *amolé.*[29] Even though caravans often transported salt from Arho/Rägäd to the Təgrayan highlands in any of the first three forms, all rock salt categories are often further scrambled into pieces of *amolé* within the stores of merchants, especially Mäqälä. *Amolé* remains the ideal size in circulation through out Ethiopia, for which it became the distinctive name of rock salt through out the country vis-á- vis other types of salt resources.[30]

2.0. Organization of the *Arhotay* Trading

The *arhotay* trading provides the key link in the production cycle between producers and consumers. It remains the dominant form of organization against risks of security, physical exhaustion; isolation and boredom inherent in the process of salt ferrying from Afar land. Three basic stages of organization seem evident including preparation, mobilization, and operation. In principle, salt is freely available in Arho for all able-bodied peasants of north-eastern Ethiopia with access to little cash and other forms of capital such as owning or hiring draft animals. Indeed, a series of *arhotays* used to be organized for the last century from all districts of Endärta, Agamä, Kəltä- Awlaelo, Tämbéin and Rayya-Azäbo.[31] In practice, however, factors related to logistics and distances made *arhotay* trading more central to the household economy of Endärta and Afar land than those the other districts of Təgray subject to more extra costs. This relative difference of reliance on the salt trading is partly manifested in the frequency of the Endärta *arhotays*.[32]

The historical evolution of Endärta's local administration seems to have been highly interlinked with the operation of the salt trade and its taxation system. Pankhurst (1968) and Abir (1968) have attributed the entire tasks of salt caravan organization to the *bäalgada*, title assumed by the governor of Endärta, since at least the Medieval period (c.1270-1527).[33] However, the nature and operation of caravan organization seems to be much more complex than Abir and Pankhurst seem to have envisaged. It had required the *bäalgada* to engage in an elaborate process of institutionalizations to cater to better accommodate the operation salt trade system. For instance, the *bäalgada* used to be

[26] Informants:*Alaqa* Täsfay; *Ato* Asäffa,*Hajji* Kahsay .
[27] O'Mahoney, "Salt Trails",P.151.
[28] Informants: *Alaqa* Täsfay; *Ato* Asäffa, *Hajji* Kahsay.
[29] Informants: *Ibid*.
[30] *Ibid*
[31] Informants: *Ibid*, Also personal discussions with my former history Professor Merid Wolde Aregay, Addis Ababa University, Age–71.I acknowledge that I owe him a lot for suggesting me to take up the current topic for my doctoral project.
[32] Informants: *Aläqa* Täsfay Mäbrahtu, *Hajji* Mohammad.
[33] Pankhurst, *Economic History,*P.423;Abir, *Ethiopia:Era of Princes*, P.46.

assisted by a group of three to four officials each bearing the title of *shumbahri* (literally- 'chief of the sea' or the salt lakes).[34] It was this group of officials who actually coordinated and executed the operational aspect of the *arhotays*. Local informants indicate that chiefs of Endärta were the greatest stake holders in the caravan organization owing to the prevalent conflicts of territories, resources and tribute/taxation between the Endärtans and their Afar and Təgrayan counterparts.[35]

The *amolé* trade was developed in the context of traditional transport infrastructure. Pack animals were fundamental to the salt transport. Camel, mules and donkeys were critical assets that earn considerable income both to their owners and to those caravans who hired them for the purposes of salt transport. Thus, the introduction of lorry into the salt region provoked tension for some salt procuring Endärta districts(to which most salt producing Afar belonged).Because Endärta's geographical proximity gave the locales a spatial advantage to monopolize the salt caravan/ transport / activity. To the contrary, the lorry transport system that encourages equity of access to salt caravans from such further districts as Agamä , Kəltä Awlaelo,Tämbéin and Rayya-Azäbo, threatened to destroy the benefits of the Afar and Endärta. Indeed, informants report that the endeavours of *Ras* Mängäsha Seyoum (Təgray's governor before the 1974 Revolution) to extend modern road networks into the salt plains was hailed by those districts, while the Endärta and Afar strongly opposed the move. Agamä and Kəltä-Awlaelo salt merchants apparently took the principal initiatives to introduce lorry to outfit the Afar and Endärta camel- based salt transporters.[36]

Currently, series of road networks are developing to integrate the salt districts in Afar land with central and northeastern regions of Ethiopia. Those projects could likely affect the livelihood of Afar and Təgray traditional salt suppliers, as much as the extension of the rail-way system has ruined traditional salt industries of Europe during the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, over twenty modern Industrial salt plants are engaged in commercial extraction of the Afdéra Lake salt. These developments could be the second huge blow to the Afar *amolé* industry in the modern period of its history (the first being the importation of a mass of commercial sea salts from the neighbouring colonies by the beginning of the 20th century- this issue will be discussed in greater details below). Indeed, the salt caravan culture is under threats from two razors-commercialization and expansion of lorry transport.

Attempts to appraise the impacts of the caravan salt trade on livelihood imply mixed pictures. In the 1970s, the traveler cum historian, O'Mahoney observes, the *arhotays* often make a round trip of over 400 miles in a very difficult environment for a pittance![37] That is, no proportion exists between the human efforts and hardship involved and the financial returns from the sale of a few slabs of salt. And yet its local impact on household economy seems quite significant. Indeed, as our senior informant, Asäffa Kahsay remarks, "The salt of Arho remains Təgray's only prominent factory until recently"[38]. Stressing its impact on his life, "Having been displaced from agriculture due to recurrent famine in the 1960s, I have found refuge in salt retailing out of which I support my otherwise big family".[39] A veteran *arhotay*, Hailu Gäbrä-Yohännes also claims with pride that Arho was the foundation of his household

[34] Informants: *Aläqa* Täsfay Mäbrahtu, *Ato* Asäffa, *Ato G*ässässäw, *Ato* Gədäy.
[35] Informants: *Ibid*.
[36] *Ibid*.
[37] O,Mahoney,"Salt Trails",P.154
[38] Informant: *Ato* Asäffa Kahsay
[39] *Ibid*.

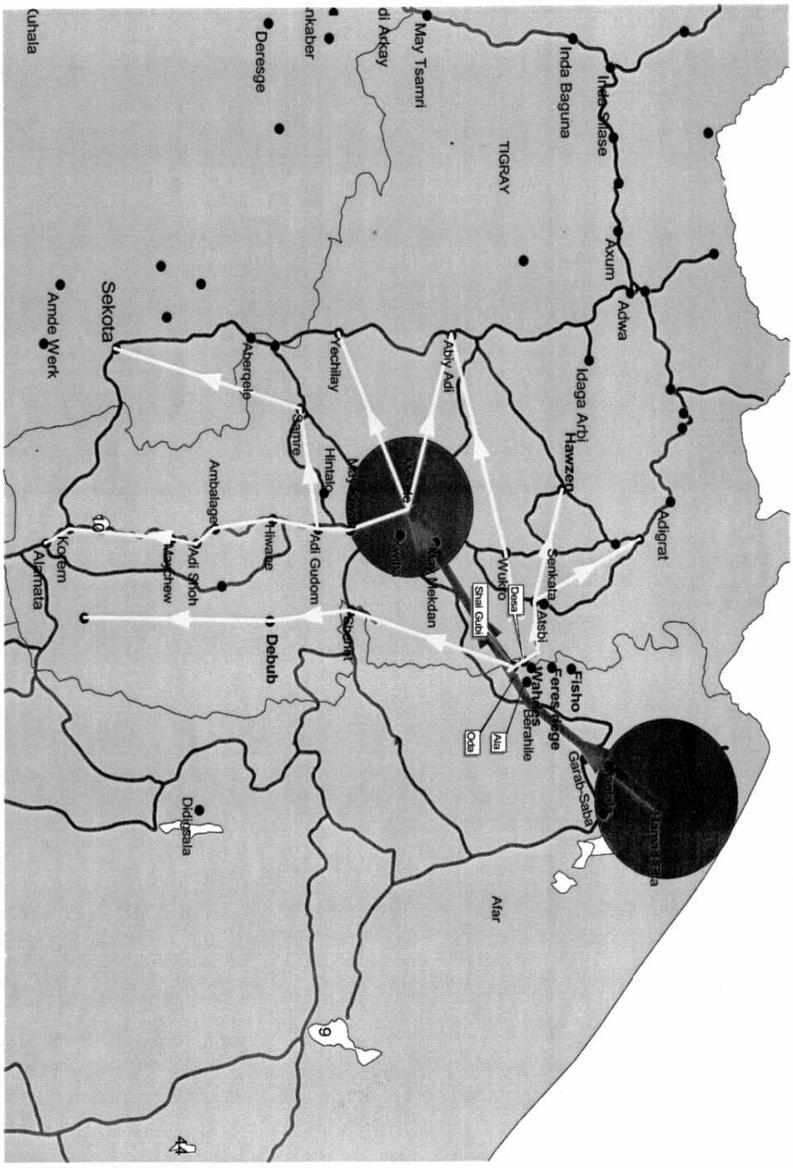
economy for decades until 1984, when his camel folk were suddenly ransacked by the Afar rebels, the Ugugmo."[40] Another informant, a wholesaler, *Hajji* Kahsay Mohammed reinforces the fact that salt transport provides peasants with access to cash, to meet their ends. Indeed, he estimates that peasants from Endärta on an average spent 3-4 months as salt caravans and could earn about $100 Maria Theresa thalers in the pre-Italian period.[41] The bottom line is peasant caravans do get money but they often reinvest it on purchasing pack animals, to be employed to ferry more rock salt, hence, the proverb: "*genzabya Arho's tamalisu ne Arho*!(literally the money from Arho goes back to Arho![42]

3.0. Salt, Trade Routes and Social Networking

The Ethiopian highlands were generally poorly endowed with salt (than their lowland counterparts).[43] With the exception of Shäwa, which was also receiving salt from Lake Assal, these highlands were entirely relying on the amole supplies from the former Afar districts of Tigray. McCann saw the salt blocks as the foundation of Ethiopia's trade and interregional connections.[44] This assumption needs further investigations from multidisciplinary perspectives. While the salt trade existed at least since the 6th century, it still remains an inherent feature of the Təgrayan economy in the 20th century. Salt supply geared for marketing and redistribution reach highland Təgray through different local routes to be redistributed to other regional routes through mid-distance and long-distance trade networks. Informants in eastern Təgray identified three major salt trade routes that linked up the Afar salt plains with the string of highland salt market towns before subsequent redistribution. The first one was the south-easterly route that stretched along the Arho-Bärahä-Shekhät-Alamat'a route commonly but not exclusively taken by the Rayya-Azäbo caravans. The second one, the proper easterly route, which follows the Arho-Bärahä-Atsbi/Mäqälä route, is often used by *arhotays* from Kəltä-Awlaelo,Tämbién and Endärta. It is the shortest and probably the busiest route. The third one was the Arho-Bärahä-Tserae route that extends to Hawzén (one of the very prominent markets in central Tigray). *Arhotays* from Agamä apparently frequented this route. A concise sketch of the salt trails is provided below:

1. Arho-Bärahlä-Shekhat-Wäjärrat-Alamat'a
2. Arho- Bärhalä - Bärahä-Atsbi/Mäqälä
3. Arho-Mägläla-Ala-Tsrae-Hawzén-Adwa

[40] *Ato* Hailu Gäbrä Yohännes, Age 71, Mäqälä (April 2006). Ugugmo is an Afar term, meant Revolutionary, an Afar dissident group which later merged with the Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF). This Front is now officially in charge of the salt district administration, though elements of it recently claim responsibility for the March 2007 kidnappings of British tourists in the Arho salt mines.
[41] Informant: *Hajji* Kahsay Mohammed.
[42] *Ibid*; *Ato* Hailu, *Ato* Assäffa
[43] James McCann, *From Poverty to Famine in Northeast Ethiopia: A Rural History,1900-1935*,Philadelphia:University of Pennsylvania Press,1987),P.72.
[44] *Ibid.*



Map 1. Local and Medium salt routes and markets: Təgray-Lasta

Endärta's *arhotays* constituted the biggest group with stronger traditions of salt caravan organization and operate much more swiftly than their other Təgrayan fellows. Salt transport remains their serious business complementing household income to the extent they considered it on a par with cultivation. For the steadily growing landless peasants and new house holds, salt transport was a full time activity more than cultivation in ensuring access to subsistence. The Təgrayans traded with the Afar fairy extensively. While Atsbi, Fisho and Həntalo were the best salt markets in the 19th century[45], informants stress that Bärahlä in the foothills of the escarpment and Mäqälä at the edges Təgrayan plateau relatively dominated the history of 20th century *amolé* trade while others underwent a steady decline.[46] This was partly attributed to the centralization of the fiscal administration and the emergence of secondary/salt markets such as Sənqata,Wuqro,Qwuiha, and Koräm, on the Asmara-Mäqälä-Dässié motor road networks built not very far from the old markets.

The *amolé* trade gained greater importance in northern Ethiopian highlands in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The string of towns situated along the Asmara- Mäqälä - Dässié route emerged as the more prominent salt markets active in the process of *amolé* marketing and subsequent redistributions in the early 20th century. Early *amolé* transit stations that earned greater reputation by local tradition were Həntalo, Samrä, Säqota and Bälässa (Gondär). These markets had effectively networked the trade routes of Eastern Təgray with the more prominent northwestern long-distance trade route, i.e. the Basso-Gondär-Adwa-Massawa. [47]

Samrä's position at the crossroads of three important regions-Wällo, Bägémeder and Təgray-might have clearly placed it at a relative advantage to be closely networked with the nearest markets in conducting salt from Təgray and procuring agricultural products such as butter, honey, coffee, and livestock in return.[48] That the same informant relates the idea of Samrä's closer trade relations with Säqota(capital of Lasta, northern Wällo) and Bälässa in Gondär leads us to the same conclusion. Indeed, McCann's important finding that Säqota eclipsed its long time rival Samrä, in the period 1900-1935 reinforces this argument.[49] It is also likely that Həntalo and Samrä could have flourished as precursors of Mäqälä before their decline.

Another important development concerns the roles of certain regions and their markets in Central Ethiopia that grew partly due to their strategic interactions with the salt trade routes. Säqota and Lalibella, in Northern Wällo, are cases in point. Both lie at the strategic position to conduct the salt trade into south, west and south west of the northern Ethiopian region as a whole.[50]The two towns seem to have had remarkable part that Təgrayan markets of Samrä and Həntalo could hardly substitute. James McCann underlines Säqota market, within the district of Wag, command a central position on the diagonal route between Mäqälä,Gondär, Gojjam , Səmén, northern Wällo and further south into Wälläga.[51] Towards north, Säqota is also straightly accessible to another important Təgrayan salt market of Abəyyi Addi, capital of Tämbén district, which is in turn interconnected to Adwa, Mäqälä and Addigrat(via Hawzén) and ultimately to

[45] Abir, *Ethiopia:Era of Princes*, P.46.
[46] Informant: *Ato* Gässässäw.
[47] *Ibid*.
[48] *Ibid*.
[49] McCann, *From Poverty to Famine*, pp.72-73.
[50] Asnake Ali,1983. "Aspects of the Political History of Wallo, 1872-1935," M.A Thesis in history, Addis Ababa University, P.109.
[51] McCann, *From Poverty to Famine*, P.72.

Asmara in Eritrea. Informants unanimously saw Säqota as a proper bridge in the larger scale two-way traffic of not only of salt but also manufactured goods from Eritrea. Trade in livestock, especially of mules, horses and oxen from Wälo,Gojjam and Gondär found their way into northern Ethiopia(especially Tegray) via Säqota. Lalibella, to the south, lying in the same diagonal route, appears to be another important terminal that transited the items of trade flowing via Säqota.[52]

The decline of the principal north-western routes in the last quarter of the century, due to the Egyptian and Italian blockade of Red Sea ports, seem to have led to some reorientations of the northern Ethiopian trade routes. Conversely, the same events promoted the status of the northeastern trade routes attached to the salt trade from secondary into one of primary routes. Informants relate the emergence of Mäqälä as the principal salt trade entrépot was the result of these redirections of trade routes. The relocation of Emperor Yohannes IV's (1872-89) capital from Adwa (terminus along the northwestern trade route) to that of Mäqälä was apparently related to these courses of events. Hence the theory that trade often follows the orientation of political centrality has pertinence with Mäqälä. The extraction of surplus from the salt trade not only sustained state revenue (in time of economic stress) but also facilitated urbanization in the salt routes in general and Mäqälä in particular. Returns to salt trade were at times equally if not more rewarding than the revenue from salt *per se*!

Moreover, the early 20th century witnessed the rise of new strings of trade routes due to combinations of salt transactions and external factors related European commercial interactions. Thus, the following routes seem particularly important for channeling *amole* salt into the rest of Ethiopia:

1. Mäqälä-Koräm-Wäldiyya-Dässié-Addis Ababa
2. Mäqälä-Wäldiya-Wäräta/Yəfag-Burrié-Wälläga
3. Mäqälä - Säqota-Iste-Mota-Burie

3.1. Amolé Trade, Foreign Competition and Monopoly

The early 20th century was a landmark in the commercial history of the Ethiopian Region It introduced an era of fierce commercial rivalries between the different neighboring colonial powers, namely Britain, Italy and France.[53] This competition brought about greater impacts on the subsequent orientations of the Ethiopian trade in general and that of the salt trade in particular. The Tripartite powers targeted salt as the prominent item to extract profits, hence as a vehicle of accumulation of capital. Thus, the essence of economic imperialism in Ethiopia had one of its tentacles extended into the salt industry. The British worked hard to develop the inland ports of Moyale (southern Ethiopia) and Gambélla (western Ethiopia), the French with Djibouti while the Italians with Assab and Massawa as outlets of Ethiopian trade, and they all invariably targeted salt among the chief export items into Ethiopia. This was a sharp edged razor to the technologically lagging indigenous Ethiopian *amolé* industry.

The construction of the Franco-Ethiopian rail road in 1917 enabled the French to outsmart their rivals in diverting most of Ethiopian trade. An estimate in the late 1920s indicates the Ethiopian transit trade via Eritrea was 12%, that of British share 18%

[52] Informants: *Ato* Gässässäw; *Aläqa* Täsfay Mäbrahtu.
[53] Abdusamd, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital",P.6, Bahru, "An Overview and Assessment of Gambella Trade,P. 84.

while the French handled 70% Ethiopian trade.[54] These developments were the significant in strengthening both the political and commercial centrality of Addis Ababa, against Mäqälä's growing marginalization in both spheres.

Meanwhile, the growing commercial importance of Eritrea made its capital, Asmara, the centre for the distribution of imported goods to northern Ethiopia and the outlet of export items from the same region. Mäqälä, the capital of Təgray, to an extent benefited out of this development in that it became one of the few transit and redistribution centers of on commodities plying in the Region. Mäqälä, nevertheless, lost greatly in the salt front. Although salt still continued to be a vital commodity in the Ethiopian trade, its commerce underwent some major changes both in the patterns of distribution, volumes and quality. Previous studies also underscored how the salt trade managed to become central to inter-state politics in the Horn of Africa for the decades to come. For instance, Abdusamd (1987) and Bahru (1987) underline that the French spectacular success in handling the Ethiopian export trade was replicated in producing sea salt in their colony of Djibouti which enabled them to control the culinary salt market, at least, in southern and southwestern Ethiopia. This development made salt ranked top in volume the list of goods the Franco-Ethiopian railroad transited in the 1920s and 1930s. Sudan also poured salt exports to western Ethiopia, which further suffocated *amolé*'s market in the region. Sudanese traders used to exchange salt with coffee. Bahru states that in view of *amolé'*s value as currency, British capital from the Sudan entertained the scheme of making salt into bars and selling them profitably in Western Ethiopia. This seems to have aimed at displacing the Afar *amolé* from the region**.**[55]

The blow to the British scheme, especially to the Afar *amolé* trade, however, came in May 1930, when a Fanco-Ethiopian company, known as 'Franco-Ethiopine Pour le Commerce duCommerce du Sel') secured a monopoly on the Ethiopian salt trade. Bahru claims that 40% of the shares was possibly allocated to *Nəgus* Täfäri(the late Emperor Haile Selassie, r.1930-1974). Täfäri apparently granted the concession representing the Ethiopian government. [56] Neither British reaction nor the northern resentment had any effect to restrain the monopoly status of the French company. Indeed, the Arho salt plains as centers of salt production for Ethiopian market suffered growing marginalization, threatened by the Djibouti coastal salt mines, which were promoted by the French monopoly privileges. Arho still staggered to survive at least by relying on the demands of northern Ethiopia. It was able to do so and even revived later.

The British, however, shifted their commercial strategy from salt suppliers to salt distributors in the Ethiopian markets. The Mohammed Allay British Indian firm pioneered the distribution industry in Addis Ababa and quickly saw successful ventures by opening branches in the (south eastern and southwestern) Ethiopian towns of Diredawa, Harar, Jijiga, Jimma, Läqämt and Wälayta.[57]This strategic move even qualified the Mohammedally Co. to win a share in the Franco- Ethiopian Pour le Commerce du Sel.[58] Another British firm, the Saferian and Co. doubled as agents in Western Ethiopia for the Franco- Ethiopian salt monopoly, while running the coffee business in return. Nevertheless, unable to stand Mohammad Allay, the Saferian and some other firms quickly retired from the salt distribution business.[59] The period,

[54] Abdusamad, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital",P.7.
[55] Bahru, "An Overview and Assessment of Gambella Trade",P.83.
[56] *Ibid:84*
[57] Abdusamad, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital",P.13.
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Ibid;*Bahru, "An Overview and Assessment of Gambella Trade",P.84.

however, saw incredible contortions within the salt trade, which were the ultimate results of expatriate domination of Ethiopia's import-export trade. In relation to this, Bahru found out that the expatriate merchants, especially the Greeks, secretly agreed among themselves to drive down the price of such vital commodities as coffee and inflate that of imported items like salt and *abujädid* (cotton sheeting).[60]

Meanwhile, trade flourished in the direction of northern Ethiopia as well. The Italians apparently created a mild commercial environment where vital southwestern and western Ethiopian commodities such as pepper, coffee, honey, butter and flex were conducted to Asmara via Mäqälä and Adwa. The salt trade capitalized on the relatively better atmosphere of transactions as some of those caravans coming form the south of Təgray were carrying salt on their return trip back home. The brief Italian occupation period (1935-1941) led to the emergence of some new market towns and the decline of others. This was attributed to the Italian construction of the first modern road networks in Ethiopia, especially northern Ethiopia. Asmara became the new hub of Ethiopian import and export trade. This had paradoxical results for Mäqälä .On the one hand, transition to the commercial sea salt was intensified to further compete the *amolé* market. On the other hand, the road networks at the same time facilitated the movements of *amolé* to the entire regions to the south and west, which extended its share from the wider regional salt market. The fact that *amolé* still commanded effective demand at least in medicinal and animal feed is significant for its survival. Təgrayan salt merchants hired Italian lorries which helped them to aggressively penetrate as many bigger markets as possible to be further redistributed by local merchants. Moreover, much of rural Ethiopia was hardly affected by the Italian modern communication facilities remained more tied up with *amolé,* by the conventional trade networks and transport system.

3.2. The Post- Italian Legacy (1941-2000)

The legacy of foreign domination of the salt trade seems to have declined following Italian evacuation in 1941.The period 1941-1998 can be fairly characterized as the 'proper sea salt era' in Ethiopian culinary history. It was a product of the political/and or economic integration of Eritrea and Ethiopia that led to the commercial exploitation of the huge Red Sea Coast salt. *Amolé* still staggered to survive market leftovers, particularly by tailoring utmost to the demands for animal feed and vendors and, of course, as an option for culinary purposes, especially to those who kept subscribing to it by virtue of cultural preferences. Salt merchants from Mäqälä thus kept up supplying the entire Ethiopia through the trade networks already discussed above.

In the long run, however, Ethiopia's dependence on the Eritrean salt supplies undermined the development of alternative inland salt resources and marginalized *amolé* trade. This was particularly the case in view of Eritrea's protracted war and the subsequent secession in 1991. The challenges of salt supply, indeed, came into the fore with the outbreak of the 1998 Ethio-Eritrean conflict. The effects of the war were immediately reflected in the salt trade. The cession of salt supplies from Eritrea apparently precipitated a political crisis, albeit briefly, by exposing the grim reality of Ethiopia's dependence on Eritrean salt products. The state managed the crisis by taking two prompt policy measures, including direct imports from Djibouti and Yemen and the granting of salt mining concessions to develop Ethiopia's own neglected inland resources.

[60] *Ibid*.

In the interim period, *amolé* enjoyed a brief revival and boom for the five years until 2002/2003. Then Afdera large scale-salt production sector overtook much of *amolé's* market. It may sound ironic that Ethiopia with 290 million tones of a proven salt reserve only from Afdera still imports 50% of its local consumption which is estimated at 3 million quintals a year.[61]Needless to say, as most salt bearing villages are situated in the hotly contested Ethio-Eritrean border zone which made them a virtual source of political tension vis-à-vis the controversial rulings of the Hague Border Commission of 2002.

4.0. Salt Marketing and Organization in Mäqälä

Mäqälä was the principal centre of *amolé* salt marketing in the 20th century Ethiopia. There were considerable changes in the patterns of salt trading, market organization and the composition of salt merchants. At the opening of the century when the demand for *amole* was quite high, considerable merchants apparently specialized in salt trading alone. Fresh entrepreneurs from rural Təgray found it easier to enter into salt trading in Mäqälä. This was partly due to the mild taxes and partly due to the fact that *amolé* trading often remains opened to any one due to the little initial capital. Emphasizing this fact, one of my informants Gədäy Mängisté remarks, "Virtually there was no body from Mäqälä who had not started salt trading. Yet, only handful individuals have taken salt transactions as their specialty".[62] In fact, he claims to be one of those exclusive *amole* wholesalers, while many of his fellows switched trading between different items.

There are three categories of traders who made their livelihood partly or entirely out of salt. These are: the *arhotays,* whole sellers (distributors) and retailers. This categorization tends to exclude the labourer group such as porters in different towns. The *arhotay* (together with their Afar salt workers*)* who procure salt can be reckoned the basis in the linear cycle of *amolé* trading Not only do they supply but also simultaneously engage in trading during weekly market days. The retailers, on the other hand, are better networked both to the *arhotay* and wholesalers, a strategy which guarantees them optimal salt supply in two alternate forms: rock salt or in its raw form. Their advantage lie in their mobility and flexibility to trade in small towns or occasional markets or every quarters of towns including Mäqälä city often hardly frequented by wholesalers and the *arhotay* .Thus, they have better access to clients who wish to buy small quantities (or measures)of salt than the wholesalers or distributors might offer. Women entrepreneurs particularly prevail in the sale of raw salt that they usually obtain from wholesalers. The latter initially hardly considered the "waste" or residues left over during the process of cutting salt slabs (*gäräwäynay*) into pieces of *amolé* for shipping or redistribution. They used to give away to women retailers for nominal prices, like a quintal of raw salt for as cheap as Eth $6.00 Birr.[63]

Subsequently, however, Təgrayan women entrepreneurs discovered a new method of appreciating raw salt's value by processing or sweeping off its impurities and shipping into the nearby small weekly markets. The notable market destinations include Samrä, Mayčäw,Qobbo, Arit'at'a ,Säqot'a, and Alamat'a towns. Retailer women used to bartering raw salt with ranges of agricultural goods such as grains, spices, eggs, honey, etc.), of the Amhara-Agaw peasants who needs specific amounts salt for household consumption. The next step is that, the same women returned to Mäqälä and other nearby bigger Təgrayan markets to retail their newly acquired agricultural items (in

[61] *The Ethiopian Reporter Bi-weekly*, October 2003.
[62] Informant: *Ato* Gedäy Mangeste , Age- 72, Mäqälä, (Salt Whole seller), April 2006.
[63] Informants:*Ibid*, *Ato* Gässässäw.

return to raw salt) for a handsome price.[64] This retailing strategy indicates an aspect of gender divisions in the salt trading where women's ingenuity and the dynamics of salt marketing and networking in northern Ethiopia could be evidently demonstrated. It should, however, be noted that the women retailers (usually single household heads) could hardly evolve into an affluent or bigger merchants but survive well and support their often large households in a region suffering from recurrent food insecurity. Retailing developed very gradually leading to the emergence of a separate group since the 1950s.

Meanwhile, the wholesalers quite often succeed in business by employing not only due to their advantages of capital, stocks and interregional networking but also owing to their own specific market strategies. Among others, the wholesalers either held the *arhotay* in clientage for mutual benefit, or manipulate the *arhotays* into fierce competition to lower the price. And rarely, wholesalers compete amongst each other to hoard salt in their stocks in order to sell it at higher rate to the distributors, retailers or consumers in times of *amolé* scarcities. The other vital market strategy of wholesalers is to engage in the merchandise of highly demanded industrial or raw items parallel to *amolé* salt trading.[65]Indeed, my research trip to Mäqälä revealed that some of the big trading families in the city owe their initial career to salt though same group mostly end up in either switching into another business. Others would opt to sustain themselves by combining salt along with the other items, industrial or agricultural. Most informants report cereals, coffee, sugar, kerosene, *abujedid* (cotton clothes) and cotton threads were the main items of trade in Mäqälä town used to be often handled by salt merchants.[66] Part of the ex-salt traders also them also resort to the provision of social services such as transport, mills and restaurants. Local construction of few houses in urban areas also seems another way out for merchants to retain the meager savings generated from transactions of salt and agricultural / industrial commodities.[67]

Apparently, one can observe salt marketing in Mäqälä , being an open type, is often alternated with other merchandise by all categories of salt merchants. The situation, coupled with the essentially subsistent nature of the Təgrayan economy seems to have delayed the evolution of big salt trading families. The Təgray Region did not produce any significant export item (save for incense and oil seeds briefly) to reinforce the creation of a merchant class either. Above all, however, the introduction of cheap and huge quantities of industrial salts from abroad seem to have further decapitated salt merchants from Mäqälä to create big trading firms. Despite the constraints to the evolution of big salt trading families in the 20th Century, however, we still have cases of successful *amolé* wholesalers who used to derive sizeable profit by monopolizing the task of salt redistribution to the Ethiopian national and/or provincial capitals such as Addis Ababa, Dässié, Gondär and Däbrämarqos besides other district towns *en route.* They succeeded in creating their own clients from across the country that they regularly supply them with vital industrial/agricultural goods in return to salt.[68]

These clients constitute their own category of merchants the redistributors' category. This group was deriving some profit out of *amolé* trading by virtue of their networks to the Mäqälä whole sellers. They in turn have local networks of retailers in different

[64] *Ibid*.
[65] Ibid; *Hajji* Kahsay Mohammad, *Aläqa* Täsfay Mäbrahtu
[66] Informants: *Ato* Gedäy, *Ato* Gässässäw., *Hajji* Kahsay Mohammad, *Aläqa* Täsfay Mäbrahtu.
[67] *Ibid*.
[68] *Ibid*.

towns of Ethiopia to the south of Dässié and Gondär. Provinces in southern and southwestern Ethiopia, especially those lying along the old principal trade routes still demand some *amole*(for medicinal, animal feed and some for culinary purposes) ,even long after the introduction of masses of iodized salt had long overtaken the market for the northern *amolé*. Retailing some *amolé,* thus, still prevails in almost all Ethiopian towns for different purposes. As many modern salt plants cropped up, still considerable marketing opportunities are still reserved for the conventional *amolé* salt transactions.

Informants (wholesalers) from Mäqälä emphasizes they still periodically ship *amolé* salt to their clients all over the south. However, in times of scarcity, their clients directly venture as far as Mäqälä (or through trading agents) to fetch salt while at the same time supplying them with the much needed industrial (sugar, cotton, building materials, etc.) or agricultural goods such as sugar, pepper, spices ,coffee, honey, grains (*teff*,maize,etc). Indeed, the trading families of *Aläqa* Abraha Wäldu, *Balambaras* Dawit Wäldä-Mariam, *Grazmač* Gäbrä-Mikael,*Balambaras* Atsbeha and of my two informants Gedäy Mängesté and Gässässäw Gäbrä-Egziabher could be cited as cases of emerging big salt trading families. Most of them kept up salt shipping and distribution business for the last three to five decades. While the two informants focused exclusively on salt business, the rest of the group largely account their success to their skillful combinations of salt shipping with the redistribution of other consumer goods coming from outside Mäqälä. The salt market constitutes the nucleus of the city's commercial zone around which the very essence of urbanization and physical expansion was to be sought .One can safely argue that the urban growth of a string of towns in north eastern Ethiopia could be attributed to the salt transactions , trade networks and its returns (goods exchanged in return).

Bibliography

Abdussamad H.Ahmad, "Gojjam: Trade, Early Merchant Capital and the World Economy, 1901-1935", PhD Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1986

Abir, M. *Ethiopia:Era of Princes* .London, Longman Ltd,1968.

Asnake Ali, "Aspects of the Political History of Wallo, 1872-1935," M.A Thesis in history, Addis Ababa University, 1983.

Bahru Zewde, "An Overview and Assessment of Gambella Trade,1904-1935",*The International Journal of African historical Studies* ,20(2) , 1987.

The Ethiopian Reporter Bi-weekly,, October 2003.

Haile Mikael Misgina, "Salt Mining in Enderta," (source material)*Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, IV(2),1966.

Hailu Gässässä, "*Magadi Arho:Haqäña Tarik*", Documentary Text version of Ethiopian Television Broadcast(Tigrinya programme).

http://minerals.er.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2003/djeretsombyb03.

Hughes, Alex and Suzanne Reimer (eds.), *Geographies of Commodity Chains.* London & New York*:* Routledge, 2004

Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Planning and Development, "Regional Aspects of National Planning in Ethiopia", Part II (Addis Ababa,1967).

Lovejoy,Paul E. *Salt of the Desert Sun: A History of Salt Production and Trade in the Central Sudan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

McCann, James. *From Poverty to Famine in Northeast Ethiopia: A Rural History,1900-1935*, Philadelphia:University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987.
McDougal, Ann E. "Salts of the Western Sahara: Myths, Mysteries and Historical Significance" *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 23(2),1990
Medhane Taddesse, "Salt, Trade and Urbanization: The Story of Maqala Town, 1872-1935", MA. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1995.
O'Mahoney,,Kevin, "The Salt Trail" (source material), *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*,VIII, 1970.
Pankhurst, R.K. *Economic History of Ethiopia.*Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie I University Press, 1968.
Rubenson, Sven. *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence* .Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University, 1976.
Tancredi, A.M. " Sui mercati e sui prezzi del sale in Abissinia", *Bollettino Della Societa Geografica Italiana*, Serie IV-Vol.VIII, Parte I, Anno XLI-Volume XLIV,1907.
Triulzi, Alesandro. *Salt, Gold and Legitimacy: Prelude to the History of No Mans Land:Bellashangul,Wollega(Ethiopia)* .Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale,1981.
Tsegay Berhe "A History of Agamä (Təgray),1822-1914", M.A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1996.
Tsegaye Tegenu, "The Evolution of Ethiopian Absolutism: The Genesis and making of the Fiscal Military State, 1696-1913," PhD Dissertation, University of Uppsala, 1996.

List of Informants:

Alämu Kihisen,*(Ato)* Age 45, (ex-salt Retailer), Mäqälä, July 2003.
Assäfa Kahsay,(*Ato)*, Age-74, (salt retailer) , Mäqälä, July 2003.
Dämäwoz Seyoum(*Fitawrari),Age-92,* Ex-Senate member, *Wuqro,* May 2006.
Gässässäw Gäbrägziabhér ,(*Ato),* Age-78 *(* whole seller), Mäqälä, July 2003, April 2006.
Gedäy Mängeste (*Ato)*, Age-71, (whole seller), Mäqälä, July 2003, April 2006.
Hailu Gäbrä Yohännes,(Ato), Age 71, (ex-*Arhotay)*, Mäqälä, April 2006
Kahsay Ahmad, (*Hajji),* Age-77, (salt whole seller), Mäqälä, July 2003.
Merid Wolde Aregay,(Professor), Age–71, Addis Ababa University, July 2006.
Tasfay Mebrahtu,(*Halä*q*a)*, Age 65 (whole seller), Mäqälä, July 2003, July 2004.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

"Deux ans de sejour en Abyssinia ou la vie morale, politique et religieuse" par R.P.Dimethees as an issue for the histoire et the culture Ethiopian

Eleonora Lvova[1]

The Armenian priest Dimethees was in Ethiopia in the end of the XIX century. He lived there for two years. His observations were published in French and Armenian in 1891. This book in two volumes gives various and many-sided datas: "ethiopian policy" of England and other European powers; their contractions; the policies of Ethiopian "rases" nd noble men; social structure, economy and culture of Ethiopia; ethnic and confessional situation and so on.

The end of XIX century was a very hard time in Ethiopian history. European countries were figthing for the new territories in Africa and for influence on the rulers of the land. There was inside Ethiopia a cruel fight for paramount power Sometimes the rivals combated actively against strangers, sometimes they made alliances with some of them. During . this period some englishmen were imprisoned by Theodoros, the emperor of Ethiopia. England had undertaken some measures for their release but they were unsuccessful. The appeal to Armenian patriarch in Jerusalem was among them. The English ambassador in Egypt Lord Lyons had addressed His Beatitude Isaya(he was the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem) with a request to send his mission to Theodoros in order to intercede for the liberation of his compatriots.

This choice was not accidental. Armenian Church belongs to the eastern Christian Churches as does the Ethiopian Ortodox Church. Armenian priests had visited Ethiopia in the Middle Ages and connections between these two Churches in Jerusalem were very close. Armenian Patriarch had sent three men Grandeur Isaac, Vartapet(a church-chronist) Dimethees Saprichian and a young man(a servant) Esekiel. All of them saw their mission as humane and noble(generous) and thought it would help to end the war. Leaving for this country that was embraced by war and troubles Dimethees had written:"Aucune dangers… won't prevent us from undertaking this journey both dangerous and prolonged. The sacred duty of humanity is calling us there"(Dimethees, 1891: 2)

This mission was stayed in Ethiopia for two years. Dimethees made his notes and when the mission came back to Jerusalem these notes were published in armenien and French. This book is a very interesting issue for Ethiopian history and culture. Unfortunately it is little known. As I suppose it was used only in 1972 in the presentation of Dr Papasyan in Roma on the IV ICES but the author was interested only in one aspect – the urbanization.

[1] LVOVA Eleonora S. DrDr, Professor of the Chair of Africanistic, The Institute of the Asian and African Studies, The Moscow State Lomonossov University, 125009 Moscow Mochovaya str. 11. Tel (495) 6295464. E-mail: eleonora.lvova@gmail.com

Meanwhile this book gives very varied and many-sided data: “Ethiopian “ policy of England; interaction of different European powers in this region; the policy of Ethiopian “rases” and noblesse of local society; social stratification , economy and culture; ethnical and confessional situation and so on. One of the most interesting parts of the book is the publication of some authentic letters: from the Archibishop Isaya to Theodoros from Jerusalem and Cairo; correspondence with English consul and vice-consul in Egypte; a special message to Queen Victoria. Dimethees had dedicated his book to her.

In general this work consist author’s personal notes. It consists of two books(livres). The first one is devoted to the description of the mission ‘ intensions; its itinerary(through Egypt, Suez-channel; Massaua, Soudan); dangers on the road; meetings with noble Abyssinians; visits to Kassa court etc. The author tells in detail about Theodoros as an personality, about war campaignes; mentions about mixed population of the land(greeks, Armenians, galla, muslim’ peoples).

The second book consists of three parts –“Description of customs of Abyssinians”, “About religions and religious customs of Abyssinians”, Contemporain history of Abyssinia and last political events”.

It is impossible to analyze the whole work in one presentation. That is why I’m limiting myself by ethnographic datas. Certainly the author does not give complete, total and exhaustive information about the land and its peoples. Since he is a priest he is interested firstly (and most of all) inthe confessional situation and peculiaries of Ethiopian Orthodox Church. There is a special chapter and often we can see separate data through the whole text.

Particularly he almost does not write anything about domestic economy and material culture. His information about food, clothing, mode of life, dwellings and so on is very short. He yeels very miserly about social stratification, forms of dependence, duties of peasants, land property etc.

However even his short remarks give us opportunity to make some conclusions. So the poor peasants eat nothing but dry bread and green pepper. Food of more well-off people is more rich, it includes milk, meat, vegetables, sour milk, game(Dimethee, 1891, livre 2: 22). The dwellings of common people are cabins of wood and reed with poor decoration. Well-off persons live in stone building, they can see sometimes the buildings with some cameras.(Dimethees, 1891: 39). Thus we can note two types of dwellings-“tukul” and “hydmo”, although Dimethees himself does not use these terms.

He wrote about palaces of Gondar:”There is some stone buildings erected by the portuguese. They are astonishing even today”(Ibid.). Similar opinion was universal in the XIX and most of the XX centuries. So a Russian traveler Dr. Schusev said the same phrase(Schusev. 1900). There was Dr.F. Anfrey who proved native origins of monumental architecture of Ethiopia.

Clothing also demonstrates the difference of social stratas. Although all Abyssinians wear cloaks (Dimethees does not name them “shamma” or “natela”) well-off persons have a wide red strip on them. Futhermore these clothings have different prices(from 2 till 8 talers) and this speaks about considerable social and propertied inequaility (Dimethees, 1891:23).

The differences of social status were also displayed by forms of greeting. Men of equal rank men embraced and asked each other repeatedly about their families, ménages, successes, health and so on. If one man met a noble person he embraced his knees, was not allow to ask questions and anserwed by bowing.(Dimethees.1891: 32)

The author sees three classes in the abyssinien society. He put the clergy on the first place but he thinks this strata is numerous and influential but laisy. The second one is the middle class(“bourgeois”). This strata is more numerous, its members are occupied “by commerce and another things”. At last the peasants make up the majority of the whole population and the greater part of the army(Dimethees.1891: 39). Complicated system of feudal land property(“ryst”, “gult” and others forms) , serval dependence of peasants, slaves and their position – all of these themes were out of the author’ attention. For example he does not know duties of peasants. His book has a part titled “Hospitality” and he writes there:”…peasants are obliged to receive and attribute with respect and attention , provide with bread and other meals in double quantity; each peasant must do it in turn and in accordance with “alaka” order”(Dimethees. 1891: 20). This duty belongs only to the travelers on the service of the government and to the army. As it is known this custom is a feudal duty that has existed for a long time but Dimethees did not understand it.

We can also make a conclusion (through indirect evidences) about the agility of strata” limits and about possibilities of changing strata. Dimethees writes about servants whomove up due to diligence and then:”All the Abyssinians(without exception) are ambitious and have unvictorious inclination to the grandeur and public posts”(Dimethees. 1891: 19). Dimethees notes also that Abyssinians are patient to misfortunes and “they try to disguise their sadness and sorrow”(Dimethees.1891: 18). Perhaps this perculiar instability of social positions was the reason of similar imperturbability. Firstly complicated political situation in the country gave opportunity to receive an higher official post or to lose it. Secondly in Ethiopia there was “shum shyr” system during several centuries. Alwarish wrote about it in XVI century(Alvares.1851: 93-95). And this system of quick eminence and fall remained even under Hayle Selessie(Kaputzinsky. 1992: 20).

Dimethees separated 4 groups of musicians(we know these men were a specialy reserved professional casta). They played an imported role in social life of the country. The author writes with respect about musicians and singers of high range who work only in the household of noble persons glorifying their owners. He compared them with French trubadours. But Dimethees talks with contempt(scorn) and disregard(neglect) about three other groups< especially strolling “asmari”(although the author does not use this term). He sees them as wrethched insolent beggars, wicked and vindictive who could insult (offend, outrage) persons(Dimethees1891: livre 2: 33-34).

The author is a priest that is why most of all he is interested by the confessional situation and various peculiarities of Ethiopian faith and beliefs. He dedicated a special part to these subjects and separate notes are disperced through the whole text. The author describes all Ethiopian peoples from this point of view. One particular part is titled “Various nationalities and languages of Ethiopia”. Dimethees notes the majority of population are Christians and they speak general different languages. However he enumerated not languages or peoples but districts and regions. Amara, Agomoger, Tigre< Symen. He distinguishes as unchristian people woyto(“who do not confess any known religion” –Dimethees.1891: 131) and shangala(“do not visible religion”, “wild people”, “great enemies of Christians”-Dimethees. 1891: 134). Dimethees mentions also kemant. He writes:”Attempts of Theodoros to lead them to Christianity were unsuccessful; as usual they slaughter a bull or a ram on a tomb in order to greet the spirits of dead men. When they burned down bones of animals they play lyres, sing and cry: “Dead men are blessed, their spirits are salved”(Dimethees. 1891: 133). He

apparently does not note kemant' beliefs are close to falasha and he does not write about falasha also. However is it true that there is one preposition: "There are also Abyssinians confessing judaism but they do not live on separate lands; they are sparsed out here and there in waiting for Messia who will come and will rule Ethiopia"(Dimethees. 1891: 134). He also mentions that some of people celebrated the Saturday. But it is difficult to say if he has in his mind falasha.

Muslims, he writes, are "black Abyssinians" sparced out across Christian lands and he mentions only once an group living separetely from Christians and to the east from the Galla'country and believing into "Magomet and Ali". His opinion is that Christians form 2/3 and pagans -1/3 out of 3 millions of the whole population.

His general attention is focused on the Ethiopian orthodox faith. It seems to him that Ethiopian Christianity is not High Faith. "Christianity existed only on title"(Dimethees.1891: 12-13) the Abyssinians respect Old Tastement but know New one very badly(Ibid.) He is distressed seeing that "muslims are more believed (knowledgeable) and more experienced in their religion than the Christians"(Dimethees.1891: 133). It seems to him that an educated Christian priest that the Christian faith of Abyssinians is rather superficial< and their mode of life does not coordinate with general Christian commandments. He supposes it is constantly necessary to fight for the faith as there are a lot of pagan features.

It is known one of the main commandments is "do not kill" and one of the mortal sins is the pride. The author blames the abyssinians for infringement of these rules and for warlikeness and the absence of humility(meeknees). "Children don"t know fear – he writes displeased – women and adult girls speak freely both with their friends and with strangers"(Dimethees.1891: 30). While traveling in Ethiopia yt notes that even common people and peasants armed with gun. Dimethees writes indignantly:"Murder they say, is legitimate and must be excused in dependence on place and circumstances of a killer"(Dimethees.1891: 11).

There was also a custom of blood vengeance which contradicts christian morals. Dimethees is surprised seeing the Abyssinians are very warlike. It seems to him that this is the reason why they honoured Gabriel(always with a sword) more than Mikhael(with feather-pen); that days of sacred George were celebrated wider than Medani-Alem (the Saver) ones as the first one is a warrior with his spear and may defend them or take revenge, but the second one may give forgiveness(pardon) only.

However it is necessary to note that warlikeness is not an innate feature of the national character as Dimethees supposes – it is most probably a forced one. Ethiopia in those days was going through very hard times – facing both internal disturbulances and the conflicts with foreign enemies. The same factors caused (evoked) the so-called "unhospitality" of peasants when they meet strangers in conditions of perpetual war they suspect them as enemies.

He sees a scarcity(shortage) of real Christian feelings in the fact that natives are not afraid of death, they do not prepare humbly for, "live in merriment< they are immoderate in eating and drinking". "The Abyssinians have not the habit both to confess themselves and prepare themselves for their death"- he write with indignation.(Ibid.).

Dimethees is surprised also by funeral customs. He writes that they leave corpses of murdered men and of killed ones on the field of battle. Abyssinians(in his words) make burials for those men who had died at home. Habitants of the village and neighbouring ones gather for this ritual. He describes in details the funeral ceremony. It is Christian

with Psalmes” reading and church singins. When a noble man or a cleric dies they play drums, sing, women and men make two separate circles dancing and clapping their palms. In this way they follow the mournful procession. They conduct the mourning in a jewish custom: it takes 14 days, relatives of dead man or woman do not shave their heads and do not oil them. After the mourning they makea special feasting called “requiem” in order to calm the soul of the dead person. During this festing they also play drums, dance, sing songs with praises to the dead person and complaints of living relatives. The author considers this custom as barbaric , scandalous and astonishing (Dimethees.1891: 61-62).

One more commandment is “do not steal”. But Dimethees supposes that according to his observations this rule isn’t popular in the country. He writes more skillful and respectful thiefs are habitants of Begemdyr, Belessa, Lasta and Kolla-Bokera. It seems to the author it is national feature. He does not take into consideration the situation in the country during war and insurrections, when stealing is forced by these circumstances.

The following important Christian rule is concerning familial customs. Some peculiarities of family-conjugal customs seem to him strange and evoke his perplexity. It is known that different forms of marriage have been practiced for a long time and some of them existed even in the second half of XX century(Lvova.1997:577-584). Dimethees is a priest and naturally he supposes these forms of marriage as non-christiain and therefore inadmissible. He blames passionately adultery , and existence of many sexual partners. Dimethees does not like the rule of bringing wives and servants who must prepare food during the journey and share coach with husbands and masters. He notices each noble man on the imperial service traveling the country has his women at all of points of hait even if they are priest’daughters. Children of these women enjoy all the rights of legal children born in Church marriages. These relations are in abyssinians’opinion legal also. And they existed for a long time.(Pankhurst.1990). The datas of Russian-Ethiopian ethno-historico-sociological expedition 1990-1992 showed that often marriages were formed in church after many years of mutual life or were not formed at all (Trudy.1996). He blames also permission to marry sisters – daughters of one mother as unchristian(Dimethees.1891: 72). As Dimethees does not notice that these actions are done at the same time we can assume the existence of sororat (marriage with the sister of the dead wife).

He is indignant also at the fact that different pagan ideas, magic and other “diabol’ things” are alive even among Christians. Each real (genuine) Christian man must fight against such temptations through prayers. But Abyssinians act in another way – many of them (even priests) wear talismans and charms. He writes :”All of them wear on their necks charms of various magic forms created by clerics and priests who transmit them to poor men; some of them wear near 20 charms”(they often write some phrases from Bible or Koran)(Ibid.).

In conclusion even from this short review you can see the importance of the book of Dimethees for studying Ethiopian society in the XIX century

Bibliography

R.P.Dimethees.1891.”Deux ans de sejour en Abyssinia ou vie morale, politique et religeuse” par R,P.Dimethees – Jerusalem.

Schusev, Nicolay, 1900. “Izvestia Russkogo Geographiheskogo obschestwa”(Notes of the Russian Georafical society), Sankt-Peterbourg.

Alvarez ,Francisco. 1851. “Narrative of the Portuguese Ambassy to Abyssinia during the years 1520-1527”, ed. By Lord Stanley of Alderly. London

Kaputzinsky, Richard.1992. “ *The emperor* “(Imperator), Moscow: Nauka

Lvova, Eleonora.1997 .“Forms of marriage and the status of women in Ethiopia”. In *Ethiopia in broader perspective. Papers of the XIII ICES.* vol.III, Kyoto, The Kyoto University.

Pankhurst, Helen. 1990. “ Women, Peasantry and the state in Ethiopia”, Edinbourgh, Thesis de Doctorat.

“Trudy russko-ethiopsoy et no-istorico-sociologicheskoy expedizii’. 1996 (Works of the russsian-ethiopian ethno-historico-sociological expedition), Moscow: Nauka

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

BETA ISRAEL STUDENTS WHO STUDIED ABROAD 1905-1935

Shalva Weil[1]

From 1905-1935, Dr. Jacques Faitlovitch, a Jewish "counter-missionary", took out 25 Beta Israel students to study in Jewish communities in Europe and the Middle East with a view to them returning to their Ethiopian villages to teach their brethren about normative Judaism. The paper "zooms in" on five Beta Israel students who studied in different countries in different periods. Notable is Prof. Taamerat Ammanuel, who became Emperor Haile Selassie's aide, and was buried in Jerusalem in 1963. The paper examines the complex interplay of Ethiopian and Jewish identities among these students.

Introduction

This paper documents the Beta Israel pupils who studied outside Ethiopia during the years 1905-1935. The Beta Israel hail from villages in Gondar province, Woggera, the Simien Mountains, Walkait, the Shire region of Tigray, and other regions. Depending upon their area of origin, they speak Amharic or Tigrinya, or occasionally both. Previously known as "*Falasha*", and today in Israel designated the Ethiopian Jews (Weil 1995), the Beta Israel trace their origins to ancient times in Ethiopia; scholars also attribute their origins to other historical periods (Kaplan 1992; Quirin 1992). The Beta Israel practised a Torah-based type of religion (Leslau 1951), which had affinities to Ethiopic Christianity (Pankhurst 1997). Today, 110,000 Ethiopian Jews and their offspring live in Israel[2]. An inestimable number of Ethiopians, recently designated "Felesmura", claim some form of Beta Israel origin and are hoping to emigrate to Israel.

During the 19th century, Ethiopia began to open up to foreigners. As well as the missionaries and travelers, scholars visited Abyssinia to study Semitic and other languages. Among these was the Jewish Professor Joseph Halevy, a researcher at the Sorbonne in Paris, who left for Ethiopia in 1867 and wrote about the poor condition of the "Falashas", as they were then known (Halevy 1877). He was instrumental in facilitating Daniel, a Beta Israel boy, to reach Europe in 1868. However, Daniel was not accepted in the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* school in Paris, on the grounds that he was neither Jewish nor suitable. He was sent back to Alexandria in Egypt, where he died shortly afterwards (Trevisan Semi 2005:76; Weil 2006). Daniel was the forerunner of the Beta Israel boys who are the subject matter of this paper.

Focus of the Paper

The focus of the paper will be the students taken out of Ethiopia by Dr. Jacques Faitlovitch (1881-1955), a student of Semitic languages at the Sorbonne under the

[1] Research Institute for Innovation in Education, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mt. Scopus, Jerusalem 91905, Israel .msshalva@mscc.huji.ac.il

[2] For a selection only of different works on the Ethiopian Jews in Israel, see: Leshem 2004; Offer 2004; Weil 1999a.

abovementioned Prof. Joseph Halevy. Inspired by his mentor, Faitlovitch left Paris under the sponsorship of Baron Edmund de Rothschild for his first expedition to Ethiopia in 1904 (Trevisan Semi 1999a). During the visit, he surveyed the situation of the Beta Israel and returned in 1905 to Palestine and Europe with two "Falasha" boys: Taamrat Emmanuel, whom he took out of a Swedish Protestant mission in Asmara, and Gete Hermias, whom he met in a village in Gondar (Faitlovitch 1905)[3]. From the time of this first mission to Ethiopia until 1935, when he was finally prevented from visiting Ethiopia because of the fascist Italian occupation, Faitlovitch brought out of Ethiopia 25 young Falasha males, whom he "planted" in different Jewish communities in Palestine, Europe and Egypt. Faitlovitch's aim was to promote and implement educational projects among the Beta Israel, a "lost" tribe, and bring them in line with world Jewry. He succeeded in establishing a school for the Beta Israel in Dembea in 1913, which shut down and was transformed into the Addis Ababa school in 1923 (Trevisan Semi 1994). He appointed Taamrat as the principal of the school (Trevisan Semi 2000), and many of the students later taught there upon their return to Ethiopia until it was closed by Fascist forces. Faitlovitch died in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1955 (Weil 1987a).

Each pupil educated in Europe had an individual personality and story; all experienced a complete metamorphosis as a result of their contact with a new non-Ethiopian culture.

History of Scholarship on Dr. Faitlovitch's Pupils

In the 1950's, Messing recorded brief biographies of five Beta Israel students who were brought out by Dr. Faitlovitch to Europe and elsewhere during the period under study. He described them thus: "Getye Jermias – Faithful Disciple, Taamrat Emmanuel – Diplomat and Rebel, Taddesse Yaqob – Civil Service Excellency, Reuben Issayas – Rural Commander in Peace and War, Yona Bogale – Leader and Scholar at Home and Abroad"(Messing 1982:62-79).[4]

In 1962, Richard Pankhurst published a seminal work on the foundations of education, printing, books and literacy in Ethiopia, in which he mentioned for the first time a relatively large group of 22 Beta Israel pupils who had studied abroad (Pankhurst 1962).[5]

However, it was the immigration of Beta Israel to Israel from the late 1970's on and the excitement caused by Operation Moses (1984-5) (Wagaw 1991) and later Operation

[3] As usual with Ethiopian names, there is a problem as to how write them in English. In the case of Dr. Faitlovitch's pupils, they all had different renderings, as well as "new" Hebrew names, invented by Dr. Faitlovitch. For example, Taamrat Emmanuel is usually written this way in English, and signed his letters in different languages thus, but the *Encyclopedia Aethiopica* editors requested me to write the correct transliteration- Taamerat Ammanuel (Weil 2008). Gete Hermias has been called variously Ghetie Hermias, Gete Wondemagegnehu and Gete Yirmias or Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah); the Hebrew version of his name was bestowed upon him by Dr. Faitlovitch. In the case of Solomon Isaac, Solomon's father was Ishaq, the Amharic equivalent of Isaac. Solomon signed himself in Hebrew as "Solomon ben Yitzchak" or "Solomon Yitzchak (the Falashi)". I prefer the name "Isaac" in English, which is more reminiscent of the original Amharic, although it is an arbitrary decision. There are various spellings in English of Taddesse Yacob's name: Taddasa Yaqob, Taddesse Jacob and more. This article has selected the way Taddesse Yacob himself chose to write and sign his own name in English; he even wrote me his own curriculum vitae with this spelling (personal correspondence Taddesse Yacob-Shalva Weil, May 1989).

[4] In addition, he included "Mallese Tekle-the Pure Soul", a young pupil of Dr. Faitlovitch, who was sent by Emperor Haile Selassie after Dr. Faitlovitch's death on a tour of municipalities in the USA in 1956 and never returned (Messing 1982:70-71).

[5] Pankhurst mentions only 22 pupils, but I have reconstructed, with the help of Taddesse Yacob a fuller list of 25.

Moses (1991) (Spector 2005) that spurred on research into the Beta Israel students who studied abroad during the first half of the twentieth century.

Since the 1980's, the lives of several of the 25 pupils have been documented, and the fate of others is only now coming to light. Some of these "boys" succeeded in obtaining higher education and returned to Ethiopia as teachers in the Addis Abeba school for the Beta Israel children. Others, such as Abraham Meir and Hizkiyas Finas, died in Europe of disease; Solomon Isaac, who studied in Jerusalem and kept a "secret" diary in Hebrew, died on the way back to Ethiopia in the 1920's. Still others received important government or municipal positions in Ethiopia. Taamrat Emmanuel became an aide to Emperor Haile Selassie, and was eventually buried in Jerusalem.

Examples of scholarship in the field include the obituary of Yona Bogale recalling his life's work (Weil, 1987b), reconstruction of the tragic life of Hizkiyas Finkas (Trevisan Semi, 1999a), the life and death of Solomon Isaac (Weil, 1999b), the trips of MenguistuYitzchak and Mekuria Tsegaya to Europe (Mekuria, 1999), detailed information on Taamrat Emmanuel (Grinfeld 1985; Trevisan Semi 2000), and more (e.g. Summerfeld 2003).

So far, there is no published life-history of Hailu Desta[6], but an academic article written by the Ethiopic scholar Ullendorff documents letters from Taamrat Emmanuel to "Al'Azar Desta" (sic) (Ullendorff 1986/7), utilizing the Hebrew name Elazar that Dr. Faitlovitch bestowed upon him in Germany.

"Zoom in" on five Pupils

While it would be impossible in a paper of this scope to cover the biographies of all the Beta Israel students who attended schools out of Ethiopia, at least 11 biographies have been well documented to date (Taamrat, Solomon, Yona, Taddesse, Hailu, Adgeh, Hizkiyas, Mekonnen, Gete, Mekuria, Mengistu); the remaining 14 will be more difficult to document[7].

In this paper, I shall focus upon five of the students, to whom research has recently devoted, in order to illustrate the rich lives of these Beta Israel students, their varied experiences and their fates. The students I have selected here are: Taamrat Emmanuel, Solomon Isaac, Abraham Adgeh, Hizkiyas Finas,and Taddesse Yaqob.

Taamrat Emmanuel[8]

Taamrat Emmanuel (1888-1963)[9], intellectual, teacher, and friend of Emperor Haile Selassie, was born in the village of Azezo, Gondar province, to a Beta Israel father, Fanta Dawit, and a noble Christian mother, Trunesh. In 1904, Dr. Faitlovitch first met Taamrat Emmanuel in the Swedish Protestant mission in Asmara, and, together with

---

6 Hailu Desta lived for some time in my house in Jerusalem before his death. In the SOSTEJE (Society for the Study of Ethiopian Jewry) conference, which took place in Milan, Italy, in 1999, I presented Hailu Desta's biography. SOSTEJE is an international organization aimed at promoting research on Ethiopian Jews (see: www.sosteje.org). At the last SOSTEJE conference at the University of Addis Abeba, I was elected SOSTEJE President.

7 I am currently reconstructing the life of Ermias Issayas, who studied in Palestine 1926-7, about whom nothing has been written and from whom we have no letters in any archive. The biography is being reconstructed through repeat interviews with his 87-year old daughter, references to him in Dr. Faitlovitch's diaries and letters to and from Taamrat Emmanuel. The paper on his life will be presented at the next SOSTEJE conference in Florence, Italy, in October 2007.

8 Most of this biography will appear in Weil (2008). For the most scholarly work on Taamrat to date, see: Trevisan Semi 2000.

9 Zewde (2002:46) states that Taamrat's year of birth was 1893, although he concedes in a footnote (51) that Ullendorff (1990) dates his birth to 1888.

Gete Hermias, took him to Europe to study Jewish and secular subjects. Taamrat studied for two years at the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* school in Auteil, France (1905-1907), and for more than a decade at the Rabbinic College in Florence, Italy, under the guidance of Rabbi Zvi Marguilies (1858-1927), founder of the Pro-Falasha Committee in 1906-7. In 1916, Taamrat received a qualification as a ritual slaughterer. In 1921, Taamrat moved to Palestine, until Dr. Faitlovitch collected him in 1923 on his way to Ethiopia in order to recruit more Beta Israel students to study in Europe. Taamrat knew to read and write in Amharic, Tigrinya, French, Italian and Hebrew.

In 1923, Dr. Faitlovitch established the Falasha school in Addis Abeba (Grinfeld 1992), and appointed Taamrat as its first principal. In 1931, Taamrat traveled with Faitlovitch to the United States to gain financial support for the American Pro-Falasha Committee. He was the first Ethiopian Jew to visit America and delivered a fund-raising speech in Italian to different Jewish organizations making them aware of the plight of the Falashas. Back in Ethiopia, Taamrat acted as principal of the school until 1936, when the school was closed during the Italian occupation. Taamrat, who had penned an anti-fascist article in France, translated into Amharic, caused a furious reaction from the Italian Legation. In 1937, he was forced to take refuge, together with some of the teachers and pupils from the school, in the Beta Israel villages of Ambober and Wuzaba in Gondar. In 1938, in the wake of the reprisals following the attempted assassination of the Italian general Rudolfo Graziani, Taamrat fled to Egypt, and subsequently met Dr. Faitlovitch in Palestine. He then joined the Emperor Haile Selassie's government in exile in London.

In 1941, after the liberation of Ethiopia by the British, Taamrat triumphantly returned to Ethiopia with the Emperor. He first worked in the Ministry of Education (Zewde 2002) until he was requested to revamp the Foreign Ministry. From 1948-1951, he held the position of cultural attaché of the Ethiopian Legation in Paris.

Throughout the years, Taamrat continued to champion the cause of his Beta Israel brethren, at times interceding on their behalf with the Emperor. However, he was unable to re-open the Falasha school, and was troubled about their education (Grinfeld 1985). Taamrat Emmanuel wrote numerous newspaper and scholarly articles, including notes on Falasha monks (Leslau 1974), translations of excerpts from Susenyos' chronicles into Italian and an Amharic manuscript on Gandhi[10].

During his latter years, Taamrat's relations with the Emperor became strained over the former's disdain of feudalism, his protest at the delay in instituting land reform, and his refusal to write the Negus' biography. Taamrat departed for self-imposed exile, in Eritrea, Djibouti and finally in Jerusalem, Israel. At first, he lived in the Ethiopian Christian quarter in Jerusalem, but later moved to a rented apartment in the Jewish part of the city. He died there, unmarried with no descendants, in 1963.

Solomon Isaac (Salomon Yeshaq)[11]

Solomon Isaac (c.1890-1921) was born in Sekelt province and was one of the pupils of the great Beta Israel priests at Guraba. When Dr. Faitlovitch arrived on his second expedition to Ethiopia in 1908-9, he was accompanied by Gete Hermias, whom he had taken to Palestine and Italy after his first Ethiopian expedition (Faitlovitch 1910). Gete introduced his cousin Solomon Isaac to Dr. Faitlovitch. The three arrived in Jerusalem in 1909 and Solomon joined Gete at the Lemel school in Jerusalem, but soon Gete was

[10] The original unfinished manuscript was given to me by his nephew Taddesse Yacob.
[11] The section on Solomon Isaac is primarily based upon: Weil (1999b, 2008)

transferred to Florence and Paris, and Solomon remained alone in Jerusalem. He learned Hebrew, Torah and secular subjects, and pursued an orthodox Jewish way of life. In 1914, when the First World War broke out, Solomon Isaac found himself isolated. He kept a diary written in excellent Hebrew, some of which is preserved, in which he describes an eye-witness account of the British General Allenby's entry into Jerusalem in 1917 and the termination of Turkish rule in Palestine. By 1918, the entries in Salomon's diary were becoming increasingly melancholy. He wrote desperate letters to world Jewish leaders, signing his letters "Solomon Yitzhak (the Falasha)" and asking them to help him. Finally, in 1920, Dr. Faitlovitch managed to return to Jerusalem, accompanied by Taamrat Emmanuel, a renowned Beta Israel student who had studied abroad. Faitlovitch agreed to take Solomon Isaac back to Ethiopia, but on the way Solomon died in the fortress of Marob in Egypt, probably from hepatitis[12].

Hizkiyas Finas[13]

Hizkiyas (1907/8-1931) was born in the Beta Israel village of Wolleqa, situated on the north-western edge of Gondar, four kilometers from the city centre, where, as a young boy, he tended a flock as a shepherd.[14] In 1920, Dr. Faitlovitch went on his fourth expedition to Ethiopia, and in 1921 he took back with him four boys, whom he wanted to educate in different Jewish communities abroad. These included Yona Bogale and Abraham Meir, whom he placed in Jerusalem, Abraham Baruk, who was received by a Jewish community in Switzerland, and Hizkiyas Finas, who was sent to Florence, Italy. Hizkiyas was placed with a childless German Jewish couple called Gruenwald, but the Florentine lawyer Alfonso Pacific had to shoulder the financial burden of the boy's upkeep and education. The Gruenwalds housed him in bad sanitary conditions, and, alone, with no Ethiopian companion, the boy became ill. He was transferred to a Jewish sanatorium in Merano, but the principal did not have the means to retain him there. He was returned to Florence, but nobody could take care of him. In 1929, he finally left Italy for Egypt with tuberculosis. He was taken in by Rabbi David Prato, originally from Florence, who was the chief rabbi of Alexandria from 1927-1936[15]. Prato protested the idea of sending a TB patient to the humid Egyptian climate, but to no avail. Hizkiyas died in Alexandria on 7 February 1931.

Abraham Adgeh[16]

Abraham Adgeh (Abrəham Adgäh) (1910-1975) was born in a village in Woggera, Ethiopia, in 1910. Together with his friend, Hailu Desta, he ran away to Dr. Faitlovitch's school in Addis Abeba in order to receive some education.

In 1927, he was taken to Europe by Dr. Faitlovitch, along with Hailu Desta and Mekonnen Lowy (Trevisan Semi 2005). Abraham and Mekonnen were placed in the London Jewish community, and Hailu moved from Paris to Frankfurt. Abraham lived with the Levys, an orthodox German Jewish family, in Highbury, London, and attended the St. John's College from 1924-28. He was a good student and acquired excellent English, as well as Hebrew.

[12] In a German novel on Solomon Isaac entitled *Salomo der Falascha*, the author, Selig Schachnowitz, makes Solomon die without returning to Ethiopia, but in the novel he is killed defending Jerusalem (Sohn 2005).
[13] The section on Hizkiyas Finas is primarily based upon: Trevisan Semi (1999b).
[14] Further information on Wollaqa, will be available in Weil (2008).
[15] In 1936 he became the Chief Rabbi of Rome.
[16] This section on Abraham Adgeh is primarily based upon: Weil (2003, 2005).

In 1935, Abraham Adgeh was recalled to Ethiopia. He returned to the Beta Israel village of Ambobär in Gondär, but found it difficult to adjust to village life, so he moved to the Falasha school run by Taamrat Emmanuel in Addis Abäba. In the same year, he.was sent to Massawa as an interpreter. In 1939, he took up a senior position in the municipality of Gondär. In the 1940's Adgeh worked in Addis Abäba translating British law into Amharic. During the Second World War, he sent a few letters to his English adoptive family, the Levys. After a period in Harär and in Eritrea, from the 1960's on, he worked as the head of the purchasing and maintenance division of the Addis Abäba municipality. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Addis Abeba in 1975.

Tadesse Yacob[17]

Tadesse Yacob (1913–2005) was born in the village of Semano in the Sekalt district in Dembia. He was the son of Negussie Jember and Yeshiharag Gabre-Mariam, the sister of the Beta Israel leader Taamrat Emmanuel. In 1925, Tadesse joined Dr. Faitlovitch's school in Addis Abeba. In 1930, Tadesse was selected to study abroad in Egypt at the Jewish school, *L'Ecole Moise de Cattani Pacha de la Communaute Israelite du Caire*. He subsequently moved to the *Lycee Francaise* in Cairo, where he studied till 1937. In 1940, he was recruited to work in the Secretariat of the Secret Service of the English army in Khartoum. In October 1940, he was appointed chief of the Propaganda Unit of the Godjam Front on behalf of Haile Selassie, who was hoping to re-enter Ethiopia. From 1941-44, Tadesse was Director of the Ministry of Finances in Ethiopia. In 1952 he was appointed Director-General of the Mines in the Ministry of Finance; in 1956 he acted as Assistant Minister of the Ethiopian Electric Light and Powers Authority; in 1958 he was appointed Vice Minister of the Ministry of Finances. In 1960, Tadesse became Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture. In December 1961, he was appointed Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Cabinet, a post he held till 1966, when he was appointed High Public Service Commissioner with the rank of Minster of the Public Service Pension Commission, and of the Central Personnel Agency and Public Service Commission. From 1964 till 1974, when he was imprisoned as part of Haile Sellassie's entourage, he also acted as President of the Advisory Council of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia.

Taddesse Yaqob received many awards, including the Ethiopian Star of Victory in 1941, and the Africa Star from the English.

After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Tadesse served as treasurer in Dr. Faitlovitch's Pro-Falasha Committee, which established a school for the Beta Israel in Asmara. He more than once interceded with the Emperor on behalf of his village brethren and was instrumental in the 1950's in dispatching two groups of youth to study in Israel. Nevertheless, he perceived himself as totally Ethiopian. When Operation Solomon took place in 1991 and the Beta Israel were airlifted to Israel from Addis Abeba, he preferred to remain in Ethiopia, where he died in 2005.

Conclusion: The Contribution of the Beta Israel Students to Ethiopia

In this paper, I have discussed the curious phenomenon of the Beta Israel boys, who studied outside Ethiopia during the years 1905-1935. There were Christian forerunners to this phenomenon, as Ethiopian boys were taken to be educated in Europe, notably in St. Chrischona, Switzerland and in other Missions. There was also one nineteenth

[17] This section on Tadesse Yacob is primarily based upon: Weil (2006,2008).

century Beta Israel forerunner to the larger phenomenon of 25 pupils, taken by Dr. Jacques Faitlovitch from different areas in the interior of Ethiopia, to study in Jewish communities in Palestine, Egypt and Europe. Each student, taken out of Ethiopia, was an individual with an extraordinary and often tragic tale. Some died in Europe; others became successful and famous, but they remained affected psychologically by their lonely experiences prior to the Second World War.

Research into all 25 of the Beta Israel students who studied abroad only started in the 1960's but made great strides in the 1980's and 1990's due to two factors: the popularity of the Beta Israel as an object of research following their emigration to the State of Israel in Operation Moses (1984-5) and Operation Solomon (1991); and the establishment of SOSTEJE (Society for the Study of Ethiopian Jewry), which encouraged the presentation of papers on these students at its international conferences. The methodologies used to study the students included interviews, diaries, archival work and bibliographic research[18]. Recently, there appears to be more academic interest in the subject and hopefully, this paper will inspire further research into additional Ethiopians, Beta Israel or others, who studied outside Ethiopia during the twentieth century.

In this paper, I "zoomed in" on the narratives of five extraordinary Beta Israel students taken out of Ethiopia. Of the five, two from one family became well-known in Ethiopia. Taamrat Emmanuel was the aide to the Emperor Haile Selassis and his nephew Tadesse Yacob rose to the rank of Minister. Two others never returned to Ethiopia. Solomon Isaac died tragically on the return journey to Ethiopia, having survived the terrible conditions in Jerusalem during the First World War. Hizkiayas Finas died in Italy of tuberculosis. Abraham Adgeh was different from most of the other Beta Israel who studied in Europe. He represented a "new" type of Beta Israel - a more wordly one, more cosmopolitan, the Ethiopian hero of a particular historical period. And yet, he imbibed the English education he was given. In time, he became the epitome of an English gentleman, despite the fact that he never abandoned his Ethiopian identity.

The interplay of Ethiopian and Jewish identities, overlapping with European and Palestinian identities, presents a complex picture of individuals, whom Dr. Faitlovitch could not succeed in moulding, despite his vision and dream. Taamrat, Solomon, Hizkiyas, Adgeh and Tadesse were all influenced by the Jewish education they received, but in the end, those that stayed alive remained distinctly "Ethiopian".

References

Faitlovitch, Jacques. 1905. Notes d'un Voyage chez les Falachas (Juifs d'Abyssinie), Paris: Leroux.

Faitlovitch, Jacques. 1910. Quer durch Abessinien: Meine zweite Reise zu den Falaschas, Berlin: Poppelauer.

Grinfeld, Yitzchak. 1985. "Taamrat Emmanuel-Forerunner of the Revival of Ethiopian Jewry", *Pe'amim,* Vol. 22, pp. 59-74.

1992. "The Hebrew School in Addis Abeba at the Beginning of the Italian Occupation (1936-7)", *Dor le'dor* 5, 51-84. (Hebrew).

[18] It is a pity that research funds were not available to support more systematic research into all the students who were then alive in the 1980's; some pupils died only recently; one is still alive.

Guandalina, Carlo. 2005. "Gete Yirmiahu and Beta Israel's Regeneration: a Difficult Path", in Tudor, Parfitt and Emanuela Trevisan Semi, *Jews of Ethiopia: the Birth of an Elite*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 112-121.

Halevy, Jacques. 1877. "Travels in Abyssinia", in A. L. Loewy (ed.), *Miscellany of Hebrew Literature,* series 2, 2, p. 252.

Kaplan, Steven. 1992. *The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopia,* New York.

Leshem, Eleazar and Osnat Zamir. 2004. *Ethiopian Jews in Israel: situation report 1999-2004*, Jerusalem:Meyers-Joint Brookdale Institute (Hebrew).

Leslau. Wolf. 1951. *Falasha Anthology,* Yale Judaic Series, 6, New Haven.

Leslau. Wolf. 1974. *Taamrat Emmanuel's Notes of Falasha Monks and Holy Places*, American Academy for Jewish Research.

Mekuria, Benjamin. 1999. "The Long Journey of the Young Beta Israel from Lasta", pp. 296-300.

Messing, Simon. 1982 (reprint). *The Story of the Falashas: 'Black Jews' of Ethiopia.* Connecticut: Balshon.

Offer, Shira. 2004. "The Socio-Economic Integration of the Ethiopian Community in Israel", *International Migration*, vol. 42(3), pp. 29-55.

Pankhurst, Richard. 1962. ″The foundations of education, printing, newspapers, book production, libraries and literacy in Ethiopia", *Ethiopian Observer*, 6, 3, pp. 241-290.

Pankhurst, Richard. 1997. "The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Their Ethiopian Setting.". In: Shalva Weil (ed.), *Ethiopian Jews in the Limelight:Israel Social Science Research*, Jerusalem, pp. 1-12.

Quirin, James. 1992. *The Evolution of the Ethiopian Jews: A History of the Beta Israel (Falasha) to 1920,* Pennsylvania.

Sohn, Sigrid. 2005. "S. Schachnowitz's novel *Salomo der Falascha (1923),* in Tudor, Parfitt and Emanuela Trevisan Semi, *Jews of Ethiopia: the Birth of an Elite*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 53-64.

Spector, Stephen. 2005. *Operation Solomon: the Daring Rescue of the Ethiopian Jews*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Summerfield, Daniel. 2003. *From Falashas to Ethiopian Jews,* London: Routledge Curzon.

Trevisan Semi, Emanuela. 1994. "The educational Activity of Jacques Faitlovitch in Ethiopia (1904-1924)",*Peamim*, Vol.58, pp.86-97 (Hebrew).

Trevisan Semi, Emanuela. 1999a. "Universalisme juif et prosélytisme: l'action de Jacques Faitlovitch, "père" des Beta Israel (Falachas)", in *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 216, pp. 193-211.

Trevisan Semi, Emanuela. 1999b. "From Wolleqa to Florence: The Tragic Story of Faitlovitch's Pupil Hizkiahu Finkas", In: Parfitt, Tudor and Emanuela Trevisan Semi (eds.) *The Beta Israel in Ethiopia andIsrael,* London: Curzon, pp. 15-39.

Trevisan Semi, Emanuela. 2000. *La correspondance de Taamrat Emmanuel: intellectuel juif d'Ethiopie dans la premiére moitié du XXème siécle*, Torino: Harmattan Italia, (French/Italian).

Trevisan Semi, Emanuela. 2005. "Ethiopian Jews in Europe: Taamrat Emmanuel in Italy and Makonnen Levi in England", in: Tudor, Parfitt and Emanuela Trevisan Semi, *Jews of Ethiopia: the Birth of an Elite*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 74-100.

Ullendorff, Edward. 1986/7. "Two Amharic Letters by the Falasha Leader Taamrat Emmanuel". *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society,* pp. 192-200.
Ullendorff, Edward. 1990. *From the Bible to Enrico Cerulli.*. Stuttgart.
Wagaw, Teshome.1991. "The International Political Ramifications of Falasha Emigration", *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* 24, pp. 557-581.
Weil, Shalva. 1987a. "In memoriam: Yona Bogale: One of the Leaders of the Beta Israel", *Pe'amim,* Vol. 33, pp. 125-7 (Hebrew).
Weil, Shalva. 1987b "An Elegy in Amharic on Dr Faitlovitch", *Pe'amim* 33, pp.125-127 (Hebrew).
Weil, Shalva. 1995. "Collective Designations and Collective Identity among Ethiopian Jews," in Shalva Weil (Ed), *Israel Social Science Research*, 10, 2, pp. 25-40.
Weil, Shalva. 1999a. "Collective Rights and Perceived Inequality: The Case of Ethiopian Jews in Israel", in: T. Allen and J. Eade. *Divided Europeans: Understanding Ethnicities in Conflict*. Hague/London/Boston: Kluwer Law International, pp. 127-144.
Weil, Shalva. 1999b. "The Life and Death of Solomon Isaac", In: Parfitt, Tudor and Emanuela Trevisan Semi (eds.) *The Beta Israel in Ethiopia and Israel,* Surrey: Curzon, pp. 40-49.
Weil, Shalva. 2003. "Abraham Adgeh". In: S. Uhlig (ed.) *Encyclopedia Aetheopica*. Vol 1, Wiesbaden, p. 48.
Weil, Shalva. 2005. "Abraham Adgeh: the Perfect English Gentleman", in: Parfitt, Tudor and Emanuela Trevisan Semi (eds.), *Ethiopian Jewry in Historical and Contemporary Times,* London:Curzon, pp. 101-111.
Weil, Shalva. 2006. "Taddesse Yaqob of Cairo and Addis Abeba", *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies,* Vol. 2 (1&2), pp.233-243.
Weil, Shalva. 2008 (Forthcoming). "Salomon Yeshaq", "Taamrat Ammanuel", "Taddesse, Yaqob ", "Wollaqa", in: S. Uhlig, (ed.) *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, Vol.4, Wiesbaden.
Bahru, Zewde. 2002. *Pioneers of Change in Ethiopia.* Oxford: James Currey.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

A Japanese Scoundrel's Skin Game: Japanese Economic Penetration of Ethiopia and Diplomatic Complications Before the Second Italo-Ethiopian War

J. Calvitt Clarke III[1]

Between 1927 and 1935, many of Japan's governmental representatives and private entrepreneurs visited Ethiopia to explore possibilities for expanding commercial and political ties. Among the latter were several con men, including Kitagawa Takashi. Arriving in Ethiopia in 1932, he negotiated for agricultural land concessions, permission for Japanese immigration, and rights to grow medicinal plants including opium. His scams led to diplomatic complications for Addis Ababa and Tokyo, which constrained Ethiopia's ability in 1935 to rally international support against an Italy bent on war.

Kitagawa Takashi and the Nagasaki Association for Economic Investigation of Ethiopia (Nikkei-sha), 1932-34

As Italy girded for war against Ethiopia in the first half of the 1930s, Emperor Hayle Sellase desperately searched for allies to help defend his country. The Japanese seemed an attractive, potential source of aid. After all, many Ethiopians saw Japan as a non-Western, non-white model for modernization, and Ethiopia's Japanizers had long encouraged closer relations with the Japanese Empire. Many Japanese, especially the ultranationalists who wished Japan would lead an alliance of the world's "colored" peoples, favorably responded. Between 1927 and 1935, many governmental representatives and private entrepreneurs visited Ethiopia to explore possibilities for expanding commercial and political ties.[2]

Among the latter visitors were several con men promoting get-rich-quick schemes, and among these hustlers was Kitagawa Takashi, the director of the Nagasaki Association for Economic Investigation of Ethiopia. Founded in 1932 in Nagasaki to conduct import and export trade, the association was more commonly known as Nikkei-sha. A businessman of an "adventurous and speculative type,"[3] Kitagawa's scams caused a notable international scandal for Addis Ababa and Tokyo, and these diplomatic complications constrained Ethiopia's ability in 1935 to rally international support against an Italy bent on war.

With three companions, he arrived to a warm welcome in Ethiopia on September 24, 1932. After studying the economic conditions in Addis Ababa for Nikkei-sha, Kitagawa with perhaps four other Japanese ventured into the hinterland by mule caravan carrying samples, including cotton fabrics, patent medicines, sundry goods, and agricultural implements. Hoping to sell this cheap merchandise, Kitagawa also explored the market potential for a permanent business. Although this extra adventure

1 Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, Florida.
2 See Clarke: (2006: 224-32); (2004: 35-51); and (2002: 83-97).
3 To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a.

into the interior had nothing to do with Nikkei-sha's plans, Addis Ababa put an escort of twenty natives at Kitagawa's disposal. Wherever the caravan visited, local chiefs warmly received it. The trip proved disappointing, however, because the provincial Ethiopians had little cash purchasing power. The group returned to Addis Ababa more-or-less destitute.[4]

A glib-talking and unscrupulous fixer, Kitagawa negotiated with Ethiopia's foreign minister, Heruy Welde Sellase, for authorization for Nikkei-sha on the rights to lease more than 12,300,000 acres of land in Ethiopia. They also discussed a permit to grow cotton, tobacco, tea, green tea, rice, wheat, fruit trees, vegetables, and medicinal plants. Nikkei-sha wanted the exclusive right to cultivate some plants, including opium, to make medicines for sale in Ethiopia and for export. Kitagawa, on September 18, likely telegraphed the governor of Nagasaki Prefecture and the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce reporting that Nikkei-sha had secured a concession of almost 1,500,000 acres with a monopoly for poppy cultivation. He pointed out that if Nagasaki set up an emigration company and provided each man with two and one-half acres, 650,000 Japanese could go to Ethiopia. If the company could open direct trade with Ethiopia and end the existing system of indirect trade mostly through Indian merchants, Japan could increase its business with Ethiopia.[5]

In September 1933, Tokyo asked Ethiopia to authorize Nikkei-sha to send a survey party in 1934 to search out 12,355,000 acres of wasteland for reclamation. Nikkei-sha proposed that for every thirty-seven acres, Ethiopia should allow one Japanese family to immigrate. Finally, Nikkei-sha asked for almost 2,500 acres near Addis Ababa as an experimental farm to discover what would grow well. Ethiopia agreed to approve lands to grow medicinal plants—apart from prohibited plants—and to discuss later contractual details with permission contingent on final signature of the contracts. Toward the end of September, Japan's foreign ministry granted the application to rent land in name of Nikkei-sha to cultivate medicinal plants—contingent on a negotiated agreement with Ethiopia.[6]

Rumors and International Controversy

Kitagawa presented his simple negotiations to the public as though Nikkei-sha and Ethiopia had already signed the contract. Taking the bait, under a provocative title, as was usual for the third page of Japanese newspapers, the *Osaka Asahi* on September 21 first wrote about rumored concessions for the Japanese to grow opium. This short, fifteen-line story set off a huge, international contretemps.[7]

That same day, the *London Daily Herald* published a short article by its Tokyo correspondent, who repeated the *Osaka Asahi* story. The correspondent claimed that Japan had secured the "sensational capture of land for thousands of emigrants and new markets for her traders in Abyssinia. . . ." He added that Japanese newspapers were

[4] Hirota, 9/4/33, 9/28/33: GSK E424 1-3-1; Grene, 1/17/34: NARA 784.94/6; To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a; Southard, 11/25/33: NARA 784.94/3; Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 14-15). My thanks to Mariko Clarke for translating the Japanese material in this paper.

[5] Grene, 1/17/34: NARA 784.94/6; To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a. Because of the many rumors flying around, this is a difficult story to unravel. Grene, the American military attaché in Tokyo, thought that Kitagawa physically visited the governor in mid-September. Kitagawa did not return until November 4, but it is likely that this communication, which Grene described, was by telegram.

[6] Hirota, 9/4/33, 9/28/33: GSK E424 1-3-1; Grene, 1/17/34: NARA 784.94/6; Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 14-15).

[7] To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a.

celebrating Kitagawa's triumph in getting Ethiopia to grant Japan concessions on immigration and commerce, 1,600,000 acres of lands suitable for cotton planting, and a monopoly for opium cultivation. The Japanese were forming an emigration organization to populate these lands, and soon there would be "a stream of Japanese moving west." Exaggerating Kitagawa's success, the correspondent lamented that Japanese salesmen were finding it easy to open new markets for their products in Ethiopia and that official escorts protected them as they moved around the country selling their goods. The stakes were high. Ethiopia served as a buffer between the vast colonial interests controlled by Britain, France, and Italy, and each held important interests within Ethiopia itself. Japan was challenging all three.[8]

The *Daily Herald* article snowballed around the world's press, which denounced Japan's economic and political invasion of Ethiopia. The French newspaper, *Le Temps*, as one example, from September through December published many articles, especially reprinting Italian stories and comments, chiefly those published in *Azione Coloniale*. Europeans worried about the possibility for Japanese economic and political hegemony in Ethiopia and Ethiopia's attitude favoring the Japanese.[9]

Tokyo Investigates and Ethiopia Responds

Fearing diplomatic repercussions, Tokyo took action. The foreign minister sent a telegram on October 4, 1933, to the chargé d'affaires at Port Said, Harada Chuichiro, ordering him to look into Nikkei-sha. Harada spoke about it with Heruy who was passing through Port Said on his way to Greece. Ethiopia's foreign minister explained that Ethiopia had not yet signed any contract with Nikkei-sha and, until then, the concession would not come into effect. The contract, he stressed, did not include opium growing, and Ethiopia was waiting for Nikkei-sha to clarify its conditions. Heruy added that his dearest wish was that commerce and friendship between Japan and Ethiopia would grow. And while he confessed he had underestimated the reaction of third countries, he was taking no notice of how they were choosing to interpret the affair.[10]

Meanwhile, Heruy spoke with the Cairo correspondent for the Naples newspaper, *Mattino*. The foreign minister admitted that a few months earlier several Japanese industrialists in a "private capacity and without any mandate from their Government" had arrived to study commercial possibilities in Ethiopia. Heruy said that Ethiopia was willing to grant 1000 acres for Japan to develop for growing cotton plus more land to cultivate other industrial and commercial plants. Ethiopia wanted, within reasonable limits, the Japanese to build industrial and commercial enterprises on its territory. While admitting that Japanese competition would displace India's cotton trade with Ethiopia, Heruy wondered why conversations "with our Far Eastern Friends" disturbed Europe. Noting that "Abyssinia is not the enemy of any Power, but wishes to maintain cordial relations with everybody," Heruy added that diverse discussions were developing that did "not exclude the probability of a new situation in favor of Japan."[11] This statement could not have eased worried Italian minds.

---

[8] *London Daily Herald*, Sept. 21, 1933; Military Intelligence, 10/5/33: NARA, 784.94/1; To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a; "Africa Beware!": GSK E424 1-3-1; Taura (1995: 151-52); Celarié (1934: 126).

[9] See, *e.g.*, *Le Temps*, Sept. 25; Nov. 7, 30; and Dec. 25, 1933; Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 15); Taura (1995: 152).

[10] Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 15-16); Faërber-Ishihara, (1999: 143-44); Taura (1995: 152).

[11] *Il Mattino*, Nov. 1, 1933; *Asahi Shinbun*, Nov. 3, 1933; *Japan Times*, Feb. 13, 1934; *Morning Post*, Nov. 2, 1933; London, 11/17/33: AP Etiopia b14 f9; Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 16).

Tokyo continued to examine Kitagawa. A journalist active in Japan's contacts with Ethiopia, Shoji Yunosuke, reported to the foreign ministry on several scandals surrounding Kitigawa. The ministry asked Suzuki Shintaro, governor of Nagasaki Prefecture, to look into Nikkei-sha. Harada also interviewed Kitagawa in Port Said while on his way back to Japan. According to Harada's report, Kitagawa said he had gotten from Ethiopia the right to rent 12,355,000 acres. Further, Japanese immigrants would receive almost 370,650 acres, and Japan would receive a monopoly for cultivating cotton, coffee, and other crops and herbs. The potential deal did not include opium cultivation. Governor Suzuki, on the other hand, reported that the deal included a monopoly of opium cultivation as well as almost 1,600,000 acres for rent.[12]

Unsurprisingly, Harada's report did not settle the issue. Kuroki Tokitaro, the acting consul in Colombo, Ceylon, also reported on several newspaper articles describing Japanese advances into Ethiopia. In Japan, based on information from Nagasaki, the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi* predicted that with Japanese aid Ethiopia would become a new Brazil. On October 25, 1933, the foreign ministry again ordered Harada to investigate. Harada's reply came four days later. The day before, he wrote, Heruy had told him that the issues of cotton and medicinal herb cultivation and the land rent were as reported, but Ethiopia had not yet signed a contract. Heruy had assured Harada that he had told Kitagawa that he would study the possibility of granting a lease, if Kitagawa would add to his petition a statement detailing conditions and a draft of the proposed lease. Harada then told Heruy that Europeans were condemning Japan's advance into world markets, and he feared that opinion would harden. Heruy took a slightly different tack. He said he placed friendship between Japan and Ethiopia on a high level: "How anyone else interprets these issues does not concern me, because I long to develop commerce between Japan and Ethiopia and I pray for improved friendship between the two countries."[13]

On November 7, Japan's representative to the 17th Session of the Opium Advisory Committee in Geneva denied rumors of an Ethiopian concession to Japan to cultivate poppies. These rumors, he admitted, must have alarmed the committee's members, and he had asked Tokyo to investigate. The representative presented the results to the committee. The problem had begun with the "tendentious" article in the *Daily Herald*, which had repeated the story from the *Asahi*. He quoted from Harada's report on Heruy's negotiations with Kitagawa. Since then, the negotiations had made no progress. Ethiopia, a League member, could not allow poppy cultivation, and the manufacture of opium in the empire was illegal. Because of his unsuccessful ventures, Kitagawa found himself without capital, and upset by his complete failure, he wanted "to restore his personal credit." Having broached the possibility of getting agricultural concessions, Kitagawa had received a "somewhat" favorable welcome. Based on this thin reed, he had sent his telegram of September 18 to pave "the way for a triumphant return to Japan" by securing financial support from the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce. In other words, Kitagawa's telegram "was only a fraudulent move by a member of the mission, a young man." Japan's representative regretted that "a mere intrigue by an adventurer" had led to unfriendly rumors about Japan, and he hoped he

[12] Taura (1995: 152-53). Harada actually gave a figure of 150,000 chobu and Suzuki 650,000 chobu. One chobu equals about .9830 hectares. Faëber-Ishihara (1998: 15). For more on Shoji, see Clarke (2006: 224-32) and Clarke (1999, "Marriage": 105-16).

[13] Taura (1995: 153); To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a.

had reassured the committee and had removed any misunderstanding. He asked the Secretariat to make known this official Japanese denial to the international press.[14]

Putting together the results of its inquiries, Japan's foreign ministry concluded that Ethiopia had not made any concessions, that Nikkei-sha lacked both funding and credit, and that Kitagawa had some personal problems. The ministry proved the actual contract differed from the content of the translation made by Nikkei-sha. Further, the lease and the right of cultivation would be effective only after signing the contract, and there was no contract. On November 27, the foreign ministry sent telegrams relaying these conclusions to Japanese ambassadors in England, France, Italy, Germany, and other states having diplomatic establishments in Ethiopia.[15]

The Controversy Widens

In the middle of the brewing controversy, Kitagawa had returned to Japan on November 4, 1933. Arriving at Port Moji at night, Kitagawa proudly talked to newspaper reporters about the contract as if Ethiopia had already confirmed it. The next day Kitagawa received a warm welcome in Nagasaki. On November 8, the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce and Industry and 130 people welcomed him.[16]

Confirming Harada's fears and justifying Italy's concerns, on November 6 and 7, the *Morning Post* of London launched a campaign denouncing Japan's commercial machinations in Africa. Specifically, the newspaper reported that Ethiopia had granted a cotton concession to a Japanese consortium. The paper feared that the effects of Ethiopia's treating with the Japanese might "have far-reaching consequences" and warned that a "long contemplated and carefully planned project of industrial and commercial penetration is now in sight."[17] The newspaper worried that in moving into Ethiopia, Japan would apply the same energy and ability shown when invading other markets. Japanese advances threatened not just Italy, but Great Britain and France as well. The *Azione Coloniale*, "a vigorous Fascist newspaper devoted to Italy's Africa problem,"[18] was emphatically recommending anti-Japanese collaboration among the three. Ethiopia was modernizing, and Hayle Sellase was suspicious of Europeans. Therefore, he was turning to Japan. Italy was already upset that Ethiopia had refused invitations to take part in Italy's annual International Tripoli Fair, and now Ethiopia was refusing to work with Italy as obligated by treaty. Ethiopia had sent a mission to Germany to buy airplanes, light artillery, and machine guns, "without staying to inquire about Italian aircraft prices."[19]

Toward the end of November, the United States' representative in Addis Ababa, Addison Southard, responded to the State Department's plea for information on the accuracy of the *Daily Herald* article of September 21. Southard recognized that similar reports, coming mainly from foreign newspapers, had been circulating in Ethiopia for several weeks. His legation had been unable to confirm from either Ethiopian or diplomatic sources that the Japanese had received any such land concessions. He

[14] To Ethiopia, 1/18/34: NARA 784.94/3a.
[15] Taura (1995: 153-54).
[16] Taura (1995: 153).
[17] *Morning Post*, Nov. 7, 1933.
[18] *Ibid.*, Nov. 6, 1933.
[19] *Ibid.* Also see To Ethiopia, 11/21/33: NARA 765.94/2; To Ethiopia, 11/21/33: NARA 784.94/1a; To Ethiopia, 11/27/33: NARA 784.94/1b; To Ethiopia, 11/21/33: NARA 884.602/41; Cox, 11/13/33: NARA 841.00/310; Atherton, 12/18/33: NARA 841.00/315; Atherton, 12/18/33: NARA 884.61321/5; Southard, 12/26/33: NARA 784.94/5; and London, 11/9/33: AP Etiopia b14 f 9.

believed the Japanese had applied to Addis Ababa some months before for a concession of about 495 acres for experimentally growing medicinal plants for sale in Japan. When the Ethiopians discovered the Japanese had proposed to grow opium poppies, however, they deferred action on the application. Southard thought the Ethiopians might eventually grant this small plot of land, but informal inquiry at the foreign ministry had elicited only that the concession was pending. Without mentioning Kitagawa by name, he dismissed his efforts as a "good old 'skin' game."[20] Then why were the British, French, and Italians competing so hard in Ethiopia against the Japanese? Southard thought national pride and jealousy motivated them more than any conviction of great profits in the offing. Southard added, "The crafty Ethiopian plays on the gullibility of one foreigner or another and thus gets an exaggerated amount of international advertising as to this country's business potentialities."[21] Southard noted that poor trade statistics made it difficult to appraise the true extent of Japanese inroads into Ethiopia, although recently they had won most of the local market for cotton piece goods especially of the coarser varieties. In past eighteen months, he added, a few minor Japanese had come to Ethiopia to explore opportunities, but they had found only disappointment. One had opened a little shop in Addis Ababa for selling samples "of the cheapest kinds of merchandise including mainly cottons, artificial silks, notions, and related knickknack. We hear that the business done to date has been unimportant."[22]

Southard thought it possible that other enterprises might be pending, but outside the few Ethiopian towns, there were few business opportunities. Undeveloped roads, ineffectual government and courts, an impoverished peasantry, and limited economic development restricted the potential for profit, "unless the Ethiopians offer inducements and liberty of operation which we think improbable." He estimated the average per capita purchasing power for foreign goods was not more than $1.00 a year and was unlikely to increase soon. Any concessions of the rumored size were too large for the limited Ethiopian market to absorb. Further, the French, Germans, and Belgians had earlier wasted money on cotton-growing experiments. With a "paucity of water and amenable labor," they had not been able to grow first-class fiber. All foreigners—and Southard confessed he had fallen prey too—for their first few years in country entertained delusions about Ethiopia's economic potential. Finally, the "arrogance, obstinacy, and grasping of provincial officials" made running any foreign agricultural enterprise "unduly costly." Not optimistic about Ethiopia's economic development, Southard concluded that Japan inevitably would find disillusionment.[23]

Southard elaborated on the difficulties the Japanese would face by adding three anecdotes. The enthusiasm developed by Heruy's 1931 visit to Japan and his exaggerations of Ethiopia's economic potential had resulted in a Japanese dentist going to Ethiopia.[24] After only a few months, he went broke. He reportedly had said that it was hopeless to expect to make a living in Ethiopia as there were too few who could afford dental attention—and many of those who could, would not pay their bills. Southard editorialized, "Procrastination in paying just financial obligations appears to be a national characteristic of the Ethiopians."[25] Heruy loaned this dentist enough to

[20] Southard, 11/25/33: NARA 784.94/3.
[21] *Ibid*.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*; Phillips, 1/23/34: NARA 884.61321/6. Southard held fast to his skepticism. See, *e.g.*, Southard, 2/14/34: NARA 784.94/7.
[24] For Heruy's trip to Japan, see Clarke (2007: 17-28).
[25] Southard, 11/25/33: NARA 784.94/3.

pay his steamer fare back to Singapore. Southard turned to salacious gossip for his second anecdote. The Emperor had a Japanese cook, Enomoto Seisaku, at the Imperial Palace. The cook's wife worked as a masseuse and perhaps rendered as well "more intimate services, to certain Ethiopians."[26] Finally, Southard had heard that Ethiopia's emperor was considering employing a Japanese jujitsu expert for his palace soldiers.

Southard had evidence that there were then fewer than eight or ten Japanese in Ethiopia, and none of these were important. Given Ethiopian suspiciousness of any foreign immigration, Southard doubted there was or would be any significant numbers of Japanese going to Ethiopia. Even more, reports in the international press of a "Japanese invasion" had upset the Ethiopians. He doubted they would either make important concessions or allow many to come. They, however, did want a Japanese Legation "to enhance the pride and prestige of their Emperor." Hayle Selassie felt the public kowtowing of light-skinned foreign diplomats before him raised his position in eyes of his own people: "It is not difficult to imagine the Dejasmatches pridefully remarking, 'See how even the great Emperor of Japan sends an important representative to bend the knee to our even greater Haile Selassie!'"[27]

Despite Tokyo's efforts and press protests,[28] more sensational and exaggerated newspaper articles warning of Japan's economic advance into Ethiopia came out from Germany and Italy. French and British colonial circles expressed concern. *Le Temps* on December 18 published a telegram from its Rome correspondent describing Italian anxieties. Ethiopia, the paper said, intended to favor Japanese enterprises while showing "deliberate hostility toward European economic penetration." The French paper predicted that Italy would ask for cooperation with Paris and London.[29]

Despite the denials, false rumors continued to fly. America's embassy in Tokyo initially had reported that Nikkei-sha hoped to send 650,000 emigrants to Ethiopia.[30] In mid-January 1934, America's military attaché in Tokyo joined in the extravagant descriptions of Japanese inroads into Ethiopia. He also thought, however, that the *Daily Herald* had exaggerated the economic importance of any concessions, monopolies, and any rights and privileges the Japanese may have gotten in Ethiopia. If the concessions had any substance, their importance was political, he added. He described Kitagawa's mission as one to exploit economic resources, to develop trade, and to open an outlet for Japan's overflowing population. Mistakenly, the attaché declared that sometime in the summer of 1933, the Ethiopian government had leased to Kitagawa 1,600,000 acres of farmland, suitable for growing Arabian Mocha coffee and cotton. Even at this late date, he argued that the Ethiopian government had also agreed to grant Kitagawa monopoly rights to raise opium poppies.[31]

Substance to Italian Fears?

Although exaggerated, Italian fears were not entirely fatuous. In January 1934, Count Luigi Vinci, Italian minister to Ethiopia, got hold of a letter in English from Dr. Yamauchi Masao to Hayle Sellase. Yamauchi had been in Ethiopia for a couple of years and had become a special correspondent of the *Osaka Mainichi*. In the letter, he proposed that the Japanese offer help and loans to Ethiopia to electrify industries and to

[26] *Ibid*.
[27] *Ibid*.
[28] Taura (1995: 153).
[29] *Le Temps*, Dec. 18, 1933; Dawson, 12/20/33: NARA 784.94/2.
[30] Grew, 10/3/33: NARA 894.00/70.
[31] Grene, 1/17/34: NARA 784.94/6.

build iron works, which would also make weapons. Doubtless putting into focus many Italian fears, Yamauchi wrote: "If your Imperial Majesty may be willing to extend necessary permissions to afford me of an audience on matters of great importance for the 'Lift up of Ethiopia', I shall esteem it a great favour." It continued that, by developing iron works, Ethiopia, "the cradle of civilisation," would sow the seeds for future greatness. Yamauchi wanted to return to Japan as soon as possible to procure loans. He expected to get this loan "without any difficulty, on the understanding that Your Imperial Majesty may be willing to give a warrant of security in any manner desired. As Your Imperial Majesty is quite aware, I am always trying to cultivate a good link and existing friendship between Japan and Ethiopia." Japan, Yamauchi explained, had refused Ethiopia a loan during Heruy's visit, because the Japanese did not appreciate "the greatness and wealth of Ethiopia." Now, he promised, things had changed. He closed by asking for a personal audience in which he could talk details.[32]

Vinci also forwarded to Rome a copy of an even more ominous letter from Wolde Giorgis, secretary-general of Ethiopia's foreign ministry, to Toda Masaharu. Dated December 6, 1933, Wolde Giorgis wrote that, after agreeing on the price and quality, Ethiopia would offer its products in exchange for weapons, including heavy and light machine guns, and long and short rifles. Ethiopia would be grateful if, "on your arrival in Japan and after having discussed the matter with the appropriate authorities, you would communicate to us in detail the conditions necessary for properly concluding this matter."[33]

Vinci also warned of the imminent arrival in Ethiopia of 170 Japanese, destined for a concession. Further, on January 14 a Japanese journalist, Nanjo Shinichi, arrived. He was to remain in Ethiopia for one month and then continue to London.[34]

Vinci was wrong on the arrival of Japanese settlers and on the implied threat Nanjo represented. In mid-March, the *Osaka Mainichi & Tokyo Nichi Nichi* published his story on a three-week hunt into Ethiopia's hinterland, close to the border with Kenya. Most of the article described "skirmishes" with hippopotamuses. "Little Masao Yamauchi, the only Japanese residing in Ethiopia" accompanied Nanjo on the expedition. Their caravan, proudly displaying the Japanese flag, returned to Addis Ababa on March 6. Nanjo noted that Ethiopians along the route in the capital saluted the flag. Before leaving for his hunt, he had "invited royalties, cabinet ministers, and prominent citizens to a banquet.[35]

Meanwhile, Kitagawa was finding less success than the Italians feared. In mid-January 1934, the foreign ministry received a report from Governor Suzuki Shintaro that Kitagawa and others had been planning to set up an immigration company with capital investment of about one million yen. They, however, had temporarily suspended plans because of financial problems. On January 20, 1934, Kitagawa went to the International Trade section of the foreign ministry and tried to explain Nikkei-sha's plan to send twenty technicians with capital of about ¥130,000 to manage an agricultural experimental station of almost 2,500-leased acres. The International Trade section

[32] Rome, 1/17/34: AP Etiopia b24 f3. For more on Italian concerns in November 1933, see AP Etiopia b14 f9: Rome, 11/11/33; Istituto Nazionale per L'Esportazione, 11/13/33; Guaranschelli, 11/15/33; To Istituto Nazionale per L'Esportazione, 11/17/33; Buti, 11/18/33; Vinci, 11/20/33; Vinci, 11/21/33; de Bono, 11/23/33; Vinci, 11/24/33; Guaranschelli, 11/27/33; Astuto, 11/27/33; and "Documenti sulla penetrazione giapponese in Etiopia," *L'Azione Coloniale*, Nov. 16, 1933.

[33] Rome, 1/17/34: AP Etiopia b24 f3.

[34] *Ibid*.

[35] *Osaka Manichi & Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, Mar. 11, 1934.

opposed this plan because Ethiopia had not yet confirmed the land concession. Besides, the plan merely provided for an experiment on agricultural management. It was more realistic, said the International Trade section, to send a few people to conduct field tests.[36]

The International Trade section explained to Governor Suzuki the importance Japan placed on the Nikkei-sha issue. This was Japan's first effort to advance agriculturally in Ethiopia, and its success or failure would influence Japanese development there. The foreign ministry feared "any negative impression in Ethiopia," which would reflect on the plan itself as well as the total relationship between Japan and Ethiopia. Ultimately, financially strapped, Nikkei-sha went out of business after only six months.[37]

Italy's ambassador on May 9, 1934 called on Japan's foreign minister. During their fifty-minute conversation, the ambassador emphatically denied press reports that Rome strongly opposed the Nikkei-sha deal, and that Italy, cooperating with other countries, planned to expel Japanese goods from Ethiopia. He also objected to the anti-Italian implications in earlier reports in Japanese newspapers that a "certain power" opposed Japanese investments in Africa.[38]

Other Japanese Visitors, Business Failures, and an Ethiopian Proposal

Doubtless following up on the promise of Heruy's visit to Japan, a few Japanese businessmen made their way to Ethiopia. A representative of the Kanegafuchi Spinning Company visited Ethiopia for about a week to look into the demand for cotton piece goods. He also wanted to discuss possibilities for growing cotton in Ethiopia and for building a local spinning mill, but probably entered no negotiations with Ethiopia's government. On December 22, 1933, another Japanese arrived. A sub-managing partner and general inspector of the Chukyo Trading Company of Nagoya, he tried to run a retail shop in Addis Ababa for distributing Japanese goods. Discouraged, however, by the limited trade, he soon liquidated the business and left.[39]

Another visitor was Hanyu Chotaro, a businessman from Kamakura. In mid-April 1934 after five-months in Ethiopia, Hanyu publicly praised Ethiopia as a promising market for Japanese goods, but he was more circumspect in private. Having received an "enthusiastic welcome," he spoke with the emperor, the foreign minister, and other high government officials. He also negotiated "with influential French and Indian businessmen" in Ethiopia. Hanyu granted that Italy, France, and Great Britain had extensive interests in Ethiopia and that despite an agreement between them providing for noninterference in Ethiopia's domestic affairs, their influence was strong. He noted that Ethiopia's principal exports were coffee and hides, and their main imports were cotton piece goods. The nation's purchasing power, however, was low. The five-hundred-mile, French-controlled railway from Djibouti supplied Addis Ababa, where there were no electric lights. Hanyu noted that Ethiopia imported most of its cotton piece goods from Japan, and he suggested that it would be better to market Japanese cotton piece goods through foreign businessmen in Ethiopia than to market the goods themselves. This would "avoid unnecessary competition with the foreign firms." He continued, "Ethiopia, I believe, promises to be a potential market for Japan, and I will

[36] Taura (1995: 154).
[37] *Ibid*.; Faërber-Ishihara, (1998: 14); Zervos (1936: 483).
[38] *Japan Times*, May 9, 1934.
[39] Okakura and Kitagawa, (1993: 35-36); Southard, 2/14/34: NARA 784.94/7; Engert, 8/24/35: NARA 784.94/23; George, 3/22/35: NARA 784.94/17; Rome, 1/17/34: AP Etiopia b24 f3.

advise the Foreign Office to establish either a legation or a consulate in Ethiopia." He closed by insisting that Ethiopia had not granted 1,200,000 acres to a Japanese. This false report had perplexed both Addis Ababa and Tokyo, and the Ethiopians had asked him to report truthfully on things "as they are."[40]

Hanyu was correct. Contrary to what the European press was asserting, Japanese activities in Ethiopia were modest. In 1932, fifteen Japanese settled in Ethiopia, and in 1933, seven more arrived. In the summer of 1934, there were only five. By autumn, there were only three Japanese in Addis Ababa, one of whom was in the American Seventh-Day Adventist Hospital where doctors had removed his appendix. The emperor and Heruy had assured Southard that they had granted no concessions to Japanese interests, although they expected the Japanese to open a legation in 1935. Southard concluded that there was no Japanese penetration that his legation could "see, imagine, or hear about."[41] In 1935, there were only three Japanese in Ethiopia. The others had left Ethiopia after their enterprises had failed. In August 1935, no Japanese shipping company included Djibouti in its list of port calls.[42]

Presumably inspired by Hanyu's visit, in what appears to be a semi-official letter of early March 1934, Jacob Adol Mar, self-proclaimed friend of Ethiopia's foreign minister, wrote to Hanyu. He asserted that all "logical thinking" Ethiopians wanted to see the Japanese come to Ethiopia for industrial and commercial purposes. Ethiopia, he wrote, felt squeezed between the colonies of Britain, France, and Italy. He added, "In this critical situation we all hope that the presence of many Japanese may encourage Your Government to give us a political help in difficult circumstances." He lamented the "regrettable faults" by those in both Ethiopia and Japan, which allowed European powers to oppose mutually friendly relations. The Ethiopians feared that Japanese journalists, manufacturers, and traders knew so little about Ethiopia that new blunders might again trouble relations between Ethiopia and Japan.[43]

Therefore, continued Mar, his friends had suggested that he go to Japan to deliver speeches to build sympathy for Ethiopia. He proposed that he would explain to the foreign ministry the best way to open political relations with Ethiopia and how Japan's bankers, exporters, and manufacturers could set up successful enterprises. The necessary first step would be to set up an imperial legation in Addis Ababa. Japan could do this cheaply. Detailing a comprehensive economic and commercial plan, Mar wrote that Ethiopia's government would let him act officially as an adviser for Japan's legation.[44]

In 1935, Heruy condemned rumors that Japan was settling 200,000 peasants to work on cotton plantations and to become soldiers in case of war. He said there was no Japanese legation and were only four Japanese in all the country. "[O]ur four Japanese guests are little merchants who have built a small shop where they sell Japanese goods to compete with the cheap Czech glassware that the Galli and Somali women like so much. As far as I can tell, this outpost of the Japanese invasion is not doing well, and its owners are thinking of leaving the country."[45]

Southard agreed. In October 1934, he argued the Ethiopians would let, in a restricted way, the Japanese set up commercial enterprises in Ethiopia—should they offer

[40] *Japan Times*, Apr. 22, 1934; Southard, 2/14/34: NARA 784.94/7.
[41] Southard, 10/22/34: NARA 784.94/13.
[42] Zervos (1936: 484); *Osaka Mainichi & Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, Aug. 18, 1935; Tsuchida (1935: 312).
[43] Mar, 3/4/34: GSK M130 1-1-2.
[44] *Ibid*.
[45] Farago (1935: 128).

substantial financial and other inducements. The legation, however, did not see much in Ethiopia the Japanese would find commercially or economically attractive. Southard added an important understanding. He insisted the Italians knew through their efficient, local legation that there was no real Japanese penetration and there was no chance there would be in the immediate future. He added that in pursuing its political and economic designs on Ethiopia, Italy needed a foil, an imaginary Japanese penetration based on the flirtations of the last several years between Addis Ababa and Tokyo.[46]

Italian Manipulations of Fears of Japanese Incursions into Ethiopia

As Southard pointed out, the Italians were making good use of the flirtations between Ethiopia and Japan. At the Rome Opera House on March 18, 1934, Mussolini proclaimed Italy's destiny for expansion. "Italy's historical objectives," he said, "have two names: Asia and Africa . . . justified by geography and history." Italy, after all, could not expand either to the north or to the west. The Duce added that of Europe's powers, Italy lay the closest to Africa and Asia. He then set before himself and future Italians the completion of Italy's centuries-old task, territorial expansion, not for its own sake, "but a natural expansion that should lead to collaboration between Italy and the Near East and the Middle East." This would bring civilization to Asia and Africa. Mussolini declared, "We do not intend to claim either monopolies or privileges," but, he warned, the satisfied colonial powers "should not try to block on every side the spiritual, political and economic expansion of Fascist Italy." He then justified his military buildup in Eritrea and Somaliland by denouncing Japanese penetration into Ethiopia and the modernization of Ethiopia's military with airplanes, howitzers, machine guns, tanks, field artillery. Italy, the Duce claimed, had to arm its colonies enough so they could defend themselves in case Italy should become preoccupied in Europe.[47]

Explaining why Italy recently had militarily reinforced its colonies of Eritrea and Somaliland, Alessandro Lessona, Under-Secretary of Colonies, in late 1934 clarified Italy's position in a speech at Naples. Noting the worsening political situation in the Far East, Lessona saw Japan's danger to Europe in its "birth rate, energy and spirit of sacrifice of the Japanese, the imperious necessity for always seeking new markets. . . .

Her pretensions and her force are the axle around which turns all Oriental policy." He went on, "The more one restrains the Japanese expansion in the East, the more she will try to expand in other sectors and in other continents, as is proved already by Japan's activity in Ethiopia." Lessona ominously added that Africa could represent the final objective of Japanese expansion. "To draw the Dark Continent into her own orbit would signify for Japan not so much in acquisition of power, as a means of depriving Europe of the possibility of using Africa for the defense of her civilization."[48]

What were the chances for success of such an ambitious proposal? Foreign Minister Heruy had a more realistic sense of the possibilities. When a journalist asked him if Ethiopia had common interests with Japan, the foreign minister replied, "We shall never have an important exchange of trade with Japan, for we have hardly anything that they can buy from us." Heruy explained that Ethiopia's main export was coffee, "but the Japanese drink tea. . . ." Japan had no need for Ethiopia's agricultural goods and skins.

[46] Southard, 10/22/34: NARA 784.94/13.
[47] *Popolo d'Italia*, Mar. 20, 1934; Mussolini (1958: 26: 185-93); Long, 3/23/34: NARA 865.00F/218. Italians continued Mussolini's themes into the Autumn, as the Japanese noted. See *Japan Times*, Oct. 3, 1934. Contrary to Italy's fears, Japan did not supply Ethiopia with weapons or munitions. See Clarke ("Politics," 2003: 135-53).
[48] *New York Times*, Dec. 2, 1934. See Gaslini (1935: 99-107).

"We only buy from Japan because her goods are cheap and we have not enough money to pay for the perhaps superior but considerably dearer European and American products."[49]

The supposed agricultural concession to Kitagawa and other rumored deals between Ethiopia and Japan, despite many denials and obvious facts, continued to rankle the Italians throughout the summer of 1935.[50] One book, published only months before the outbreak of the Italo-Ethiopian War, complained about Japan's extensive penetration of Ethiopia. In four short years, the author asserted, Japan had gotten in the highlands extending between the valley of the Nile, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean, almost 750,000 acres of fertile land for cultivating cotton. The first contingent of Japanese cotton farmers had already set themselves up. Provocatively, the author asserted that they were young but had brought no women with them, because they were to marry Ethiopian women.[51]

In his memoirs, Emperor Hayle Sellase declared that the Italians were spreading these rumors to rile up fears among the British and French who held neighboring colonies. The Italians knew, the emperor insisted, that Ethiopia had made no such secret treaty or concession.[52] These rumors, nonetheless, seduced not just the London and Paris to violate their national and colonial interests, but even the Soviet Russians to forsake their communist, anti-imperialist ideology to support Italy against an Ethiopia helped by Japan.[53] Without this presumed Japanese threat, it is unlikely that the world's reaction to Italy's preparations for war in 1934 and 1935 would have been so muted. Nor would the League of Nations' response to war begun in October 1935 have been so ineffectual.

Unpublished Documents

Italy. Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Direzione Generale degli Affari Politici, Etiopia (Rome). Cited as AP Etiopia.

Japan. Gaimusho Gaiko Shiryo Kan. (Tokyo). Cited as GSK.

United States. National Archives (College Park, MD), Record Group 59. General Records of the Department of State. Decimal Files. Cited as NARA.

Newspapers

Japan Advertiser
Japan Times
London Daily Herald
Il Mattino
Morning Post
New York Times
Osaka Mainichi & Tokyo Nichi Nichi
Popolo d'Italia
Le Temps

[49] Farago (1935: 128).
[50] Clarke (1999, "Squabble": 9-20).
[51] Baravelli, (1935: 63-64). For the story of one proposed marriage that did provoke international complications for Ethiopia and Japan, see Clarke (1999: 105-16).
[52] Haile Selassie (1976: 208-09).
[53] Clarke (1997: 1: pp. 699-712). For more on Italo-Soviet relations before and during the Italo-Ethiopian War, see Clarke (2003, "Italo-Soviet": pp. 177-99) and Clarke (1991).

Secondary Literature

Baravelli, Giulio Cesare. 1935. *The Last Stronghold of Slavery: What Abyssinia Is*. Rome: Società Editrice di "Novissima."

Celarié, Henriette. 1934. *Ethiopie XXe Siècle*. Paris: Librairie Hachette.

Clarke, J. Calvitt. 2006. "Dashed Hopes for Support: Daba Birrou's and Shoji Yunosuke's Trip to Japan, 1935." In: *Proceedings of the XVth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*. Hamburg: Aethiopistische Forschungen, pp. 224-32.

—— 2007. "Foreign Minister Heruy's Mission to Japan in 1931: Ethiopia's Effort to Find a Non-Western Model for Modernization." *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, Vol. 14, pp. 17-28.

—— 2003. "Italo-Soviet Cooperation in the 1930s." In: *Girding for Battle: The Arms Trade in a Global Perspective*. Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 177-99.

—— 1999. "Japan and Italy Squabble Over Ethiopia: The Sugimura Affair of July 1935." *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, Vol. 6, pp. 9-20.

—— 1999. "Marriage Alliance: The Union of Two Imperiums: Japan and Ethiopia?" *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, Vol. 7, pp. 105-16.

—— 2002. "Mutual Interests: Japan and Ethiopia Before the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-36." *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, Vol. 9, pp. 83-97.

—— 1997. "Periphery and Crossroads: Ethiopia and World Diplomacy, 1934-36." In: *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Kyoto: Shokado Book Sellers, Vol. 1, pp. 699-712.

—— 2003. "The Politics of Arms Not Given: Japan, Ethiopia, and Italy in the 1930s." In: *Girding for Battle: The Arms Trade in a Global Perspective, 1815-1940*. Westport, CT: Praeger, pp. 135-53.

—— 1991. *Russia and Italy Against Hitler: The Bolshevik-Fascist Rapprochement of the 1930s.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

—— 2004. "Seeking a Model for Modernization: The Japanizers of Ethiopia." *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, Vol. 11, pp. 35-51.

Faërber-Ishihara Hidéko. 1999. "Heruy, le Japon et les "japonisants." In: *Les orientalistes sont des aventuriers. Guirlande offerte à Joseph Tubiana par ses élèves et ses amis*, Paris: Sépia, pp.143-49.

—— 1998. *Les premiers contacts entre l'Éthiopie et le Japon*. Paris: Aresae.

Farago, Ladislas. 1935. *Abyssinia on the Eve*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Gaslini, Mario dei. 1935. "Il Giappone nel'economia Etiopica," in Federazione Provinciale Fascista Milanese. In: *Corso di Preparazione politica per i giovani*. Milan: Tipografia del "Popolo d'Italia," 99-107.

Haile Selassie. 1976. *My Life and Ethiopia's Progress, 1892-1937*. Glasgow: Oxford University Press.

Mussolini, Benito. 1958. *Opera Omnia di Benito Mussolini*. Vol. 26: *Dal Patto a Quattro all'inaugurazione della Provincia di Littoria (8 Giugno 1933-18 Dicembre 1934)*. Florence: La Fenice.

Okakura Takashi and Kitagawa Katsuhiko, 1993. *Nihon-Afurika Koryushi: Meiji-ki kara Dainiji Sekai Taisen-ki made*. Tokyo: Dobunkan.

Taura Masanori. 1995. "Nihon-Echiopia kankei ni miru 1930 nen tsusho gaiko no iso" *Seifu to Minkan*, *Nenpo Kindai Nihon Kenkyu*, Vol. 17, pp. 141-170.

Tsuchida Yutaka. 1935. “Echiopia o Miru.” *Chuo Koron*, Vol. 50: pp. 308-15.
Zervos, Adrien. 1936. *L’Empire d’Ethiopie: Le Miroir de L’Ethiopie Moderne 1906-1935*. Alexandria, Egypt: Impr. de l’Ecole professionnelle des frères.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

Colonialism as State-Maker in the History of the Horn of Africa: A Reassessment

Giampaolo Calchi Novati[1]

The main colonial power in the Horn of Africa resulted to be Italy. Despite its ambitions, Italy did not have the full capacities to transform institutions and economy of the region's states and nations. At the very moment of the end of colonialism, the colonial geopolitics was disregarded. A *sui generis* decolonization rather abided by long-term historical trends. However, half century later, following local crises the state-maker functions of colonialism have been re-established with the independence of Eritrea and the fragmentation of Somalia.

Cleavages and Tensions

Geography determines the Horn's politics as much as anything else in its history and social makeup[2]. The balance of power and quest for hegemony in the area that encompasses the present-day states of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti, in addition to Sudan – the link between the proper Horn and the Nile Valley – present a complex multi-faceted picture, with numerous inter-linkages. First of all, the systems of government that were designed to facilitate control over land and people accentuated the cleavages and contrasts between groups in power and subordinate or discriminated groups. Anti-hegemonic resistance movements played a crucial role in defining regional politics. The domestic dimension is the most important. It is present throughout the entire history of the Horn and has survived and persisted even when the Horn has been under the influence and control of external forces as during the colonial era and in the years of confrontation between East and West. The second dimension of the conflict is more strictly regional. The states and the people of the Horn tend to interact and communicate with one another rather than with outsiders. The traditions of statehood differ greatly from country to country and constitute an element of tension as many states fear that the presence of an opposite model in the vicinity could destabilize or bring into question their very existence. The main threats come from within the region: geopolitical strife over land, water, ports and human and economic resources. The third level of tension and conflict is represented by the role of European colonialism, which although it may present characteristics of an external dimension, was a form jurisdiction exercised *in loco* through direct supremacy. The main colonial powers involved in the Horn were Italy and England. France weighed in as a colonial power with a few possessions (the small French Somalia, the current Republic of Djibouti), but also because it competed with Italy and England for influence in the region. The colonial period (1869-1941) witnessed the peak of interference by external forces contending for

[1] Giampaolo Calchi Novati is professor of History of Africa at the Unversity of Pavia: cngp@unipv.it.
[2] Ruth (2001: 107); Clapham (1984: 458-501).

political dominance and appropriation of strategic assets. After all, colonialism did not destroy internal hierarchies. It greatly addressed political and economic assets of the area, but was perceived and accepted in different ways by groups at different levels of power, many of whom showed support and complicity. The European powers exploited internal differences in order to pursue their own interests, supporting those who could best serve their expansionist intentions. During different periods, Egypt, the states of North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East as well as the superpowers at the center of the global system (particularly after 1945) have all acted as external forces in the Horn.

The L*eitmotiv* of the conflict in the Horn consists of the tension between the "centers" at the regional level – the most powerful and prestigious forces in the respective areas – and the vassals or "peripheral" populations and communities in search of realization and emancipation. Nothing is capable of uniting a human reality into a collective national mission better than memory. The archaeological relics, the obelisks, the tombs, and the ruins of the buildings that pertained to the powerful and educated elites, are direct evidence of past grandeur and account for the sense of superiority of those in power. The former empires were replaced by modern states that embraced and reinforced old myths, adapting them to their own objectives. The Horn remains in a condition of permanent instability due to the unresolved conflicts between groups that, for reasons of nationality, linguistic and cultural affiliation, social status, etc., hold or are close to the power and the groups that, for the same reasons but vice versa, are or feel excluded, exploited and marginalized. The imperial control has intermittently been challenged by local resistance movements, committed in their own right to constructing kingdoms and identities.

The geographical and historical center of the Horn was the Abyssinian Empire – later, Ethiopia. Ethiopia underwent a process of deep centralization of power around the dynasty and the national Christian Church and was characterized by a feudal mode of settlement and agricultural-based production. "Ethiopia's historical ruling elites have produced Africa's modern most enduring idea of state, replete with myths of biblical lore, the glories of ancient Axum, and the splendor of Gondarine courts, to justify post-colonial conquest"[3]. The Addis Ababa Government had the "sacred" duty of defending the Great Tradition of the Empire and would not tolerate any infringement upon its multinational and multiethnic features[4]. History was instrumental in supporting Ethiopia's claims to Eritrea and the Ogaden region. The two very different regimes of Haile Selassie and Mengistu Haile Mariam both persistently countered the irredentist struggle of the former Italian colony Eritrea, dubbing it as secessionism.

Sudan, in the Upper Nile, played a similar role to that of Ethiopia. Sudan was the main competitor in the Horn to Abyssinia for influence over and ownership of the Nile waters. Like Ethiopia, Sudan built up a robust central state, "civilizing" its periphery through coercion or assimilation, from north to south. As a self-legitimizing saga, Sudan's Axum was represented by the Kingdom of Kush-Meroe. During the height of the Axumite and Kushitic empires, Somalia and the southern provinces of Sudan were considered merely distant areas that could provide gold, ivory, incense and slaves to the ruling power centers. The "metaphysics" of empire applies both to Ethiopian-Somali

[3] Ruth (2001: 109).
[4] Levine (1974).

relations and to the problems related to Southern Sudan that Sudanese regimes had to cope with[5].

The power of Ethiopia and Sudan was based, above all, on ethnicity and religion. Kinship and religious affinities transcend national borders. Since many borders in the Horn were poorly demarcated and contested by some governments, the political order harboured a permanent threat. Religion was an important leverage in the hands of the ruling powers and was used as an incentive for expansion, conquest and occupation. The opposition between Christianity and Islam has been a constant over time. Christianity was a decisive component of the strategy pursued by the Abyssinian Court, together with the support of the army. Given that Ethiopia was surrounded to a great deal by Islamic populations, religion has been one of the main factors in the growing tension between Ethiopia and its neighbors since Medieval times. The imperial project, as interpreted by Ethiopia, called for opposition to the state of Somalia, or in other words, to the power of the authorities that ruled the lowlands inhabited by Somali-speaking people. The Muslim faith, other than language, represented the main point of reference in terms of identity in the context of a fluid and volatile system of government. As a result of the expansion of the indigenous community, Ethiopia can no longer be considered a "Christian nation": Ethiopian Muslims are present throughout the country and are concentrated in the southern, eastern and western peripheries[6]. Unlike Ethiopia with its epic history focused on affirmation of Christianity, in Sudan the Arab-Muslim elite have always had the upper hand, opposing surrounding peoples and polities with long and more contemporary Christian histories. The North's hegemony depends on Arabization, while at the same time, Arabization is the cause of unrest in the southern provinces.

Colonialism in Action

With colonialism, a minority of a different cultural or religious origin, intervenes by force, tampering with the already existing territorial and national assets. The colonial force takes whatever it needs for the profit of the metropolitan center, using forced labor in the form of *corvées*, servitude or slavery, natural resources and strategic assets. Italy wanted to occupy the land in order to establish colonies while the main objective of England was control of the water: the Nile Basin and the routes to India through the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Colonialism forever changed the populations or the elites that were subjugated by way of institutional, productive and cultural transformations. Ethiopia and Sudan resisted more than others thanks to their political and military might and were able to participate in and benefit from international diplomacy (Menelik was in contact with England and Italy and, with the outbreak of hostilities beyond the River Mareb, received assistance from France; Mahdi was still bound to his special relationship with the Ottoman Empire[7]). The inclusion of the peripheral non-Christians in Ethiopia and the non-Muslims or non-Arabs in Sudan, at first nominally, became a reality at the cost of creating potential hotbeds of resistance and conflict. The victory of Menelik in Adowa saved Ethiopia. However, Ethiopia paid a high price for colonialism, losing definitively access to the sea. Oddly enough, the resounding victory of Adowa did not stop the progression of Africa's partition and perhaps even accelerated Europe's conquest of the region. In the aftermath of the

[5] Reisman (1983: 152-153).
[6] Shinn (2005: 96).
[7] Egypt's rulers were interested in maintaining a weaker and dependent state on their southern side.

Adowa battle, the Egyptians and British resolved to carry on with the final attack on the state founded by Mahdi, lest Menelik's victory boosted the strength and hostility of the Dervishes.

The formal and efficient administration of the European powers dislodged the pre-existing powers. The colonial interlude was a critical juncture for the formation of states and nations. Whit a more effective management of territory and resources, colonialism nonetheless led to chronic instability due to dissent, protest to the occupation, loss of sovereignty and the expropriation of community goods. The endurance of Ethiopian independence in 1896 was a result of national mobilization and the capacity of the imperial hierarchy to hold onto power and safeguard the motherland[8]. In Somalia, resistance's performance to Italian and English occupation was more successful in the areas where tribal authority was better organized.

The means of "pacification" differ depending on the characteristics of the local community. Colonialism as such amplifies the importance of ethnicity because in a situation of assertion of a foreign culture, dominance and expropriation, clan affiliation and lineage become the most suitable means of survival. The communities that had suffered from other forms of domination before the advent of European colonialism, had a different attitude towards colonial rule than those communities that had always held the power in their own hands. The privileged groups resisted colonialism on principle as well as for self-interest while the subordinate groups struggled to create viable and oppositional states not only in response to the abuse of power by the stronger states but also due to their associative history, the ecological conditions of their natural environment or the economic-social organization of their communities. Colonialism can help the yesterday's vanquished to rectify their position of inferiority. In the official history of African decolonization there is a tendency to disregard those societies (or "tribes") that showed a positive attitude towards colonialism, often referring to them as "collaborators" while eulogizing as "nationalists" those societies that opposed and repudiated colonialism. The forms of nationalism shaped or supported by the colonial rulers, however, take on a new force when they are used in opposition to a dominant power. "The colonial experience left a lasting legacy either by separating subject peoples from the ruling centers and thus liberating them from traditional obligations or by institutionalizing pre-existing relations of domination"[9].

After having played the Tigrayan card against the Showa during the fight with Menelik at the end of the XIX century, Italian colonialism widely exploited the internal cleavages during the time of Africa Orientale Italiana (AOI) whereas Ethiopia was finally occupied by Mussolini's army (1936-41). Italy lacked the financial and technical resources, as well as the time, to effect a comprehensive transformation of the economy and society of Eastern Africa. Nevertheless, Italy believed it was possible to change the very soul of the region's states by manipulating boundaries, land property[10], the hierarchical balance of the elites and major ethnic groups or nations[11]. Italy's colonial administration in Eastern Africa constantly exploited issues of identity such as religion, culture and shared values. The objective was to cut the peripheries off from the established centers of power, giving the subjugated populations the illusion of having been "liberated". Ogaden, a semi-desert area inhabited by Somali-speaking nomads,

[8] Rubenson (1976: 408-409).
[9] Ruth (2001: 113).
[10] Haile Mariam (1994)
[11] Calchi Novati (2005: 47-74).

was separated from Ethiopia and annexed to Somalia in order to create a sort of ethno-national homogeneity. This precedent would prop up the advent of Pan-Somalism as a reunification of the idealized Somali nation[12]. Also in the north of Ethiopia, the Empire's territory was cut, this time in order to enlarge Eritrea. The Deputy General-Governor of AOI, Enrico Cerulli, had always cherished the idea, which he had elaborated in his capacity as a prominent scholar, to support the peripheral nomadic Muslim peoples at the expense of the Christian plateau-dwellers. In Eritrea, the colonial government's practices were differentiated in order to take account of and enhance the various local traditions and identities in a continuous interplay between administration and ethnography[13]. Italy maintained to make use of scientific parameters, but the reorganization spawned the emergence of racial prejudices and political maneuvers aimed at wearing down Abyssinian resistance by dividing and subjugating the Showa-Amhara elite who were at the core of the Empire ruled by Haile Selassie.

Eritrean nationalism and Pan-Somalism came fully emerged to the surface with the end of colonialism. Colonialism helped them in many ways to form. The main argument in favor of the Eritrean Liberation Front's strong opposition to incorporation of the former Italian colony into the Ethiopian Empire, was the colonial predicament. Some influence also came from the British Military Administration, operative in the ex-Italian territories from 1941 until the decision taken by the UN General Assemble in 1949-50 regarding their future. Great Britain kept the fate of Eritrea on hold and carried on for a few years with separate administration of the Ogaden and the other scraps of Ethiopian territory, such as the Haud, inhabited by Somalis, on the border with British Somaliland.

Colonialism in the Horn altered the previous pattern of domination and subordination within states and the balance of power between states at the regional level. Colonialism was a new phenomenon in terms of duration and intensity and its effect was not balanced between countries. The superiority of states with imperial traditions – Ethiopia and Sudan – outlived colonialism. Their longstanding institutions guaranteed a special force and determination. However, both Ethiopia and Sudan had to use coercive measures and, when necessary, take up arms to control their riotous peripheries, pushed by colonialism to fight for decentralization and autonomy. Somalia emerged as a unitary state as a result of colonialism and decolonization. As for revisionism and irredentism, Eritrea had ties to South Sudan, however, at the same time, showed strong kinship with the highland Tigrayans dwelling in Ethiopia. Broadly reshaped by the half-century domination of Italian colonialism, a good deal of Eritrea's political body strongly rebuffed the "imperial" solution pursued by Addis Ababa[14].

The Special Case of Eritrea

The colonial administration in Eritrea, unlike in Ethiopia which had been invaded but never colonized, had sufficient time to implement in-depth institutional and social reorganization. Eritreans were thoroughly immersed in colonialism and became accustomed to day-to-day life under European rule. For 50 years or so they spoke Italian as their *lingua franca*. Italy saw to the delineation of boundaries, completing a process

[12] At the end of WWI, a territorial agreement between Italy and England had already enlarged the territory of Italian Somalia with the annexation of Jubaland, which previously was part of British Eastern Africa (Calchi Novati: 1985).

[13] Sorgoni (2001: 231).

[14] On the controversial origin of Eritrean nationalism, see Alemseged (1998); Jordan (1989); Le Houérou (2000); Pool (2001); Redie (2000); Ruth (1995); Sorenson (1991: 301-317).

that had been initiated by the Egyptians[15] and also introduced bureaucratic administration and territorial centralization, promoting law and order. Eritrea's "colonial society" revealed itself to be more manageable and compliant than its counterpart in Somalia. A great deal of Eritreans enrolled into the colonial militias (*ascari*) which fought alongside Italy both in Ethiopia and Libya[16].

The literature presents a variety of assessments on the effective transformation of the *colonia primogenita* into a modern society in pursuit of statehood and nationhood. The work of colonialism as state-maker was not confined to the demarcation of frontiers. In fact, the primary contribution of Italian rule was to establish a system based on capitalist principles and a hierarchically structured society according to a center-periphery scheme that would engender the creation of a common identity[17]. Before Italian colonialism, the interaction between various ethno-linguistic groups in Eritrea had been insufficient to give rise to a single political entity with common institutions and shared symbols. Although Italy did not fulfill the expectations of the imperialist ideologues, it did undertake vast material and socio-cultural activities: "If both export production and markets remained relatively small, this was due to lack of 'development' through investment rather than the colony's poverty"[18]. The boom in public works and the chain of small industries which flourished during the administration of the AOI opened up the need for local manpower, which was in turn made available due to the land shortage caused by confiscations. This process had the effect of accelerating the disintegration of feudal ties as landless peasants were effectively converted into wage laborers or employees. "The period of Italian rule contributed by its very length to the strengthening of Eritrean awareness, especially among those who underwent urbanisation or served in the bureaucracy and army, although the Italians did very little to promote internal social cohesion"[19]. Other authors appear less convinced about the long-term effects of Italian colonialism. Alemseged Abbay deems the Italian influence "minimal" in transforming the life and culture of the indigenous people[20]. "Eritrea nationalism did not emerge as a reaction to colonial situation. It made its appearance after the collapse of Italian rule, when the fate of the former colony hung in the balance"[21]. Some of the professional historians and sociologists who tackle the "Eritrean question" seem impressed by the economic progress, expansion of education and political liberalization that took place during the British period between 1941 and 1952[22]. "For the first time in the history of Eritrea, the people were not only allowed but even encouraged to establish appropriate political organisations"[23].

[15] Tzehainesh (1995: 199). The notion of frontiers was mainly a European construct that colonialism had transplanted in Africa.
[16] Le Houérou (2000). According to Gennaro Mondaini, the conquest of the Ethiopian Empire, siding with the Italians, had the value of a national enterprise for Eritreans and Somalis (1941: 377).
[17] Redie (2000: 290-291).
[18] Yemane (1988: 222).
[19] Erlich (1983: 4). See also Tekeste (1987).
[20] With regard to Kebessa, he states that: "Even if urbanization, access to consumption goods as well as adoption of Western values and etiquette were the litmus tests for modernization, only an insignificant section of the population, mostly in Asmara, would pass for being 'modernized'" (Alemseged Abbay, 1998: 5, 25).
[21] Markakis (1988: 51).
[22] Trevaskis (1960).
[23] Tekeste (1997: 24).

End of colonialism and access to independence

As a result of the events of World War II, Italy lost all of its colonial possessions in Eastern Africa. The colonial infrastructure and military apparatus surrendered to British troops and to the Emperor's army in 1941. The AOI was dismembered. Although it did not acquire influence and/or prestige enough to pave the way for a return to Africa, Italy left an imprint on the Horn's institutional, social and economic structure. Traces of the Italian presence are still visible, particularly in terms of urban solutions, food, customs and even, to a certain extent, linguistic and cultural expressions[24]. The long-term consequences of colonialism on society, its impact on the mentality of the elite and the collective imagery did have some bearing on the political life in the Horn throughout the XX century. However, Italy proved a negligible agent in a political space that had been under its jurisdiction. Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea were very much in charge of their own political destinies, but also trapped in a milieu of intense and often violent confrontation. In this regard, Ethiopia took the lead cementing a strong agreement with the United States[25]. Ethiopia and Sudan both assumed an air of ethno-historical superiority in order to justify their pre-colonial relations of dominance respectively with Eritrea and the Southern Sudanese provinces of former Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. This attitude, in turn, led to widespread disaffection and alienation.

The terms of the 1947 Peace Treaty obliged Italy to formally renounce of all of its colonies and the treaty acknowledged the full sovereignty of Ethiopia. The UN debate was disappointing from the Italian point of view. Rome lost almost everything[26]. Eritrea was proclaimed an autonomous unit federated to Ethiopia[27]. Only poor Somalia was put under Italian administration as a trusteeship territory for a ten-year period. The Italian Trust Administration of Somalia (AFIS) exported into Africa, at least to some extent, Italy's new democratic profile. Italian authorities established a difficult relationship with the most dedicated and militant nationalist movement, the Somali Youth League (SYL). Their converging interests made it relatively easy to work together to build up the new state. Haile Selassie showed open disdain for the fact that Italy was responsible for the administration of a territory that bordered Ethiopia. Some ministers and personalities in Addis Ababa took for granted the fact that Italy was plotting to re-establish a semi-colonial presence in the Horn. Haile Selassie himself maintained that Italy, condemned as an aggressor and defeated in the war, was not entitled to look after the implementation of the UN resolution in Eritrea. In the end, Italy was powerless when Ethiopia's abuses led to the abolishing of the Eritrea-Ethiopia federation[28].

The people of Eritrea, through the mouthpiece of their political associations, could reasonably claim that they had not had the chance to freely choose their own destiny. The federation was short-lived and in November 1952 the Eritrean Assembly, persuaded by military pressure from Ethiopia, voted for the incorporation of the former Italian colony into the Ethiopian Empire as a province. Ethiopia's rulers in the XX century, especially Haile Selassie, "came to regard access to the Red Sea as the cornerstone of their foreign policy; this goal [Eritrea] supplanted the earlier zeal for southward

[24] Uoldelul and Calchi Novati (2003).
[25] Marcus (1983).
[26] Rossi (1980).
[27] UN resolution 390-A(V) of 2 December 1950 provided that Eritrea should "constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown".
[28] The main grievance by Michela Wrong is that the world at large betrayed Eritrea when the federation was abolished (2005: 183).

expansion"[29]. Such a move did not abide by the principle of individual self-determination, in the process of decolonization, as a acknowledged right of all colonial territories throughout Africa[30]. The nation itself could be considered a product of colonial power[31]. Apparently, the achievements of colonialism in the Horn were emasculated by local and national priorities. The infringement of the colonial legacy was complete when the former British Somaliland[32] merged with the Italian possession, joining the Republic of Somalia, which gained independence in 1960 (with Mogadishu as the capital city). While Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti owed much of their political infrastructure to colonialism, the Ethiopian and Sudanese states maintained their pre-colonial stances, based on conquest and hegemony. Irredentist drives of the entities north of the river Mareb and south of the Sudd, which sought equitable institutional alternatives to the colonial or post-colonial *status quo*, illustrated the fragility of the entire situation.

From the time of independence onwards, the political situation in the Horn was characterized by rivalries between the old states and the new states. The states with stronger traditions managed to take back control of their peripheries. The *longue durée* was in opposition to the innate restlessness of the subordinate populations. The attempt to detach the peripheries from the centers gives the impression of being a sort of revaluation of colonialism. Ethiopia has a strong history, but it does not countervail the strong ethno-religious differences and does not erase the memory of slavery and mischief of power. When Haile Selasse returned to Ethiopia, he sought to appeal to both the Ethiopians and the Eritreans, but each interpreted his words differently. The particularities of the experience of Eritreans as colonial subjects distinguished them from the polity which now hoped to bring them under their control. Ethiopia was at war with both Somalia (for the Ogaden region, but in final analysis, for the differing concepts of statehood to which the two states aspired) and Eritrea (before and after its independence). Pan-Somalism was in opposition to the established states. Thanks to Italian and British politics, Mogadishu established itself as a "new center" and proved to be quite attractive. The reassertion of Somalia was essentially a direct attack on the territorial integrity of Ethiopia and Kenya. Mogadishu did not recognize the territorial divisions made during the Scramble nor the later realignment of borders led by the UN nor any other diplomatic and political steps taken after the end of colonialism. The fusion of the two Somalias created an initial sense of accomplishment for the Pan-Somalism but was in contradiction to the tendency to exert the right to territorial self-determination along the colonial geopolitics.

The 30-year guerrilla campaign launched in the early 1960s by the Eritrean liberation movement ended in May 1991 with the unexpected military victory of David, and not of Goliath. In the same days, the Derg regime in Addis was overthrown by guerrillas from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The fact that the EPLF and TPLF had fought side-by-side against a common enemy ensured a period of "understandings" between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The EPLF had provided the Tigrayans of TPLF, its comrades in war, with arms and logistical support. The golden era of Eritrea, when everything seemed possible, was, however, rapidly tarnished. The post-independence

[29] Ruth (2001: 114).
[30] Jackson and Rosberg (1984); Jackson and Rosberg (1988).
[31] Taddia (1986, 1990: 157).
[32] Colonialism only slightly changed the economic and social structures in British Somaliland, the Cinderella of the British Empire, because it's main function was to provide food for the Aden base.

revisionism of Asmara was aimed mainly at counteracting the primacy of Ethiopia.The conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia (1998-2000) broke out because of a minor border dispute in an area whose confines had been agreed upon by Menelik and the Italians at the turn of the century. Ostensibly, the real *casus belli* was more sophisticated[33].

The 1991 Breakthrough as a Colonial Retribution

The former Italian possessions were particularly vulnerable to "Africa's crisis" because of their isolation from the most important economic and financial flows, in large part due to their traditional European patron's feebleness. In Ethiopia and Somalia, ravaged by war and drought, the traumas of transition have dramatically shattered political stability. Clearly, the Italian influence did not provide a sufficient shield in this respect. For other reasons, connected to its geo-strategic position between Arab Africa and black Africa, Sudan also experienced long periods of war after independence. The Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) signed in 2005 between the central government and the SPLM/A granted the southern provinces the right to opt for independence within a few years, and thus opened a chapter of uncertainty as to the fate of the unitary state.

The end of the civil war in Somalia led also to the definitive end of Somalia as it was constituted in 1960. The long-term historical dispersion of Somali statehood and nationhood outweighed the recently-born formalized state, leaving the power in the hands of the clans and diaspora communities – the primary vehicles of Somali ethnic and cultural identity. The Somali state committed a veritable "suicide": when Siyad Barre, defeated by the precarious coalition of various militias, abandoned Mogadishu in January 1991, the central authority collapsed and tribal anarchy spread, while the warlords held onto control of their respective areas of sovereignty. The post-colonial Somali state fell into the condition of a "quasi-state"[34]. The central government enjoyed juridical sovereignty but was unable to exercise it within its territory. Clanism chased the pursuit of an irredentist, outward-oriented nationalism.

Furthermore, as a consequence of the all-out war that accompanied the disintegration of the Siyad Barre regime, the former British Somaliland reclaimed its autonomy. Even if the local authorities did not request formal international recognition, they started to behave as an independent state. The former British possession, less affected by colonial reforms and keen to the pastoral ethos of nomads, had consistently expressed its hesitancy to adapt to the cultural pattern of the rest of Somalia where the urban and agricultural way of life reflected greater progress[35]. The leaders of Somaliland did not take part in the elusive diplomatic efforts to reinstate a unitary Somali government and decided to go it alone.

The civil war in Ethiopia had less devastating consequences. The collapse of the Derg regime, when Mengistu Haile Mariam fled and what remained of the dying regime surrendered to the guerrillas led by the TPLF in the new form of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), did not disrupt the state and its institutions like in Somalia. The longstanding tradition of firm statehood allowed Ethiopia to survive the turmoil. However, the government established by the TPLF put an end to the official state ideology. The concepts of centralization and hegemony which had been fundamental to the power structure in Addis for centuries, from the Axum kingdom

[33] Ruth (2000); Tekeste and Tronvoll (2001); Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut (2004); Reid (2004)..
[34] Jackson (1990).
[35] Lewis (1961).

onwards, and which had even driven the military revolution of the Derg in 1974, vanished. The post-Derg regime acknowledged for the first time that the periphery of the former empire had the same ranking as the traditionally dominant elite. The unstated motive behind this rethinking of Ethiopian statehood recalls the strategy that once inspired Italian colonial policy: undermining and crippling the power of the Amharas. Ethiopia buried its hegemonic past. The former empire has been reshaped as a federation of nominally semi-autonomous provinces divided on the basis of ethnicity. The Constitution affirmed the principle of self-determination up to secession, only dictating the complicated procedures to be followed to ensure that the secession is legal and authorized.

The independence of Eritrea desecrated the dogma of inviolability of boundaries. In a way, this independence represented the "return" of an ex-colony to its individuality and identity. Whether reality or invention, Eritrea was an Italian "artifact". Despite a certain aura of anti-colonialism throughout the history of Eritrean nationalism, the colonial experience facilitated its distance from Ethiopia[36].

The separation of British Somaliland from the Republic of Somalia moved in the same direction. In this case, however, it was not Italy, but Great Britain, to profit. Even the semi-victory of London confirmed the grand vitality of colonialism as state-maker in Africa. The situation in Sudan is more complex. Until the very end, Great Britain, after rejecting the idea to unite Egypt and Sudan into a single state, had to decide between the unitary solution and the division of Sudan. The Christian black South held more similarities with Uganda and the Africa of the Great Lakes rather than with the Arab-Islamic North and Arab Africa at large. Khartoum, the capital of the state, reaffirmed the traditional preponderance of the North without managing, however, to develop an inclusive policy that could make the South feel an integral part of the state. The upheaval and later on the semi-independence of the southern provinces of Sudan recalled the old divisions along ethnic, linguistic and religious lines – components which were affected by the diverse level of intensity of the colonial predicament.

When Italian and British rule in the Horn ended, the "colonial" standard was temporarily broken. For about 40-50 years, the institutional pattern mirrored a certain idea of the "authentic" history of Ethiopia and Somalia (and Sudan). But, the colonial phenomenology proved, in the long run, to be stronger than the Great Traditions of Ethiopia and Pan-Somalism in the Somali context. Clan affiliation and lineage acted as a tool for self-defense under colonial rule and resurfaced as potent instruments for unification once colonialism finished and forgotten. The reassessment of states and nations multiplied in the post-colonial order due to fresh formulations of collective security which, abrogating the Cold War praxis, promoted or accommodated the "balkanization" of the established states for the sake of the Neo-Empire.

[36] The different meaning of Eritrea and Ethiopia was defined or redefined by the war of 1998 and the virulent propaganda of ideologues from both sides encouraging divisions between the cross-border populations (Gilkes, 2004: 249).

References

Alemseged Abbay. 1998. Identity Jilted or Re-imagining Identity? The divergent paths of the Eritrean and Tigrayan nationalist struggles. Lawrenceville and Asmara: The Red Sea Press.

Calchi Novati, Giampaolo. 1985. L'annessione dell'Oltregiuba nella politica coloniale italiana. Rome: Istituto Italo-Africano.

Calchi Novati, Giampaolo. 2005. 'National Identities as a By-Product of Italian Colonialism: A Comparison of Eritrea and Somalia.' in Jacqueline Andall and Derek Duncan (eds.), Italian Colonialism. Legacy and Memory, Bern: Peter Lang, pp. 47-74.

Clapham, Christopher. 1984. 'The Horn of Africa', The Cambridge History of Africa, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, vol. VIII, pp. 458-501.

Erlich, Haggai. 1983. The Struggle for Eritrea, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Gilkes, Patrick. 2004. 'Violence and Identity along the Eritrean-Ethiopian Border', in Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut , Unfinished Business, Ethiopia and Eritrea at War, cit.

Haile Mariam Larebo. 1994. The Building of an Empire: Italian Land Policy and Practice in Ethiopia, 1935-1941. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Jackson, Robert. 1990. Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jackson, Robert A. and Rosberg, Carl. 1984. 'Popular Legitimacy in Multi-Ethnic States.' The Journal of Modern African Studies. Vol. 22 (2), pp. 177-198.

Jackson, Robert A. and Rosberg, Carl. 1988. 'Sovereignty and Underdevelopment: Juridical Statehood in the African Crisis.' The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 26 (1), pp. 1-31.

Jacquin-Berdal, Dominique and Plaut, Martin (eds.). 2004.Unfinished Business. Ethiopia and Eritrea at War, Trenton and Asmara: The Red Sea Press.

Jordan Gebre-Medhin. 1989. Peasants and Nationalism in Eritrea. Trenton: The Red Sea Press.

Le Houérou, Fabienne. 2000. Ethiopie-Erythrée : frères ennemis de la Corne de l'Afrique, Paris: L'Harmattan.

Levine, Donald. 1974. Greater Ethiopia. The Evolution of a Multi-Ethnic Society. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Lewis, I. M.. 1961. A Pastoral Democracy: a Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa, London: Oxford University Press.

Marcus, Harold G.. 1983. Ethiopia, Great Britain and the United States, 1941-1974, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mondaini, Gennaro. 1941. La legislazione coloniale italiana nel suo sviluppo storico e nel suo stato attuale (1881-1940), Milan: Ispi.

Pool, David. 2001. From Guerrillas to Government. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front. Oxford: J. Currey.

Redie Bereketeab. 2000. Eritrea. The Making of a Nation, 1890-1991. Uppsala: Uppsala University.

Reid, Richard. 2004. 'The EPLF and the 1998-2000 War in Historical Perspective', in Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut, Unfinished Business. Ethiopia and Eritrea at War, cit.

Reisman, W. Michael. 1983. 'Somali Self-Determination in the Horn: Legal Perspectives and Implications for Social and Political Engineering', in Lewis, I. M. (ed.), Nationalism and Self-Determination in the Horn of Africa, London: Ithaca Press

Rossi, Gianluigi. 1980. L'Africa italiana verso l'indipendenza (1941-1949), Varese: Giuffrè.

Rotberg, Robert I. (ed.). 2005. Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Rubenson, Sven. 1976. The Survival of Ethiopian Independence. London: Heinemann.

Ruth Iyob. 1995. The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: domination, resistance, nationalism, 1941-1993. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ruth Iyob. 2000. 'The Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict: diasporic vs. hegemonic states in the Horn of Africa, 1991-2000', The Journal of Modern African Studies , Vol. 38, 1, pp. 659-682.

Ruth Iyob. 2001. 'The Foreign Policies of the Horn. The Clash Between the Old and the New', in Gilbert M. Khadiagala and Terrence Lyons (eds.), African Foreign Policies, Powers and Processes, Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Shinn, David H.. 2005. 'Ethiopia', in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), Battling Terrorism in the Horn of Africa, cit.

Sorenson, John. 1991. 'Discourses on Eritrean Nationalism and Identity', The Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 29 (2), pp. 301-317.

Sorgoni, Barbara. 2001. Etnografia e colonialismo. L'Eritrea e l'Etiopia di Alberto Pollera (1873-1939). Turin: Bollati Boringhieri.

Taddia, Irma. 1986. L'Eritrea Colonia, 1890-1952. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Taddia, Irma. 1990. 'At the Origin of the State/Nation Dilemma: Ethiopia, Eritrea and Ogaden in 1941', Northeast African Studies, Vol. 12 (2-3), pp. 157-170.

Tekeste Negash. 1987. Italian Colonialism in Eritrea, 1882-1941: policies, praxis and impact, Uppsala: Uppsala University Press.

Tekeste Negash. 1997. Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Federal Experience New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Tekeste Negash and Tronvoll, Kjetil. 2001. Brothers at War. Making Sense of the Eritrean-Ethiopian War, Oxford: J. Currey

Trevaskis, G. K. N.. 1960. A Colony in Transition: 1941-1952, London: Oxford University Press.

Tzehainesh Tekle. 1995. 'Eritrea: il processo di formazione di uno stato africano', in Elisabetta Grande (ed.), Transplant Innovation and Legal Tradition in the Horn of Africa. Modelli autoctoni e modelli d'importazione nei sistemi giuridici del Corno d'Africa, Turin: L'Harmattan Italia.

Uoldelul Chelati Dirar and Calchi Novati, Giampaolo. 2003. 'The Horn of Africa and Italy's Role. Forget Colonialism and Play Globalism.' Aleph, Vol. 1 , pp. 72-81.952, London: Oxford University Press.

Wrong, Michela. 2005. I Didn't Do It for You, New York: Harper Collins.

Yemane Mesghenna. 1988. Italian Colonialism. A Case of Study of Eritrea: 1869-1934, Studenlitteratur, Lund: University of Lund.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

The Lion of Judah at Camelot: U. S. Foreign Policy towards Ethiopia as Reflected in the Second State Visit of Emperor Haylä Selassé I to the United States

Theodore M. Vestal[1]

During his second state visit to the United States in 1963, Emperor Haylä Selassé, having just played a major role in creating the Organization of African Unity, met President John F. Kennedy to ask for arms to combat the rise of Greater Somalia. Kennedy wanted to expand Kagnew Station for space programs and was concerned about increased Communist activity in the Horn. The personal diplomacy of the two leaders resulted in more arms for Ethiopia and the maintenance of a strong U.S. presence in Ethiopia during the Cold War.

On the first day of October 1963, a Pennsylvania Railroad train pulled out of Philadelphia at 9:35 sharp bound for Washington, D.C.'s Union Station. Included in the trainset was the private railway carriage of Emperor Haylä Selassé of Ethiopia, Elect of God, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and King of Kings, on his second state visit to the United States. He was the guest of President John F. Kennedy, who had responded positively to the Emperor's lobbying to come to Washington to meet face to face and engage in personal diplomacy. In the Emperor's rail car sat the ten members of the official party, ministers and family members,[2] who listened to Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke, the U.S. State Department's Chief of Protocol, speaking in French and pointing out scenic landmarks along the way.

After leaving the suburbs, the train picked up speed and traveled southward at seventy-five miles per hour. The seventy-two year old Emperor wore a field marshal's uniform of tan and red and carried a long swagger stick. His Imperial Majesty (as protocol required the Emperor to be called) sat ramrod straight in his seat, a bit on edge. Official visitors to Washington usually flew from Andrews Air Force Base to the White House lawn by helicopter, but Haylä Selassé thought such an entry undignified for a man of his stature and demanded that he arrive by train. The State Department made arrangements for that to happen, and the entire visit was choreographed with grace and precision.

[1] Professor of Political Science, Oklahoma State University, 534 Math-Sciences Building, Stillwater, Oklahoma. 74078; ted.vestal@okstate.edu. He is the author of *Ethiopia: A Post-Cold War African State* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999).

[2] Members of the official party, limited to 10 by U.S. protocol, in addition to HIM included: Princess Hirut (Ruth) Desta, granddaughter of the Emperor; Ras Imru Haylä Selassé, cousin of the Emperor; Ketema Yifru, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs; Yilms Deressa, Minister of Finance; Teferra-Work Kidane-Wolde, Minister of the Imperial Court; Dr. Menassie Haile, Chief of the Political Section of HIM's Private Cabinet; Major General Wolde-Selassie Bereka; Brigadier General Assefa Demissi; Berhanu Dinke, Ambassador of Ethiopia to the United States; and Yohannes Kidane-Mariam, Private Secretary to HIM.

At 11:59 a.m. the train backed into Union Station and docked at the exact location where the Emperor could alight on the 140-foot red carpet laid out for the occasion. As Haylä Selassé stepped out of the car, the herald trumpets of the military band sounded a welcoming fanfare, and President Kennedy shook the Emperor's hand. Mrs. Kennedy, dressed in a black Oleg Cassini suit and wearing a signature pillbox hat, greeted the Emperor in flawless French. Haylä Selassé then proceeded down a receiving line of Washington's top brass official welcomers and a host of diplomats, many from African nations, as cannons fired a twenty-one gun salute at precisely three-second intervals from the bottom of Capitol Hill. Rousing shouts of "Long live the Lion of Judah" in Amharic roared through the vault of Union Station.[3]

In ceremonies at the station, President Kennedy said that since Haylä Selassé's earlier visit in 1954 the world had seen "one of the most extraordinary revolutions in history," the appearance of 29 independent countries. "Africa and Asia have been transformed into continents whose people are almost entirely removed from the subjugated status which was the lot of so many of them but a few years ago." The President paid tribute to the Emperor as a man "whose place in history is already assured." But "perhaps the most celebrated of all, is his leadership in Africa," said Kennedy referring to Haylä Selassé's role in the Summit Conference in Addis Ababa a few months earlier that had launched the Organization of African Unity (OAU).[4]

The diminutive Emperor replied in Amharic that he came to "explore ways and means of strengthening our cooperation; a task especially important when the face of the globe has so vastly changed, and the struggle for liberty for everyone, irrespective of race, continues and must be of concern to all of us." The President who suffered from severe back pain gamely and graciously stood attentively while Haylä Selassé made a lengthy response in a language he did not understand.

With the preliminary formalities completed, the Kennedys escorted the Emperor through an Honor Cordon comprised of personnel from all the branches of the military to a waiting limousine. The two heads of state rode in an open-topped blue limousine behind marching bands and troops in a motorcade on sun-dappled Pennsylvania Avenue. Thousands of Washingtonians lined the curbs between the station and the White House and cheered and clapped. The Emperor waved and saluted the enthusiastic crowds as Mr. Kennedy sat smiling beside him. Mrs. Kennedy followed in the next car, a bubble top limo, accompanied by the 33-year old Princess Ruth Desta, Haylä Selassé's granddaughter, and the Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States, Berhanou Dinke.

After the parade, the Emperor began a three-day marathon of speaking engagements and banquets. Chief Justice Earl Warren, joined by Attorney General Robert Kennedy and others, entertained Haylä Selassé and some members of his royal entourage aboard the Secretary of the Navy's white yacht, *Sequoia*, the "Rolls Royce of yachts," for luncheon on the Potomac. The Warrens had been the personal guests of the Emperor at Jubilee Palace in Addis Ababa earlier in June and probably knew him better than any other Washington officials. Warren had received "head of state treatment" while in

[3] Nan Robertson, "Kennedy Greets Selassie as Man History Will Recall," *New York Times*, 2 October 1963, 1:2; see also David Brinkley, "A State Visit," in *Brinkley's Beat* (New York: Random House, 2003).

[4] Sterling Seagrave, "Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie Greeted by President at Start of Visit," *Washington Post*, 2 October 1963, A4.

Ethiopia, and some American diplomats thought this a non-too-subtle hint as to how the Emperor expected to be royally treated during his state visit to the United States.

At 4:30, the Emperor attended a tea party, a spur of the moment affair, in the private presidential apartments of the White House just before his conference with President Kennedy. Mrs. Kennedy and daughter Caroline, almost six, greeted Haylä Selassé and enjoyed iced tea with him. The Emperor presented gifts: a large golden filigree jewelry case and a full length leopard coat for Mrs. Kennedy; a carved ivory Ethiopian girl figurine and Ethiopian dress and shama made especially for Caroline by the Empress Mennen Handicraft School; and a carved ivory Ethiopian warrior bearing a spear for John, Jr., almost three. Mrs. Kennedy donned the coat and thanked Haylä Selassé in French for the wonderful coat and added, "I am overcome." She escorted the Emperor down to the Rose Garden where the President greeted them. Said the President, "I wondered why you were wearing a fur coat in the garden," and then added his thanks.[5]

Kennedy and Haylä Selassé formally met at the White House for one hour and twenty-five minutes. The Emperor took the opportunity to affirm his favored bond with the United States, discussed African issues including Ethiopia's border strife with Somalia, Salazar's Portugal and Angola, apartheid South Africa, the civil war in Yemen with increased arms traffic in the Red Sea area, and the shifting balance of the Cold War. According to the official record, the Emperor also requested U.S. economic aid to promote stability in his kingdom and military aid including the training of Ethiopian military personnel in Ethiopia. Kennedy thanked Haylä Selassé for the continued use of Kagnew Station, a major U.S. military facility in Asmara. The Emperor pointed out that African nations criticized him for allowing the Americans to operate the communications center. The two heads of state agreed to maintain a "private channel" to keep in touch.[6]

That evening, the president honored His Imperial Majesty (HIM) with a white-tie dinner at the White House, the highest social occasion in Washington. While the guests were gathering Jacqueline Kennedy was flying to New York on the first leg of a two-week "strictly private" visit to Greece. In her absence, Rose Kennedy, the President's mother who was a year older than the Emperor, acted as hostess for the evening. Haylä Selassé wore his court uniform: an olive jacket, dark blue trousers, and myriad ribbons, medals, and gold braid. Altogether 129 guests, the important people of Washington and other VIPs, dined in formal splendor on green-bordered Truman china with gold tableware and were entertained in the East Room by the Robert Joffrey Ballet. In an after dinner toast, Kennedy hailed Haylä Selassé as a giant in world affairs for the last three decades. "There is really no comparable figure in the world today who held high responsibilities in the 1930s, who occupied and held the attention and the imagination of really almost all free countries in the mid-1930s, and still could, in the summer of 1963 in his own capital dominate the affairs of his continent…This is an unprecedented experience in the 20th century, and I know of only a few experiences in recent history which are in any way similar." The Emperor replied to the toast with deep feeling, thanking Kennedy for the aid and friendship given by the United States over the years to Ethiopia.[7]

---

[5] Dorothy McCardle, "Leopard Coat is Gift to First Lady," *Washington Post*, 2 October 1963, C3.

[6] Memo, Benjamin Reed to McGeorge Bundy, 2 October 1963, National Security Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 8/63-11/63, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA [hereafter JFKL].

[7] Dorthy McCardle, "Town Looks Up to Visiting Giant," *Washington Post*, 2 October 1963, C1.

Like other heads of state who visited the Kennedy White House, Haylä Selassé had fallen under the spell of the wit and charm of the President and First Lady and the uniquely hospitable treatment lavished by both Kennedys. In meetings with HIM, the President spoke simply and directly, as one world leader talking in confidence to another. He set forth American policy without apology, even when he knew it might disturb or displease the Emperor--as was the case in discussing Somalia. Kennedy was candid in not promising HIM things he could not deliver.[8] In turn, the Emperor seemed to admire the sensibility of the young President and his respect for the dignity of his guest. Of course, Jackie Kennedy, "*la belle Américaine*," with her flawless French and dazzling grace captivated the Emperor from the moment he stepped off the train. In short, the monarch was privy to the culture, beauty, and sophistication of a short-lived era that upgraded American pageantry and public discourse—Camelot before it became known as such. Events would soon create the mythology of Kennedy's Camelot, a gallant place of courageous deeds, glamorous spectacle and enduring mystique, but the Lion of Judah had drunk deeply from the stream of life-enhancing zest that flowed through that Washington kingdom in the Autumn of 1963.

Haylä Selassé had made a special request to lay a silver wreath at the Lincoln Memorial, and on the next morning, he did that in a stirring and somber ceremony. The Emperor ascended the Memorial steps between two cordons of American soldiers. He carried a glittering wreath made from 580 Ethiopian coins and weighing almost 50 pounds. The Emperor placed the wreath at the foot of the imposing statue of Abraham Lincoln, a man Haylä Selassé said had been "a symbol to all men who cherish freedom and equality as the most precious of God's gifts." Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall then led the Emperor to the side of the memorial where Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (delivered in November 1863) is chiseled in five-inch letters, and where an interpreter read it in Amharic.[9]

Next, it was off to Capitol Hill where the Emperor met Congressional leaders and addressed the U.S. Senate expressing the hope of his nation that independence will come soon to those African people "who are still under the bonds of colonialism."

Haylä Selassé then gave a state luncheon in honor of President Kennedy at a country club in Rockville, Maryland. The President and his party traveled to and from the event in two helicopters from the South lawn of the White House. At the luncheon, gifts were exchanged. The Emperor gave the President a handmade filigreed silver centerpiece in the shape of a fluted bowl, the symbolic lion, an autographed portrait photograph, and two Bibles, one a priceless 200-year old relic in Ge'ez, the ancient liturgical language of Ethiopia, and the other, a beautifully bound and inscribed New Testament. Kennedy gave Haylä Selassé a replica of the Washington-Bailey Sword, which General George Washington actually carried in battle during the Revolution; a Tiffany silver desk set; a 16mm motion picture projector with gold plaque; and an inscribed photograph in a silver frame.

At 3:15 p.m. the Emperor was at Georgetown University where an honorary degree of Doctorate of Humane Letter was conferred upon HIM. At 4:00, Haylä Selassé arrived at the White House where he had a final forty-five minute meeting with the President.

Jacqueline Kennedy and party while in Greece used the yacht *Christina* offered by Aristotle Onassis.

[8] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: JFK in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 557.

[9] Winzola McLendon, "Selassie Places Solid Silver Wreath made from Coins at Lincoln Shrine," *Washington Post*, 3 October 1963, 1.

The two leaders again discussed current problems of the African continent. Kennedy repeatedly emphasized the warmth of American friendship for Ethiopia and also affirmed U.S. support for Ethiopia in her border dispute with Somalia. Washington's position was that the United States needed to supply arms to Somalia to prevent that nation from turning to Communist powers for military aid. The Somalia issue was the only matter, officials said, that presented any problem during the conversation that was described as extremely friendly and smooth. The President promised to give careful consideration to Ethiopia's request for loans and other economic assistance to help finance its Five Year Plan, especially with the developments of the nation's rivers. In response to an invitation to come to Ethiopia extended by Haylä Selassé, the President "expressed his desire to arrange such a visit as soon as his schedule permitted." The meeting ended with the heads of state issuing a joint communiqué declaring that the still dependent territories of Africa had the right to freedom and independence.[10]

The Emperor then went to the Shoreham Hotel where he held a reception for the Chiefs of Diplomatic Missions and friends of Ethiopia in Washington. He and his party stood in a receiving line and shook the hands of 1,126 guests. This was followed immediately by a reception in honor of HIM given officially by the Ethiopian Ambassador.

The next morning, readers of the *Washington Post* were treated to an editorial entitled "Lion of Judah" that praised Haylä Selassé but added that "sentiment cannot blind the Emperor's well-wishers to signs of inefficiency and ruthlessness in the country's [Ethiopia's] government. But nevertheless the balance is highly favorable, and few African nations have brighter prospects." The editorial concluded that HIM's "gallant resistance (to the Italian Fascists) has earned him his prestige and the right to a respectful audience."[11] The Emperor's star still was bright, but some of the luster of a previous time had faded.

The Emperor's breakneck schedule continued on the third day in Washington. At ten in the morning, Acting Secretary of State George Ball met Haylä Selassé at his guest house, and by 11:00 HIM was at the State Department's West Auditorium for a press conference. The hall was largely filled with U.S. government employees, to swell the crowd to a size befitting royalty. The Emperor talked about the goals of Ethiopia's five-year economic plan and his meetings at the White House. He characterized his discussions with the President as very cordial but expressed regret that he was not successful in his efforts to get President Kennedy's full support in Ethiopia's dispute with Somalia. Even as Haylä Selassé was speaking heavy fighting was reported in the Ogaden. HIM was not satisfied with Kennedy's explanation of why the United States was giving military aid to Somalia. With Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams at his side, the Emperor said, the "validity" of the explanation "did not impress us very much."[12] Haylä Selassé asserted that if Ethiopia did not receive military aid matching what Somalia had obtained, she too would be forced to turn to the East. Kennedy agreed only to take HIM's request under consideration. The undisclosed U.S. strategy was to partially satisfy the Emperor's request as inexpensively as possible while assuring a stable, cohesive, and friendly government in Ethiopia.

[10] "Selassie, Kennedy Join Views on Free Africans," *Washington Post*, 3 October 1963, A5.
[11] *Washington Post,* 3 October 1963, A20.
[12] Arch Parsons, "Selassie Denied Full U.S. Aid in Somali Dispute," *Washington Post*, 4 October 1963, A8.

The audience applauded when the Emperor took leave of the podium for the elevator to the John Quincy Adams Room, where Secretary of State Dean Rusk was the host for a state luncheon for 130 guests. The U.S. Army Band string ensemble serenaded the diners seated at a horseshoe table for another sumptuous meal catered by French caterers. After lunch, Rusk accompanied HIM to the Naval Observatory where the Emperor again received military honors and passed through a final receiving line of ambassadors and officials before boarding a helicopter. The herald trumpets blew a farewell fanfare as Haylä Selassé ascended into the clouds on his way to Andrews Air Force Base and an awaiting plane to fly him to New York City where his state visit continued.

Prelude to the Washington Visit

While the Byzantine ritual and splendor enthralled the American public and stroked the egos of the Ethiopian visitors, events before and after the Emperor's state visit were to have an impact on American foreign policy. Much had happened since Haylä Selassé had brought his brand of personal diplomacy to Washington in 1954. Although Ethiopian government spokesmen frequently complained that the United States was not providing adequate support, there was a sharp increase in military and economic cooperation during the Eisenhower administration. Eisenhower basically approved an arms-for-base-rights agreement, and Ethiopia received most of the arms the Emperor had requested and a military training mission. In addition, Ethiopia sought aid in the development of its economy, and political support for the incorporation of Eritrea, control over the Ogaden, and backing against any threats to its sovereignty. For its part, the United States had solidified its claim to Kagnew Station and access to a strategic locale on the rim of the Middle East. Other major goals of American foreign policy included keeping Soviet and Egyptian influence out of the Horn of Africa and a pro-Western government empowered in Ethiopia. There had been a remarkable gain in good will towards Ethiopia by Americans as a result of HIM's first state visit, and Haylä Selassé had become a bona fide international celebrity.[13]

The state visits of Emperor Haylä Selassé to the United States were part of a grand mosaic of the foreign policy of both governments that involved a host of official and unofficial actors. In the monarchy of Ethiopia, power was concentrated and most foreign policy decisions were made by the Emperor and his Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the democracy of the United States, power was widely shared and decisions and their implementation rested with the President and the White House staff, the Secretary of State and the bureaucracy of the State Department, the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia and his staff, and military and intelligence officers in Washington and in the field. Foreign policy for a specific country took place in a context of America's world-wide objectives as well as those for a continent or region. What then were U.S. attitudes towards Ethiopia at the time of Haylä Selassé's second state visit and who were the major actors bringing reality to policies?

The U.S. State Department relegated Sub-Saharan Africa, not directly threatened by the USSR and Cold War rivalries, to the periphery of U.S. foreign policy concerns. Nevertheless, with colonialism in Africa fast coming to an end, State finally established a Bureau of African Affairs in 1957. That year there were more Foreign Service

[13] Theodore M. Vestal, "Emperor Haile Selassie's First State Visit to the United States in 1954: The Oklahoma Interlude," 1 *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 133-152 (2003).

personnel in West Germany than in all of Africa. But the vital nature of the Kagnew Communications Center put more thumb on the scale for the weighing of Ethiopia's value to American security interests. Thus, in the African context, Ethiopia was of prime concern to the United States.

Also in 1957, the emerging ideology of Greater Somalia posed a threat to Ethiopia. At that time the United States announced support for the unification of British Somaliland and Italian Somalia after they achieved independence in 1960. This perturbed Haylä Selassé who was extremely sensitive to any derogation of Ethiopian sovereignty. The Emperor's fear that the United Kingdom and United States were pushing for a "Greater Somalia" became an obsession. In response, he played the Cold War card of cozying up to the Eastern Bloc or attending conferences of non-aligned nations, tactics he frequently repeated whenever he perceived that America was not treating his country properly.

1960 was an *annus horribilis* for Haylä Selassé. On 1 July, Somalia gained independence creating what HIM regarded as a hostile neighbor on his eastern borders. The Emperor feared that Somalia backed by the United Arab Republic, both Islamic nations, would follow the Italian example and invade his nation—a fear that haunted him the rest of his life. Then in December, while Haylä Selassé was traveling in South America, there was an attempted *coup d'état* led by the Emperor's Body Guard. The wily Emperor, with some help from the U.S. military, survived, but the monarchy had been stripped of its claim to universal acceptance and the tensions between traditional and modern forces within the country had been exposed. Assistant Secretary Williams reported that Ethiopia had been deeply affected by the unsuccessful coup of December 1960 and would never be the same again. This was followed by a period of deep personal sorrow for Haylä Selassé. His wife, Empress Menen, died in August 1961, and a little over a year later, his son, Prince Sahle Selassie, also died. Arthur Richards, the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia at the time, speculated that these deaths had made Haylä Selassé "tired and depressed" and a lonely figure of a man.[14]

At the end of the Eisenhower administration, the United States was caught off guard by the speed of decolonization in Africa. Most of the European colonies received little attention from the United States because they were in the "sphere of influence" of allies.

The election of John F. Kennedy in 1960, however, brought to the office a President with a unique record on Africa. Kennedy had served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and became chair of the African Subcommittee. Early in his presidency, Kennedy recommended "a strong Africa" as a goal of American policy. He lent rhetorical support to African nations, doubled their foreign aid, and sent Peace Corps Volunteers to serve in many of the sub-Saharan countries. According to Kennedy aide Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the President "became, in effect, Secretary of the State for the Third World. Assistant Secretaries of State in charge of developing areas dealt as much with him as with the Secretary of State." Further, Kennedy "conducted his Third World campaign to an unprecedented degree through talks and correspondence with heads of state"—especially those of African nations.[15] An important milestone in this campaign was the passage early in the Kennedy Administration of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 that reconfigured the government's development assistance activities and created

[14] Telegram, Richards to Sec of State, 19 January 1962, National Security Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 6/63-7/63, JFKL.
[15] Schlesinger, 509.

the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as the primary vehicle for foreign aid.

When the newly appointed Ambassador of Ethiopia, Berhanu Dinke, presented his credentials to the President in August 1962, Kennedy talked about Ethiopian development and affirmed "our desire to be associated intimately with the peoples of Africa in your quest for those things which you desire for yourselves: peace, your continued development as free and independent nations, the opportunity to develop your institutions in your own way."[16] To assist Ethiopia in attaining such goals, the first group of 244 Peace Corps Volunteers, the largest contingent sent to any country at that time, arrived in Addis Ababa in September 1962. They were greeted by the Emperor, who thanked the Volunteers for coming to "help drive out ignorance" from his country.

Meanwhile in the Horn of Africa, Eritrea that since the 1950s had been "an autonomous state federated with Ethiopia" was absorbed into Ethiopia as a province in 1962. This action, seen by some as a violation of a UN mandate, provoked strong international opposition—but not from the United States which viewed Haylä Selassé as a preferable landlord of Kagnew Station rather than other possibilities.[17] While the Emperor gained Eritrean ports on the Red Sea, he encountered heavy seas in the U.S. Congress. Members of the House Appropriations subcommittee criticized foreign aid officials for giving Haylä Selassé what some of them called a "royal yacht," complete with air-conditioning and gold-colored wallpaper in his stateroom. The ship, actually a converted U.S. seaplane tender was to serve as the flagship of the Ethiopian Navy. The storm about the "floating palace" that had been given to Ethiopia as a "political consideration" soon blew over.[18]

Two months later the United States was at sea with weightier matters on its agenda: its naval blockade of Cuba during the missile crisis. At its conclusion, the Emperor cabled Kennedy: "We commend the statesmanship and judgment which have averted the catastrophe in Cuba where only a few short days ago the future of humanity appeared to hang in the balance. We urge that the settlement of the Cuba problem be used as a point of departure for the resolution of other pressing problems which threaten the preservation of peace."[19]

In the early 1960s, the "decade of Africa," Haylä Selassé played a role in bringing about what many observers thought might brighten prospects for peace in Africa. The Emperor enhanced his reputation as an elder statesman of the continent by his astute leadership in the creation of the OAU. He also had continued his role as a Cold War ally of the United States and as a supporter of United Nations collective security as demonstrated by his sending Ethiopian troops to help quell the Congo Crisis in 1960.

In October 1961 in Addis Ababa, HIM made a splendid gift of one of his palaces, the Guennete Leul, and its grounds to the people of Ethiopia for a newly founded Haylä Selassé I University, the nation's first university. USAID was to play a prominent role in the early success of the university. Another significant U.S. initiative was agreed to in

[16] President Kennedy's reply to remarks of Ambassador Berhane Dinke, 29 August 1962, JFK President's Office files, Box 116, Ethiopia, General, 1962, JFKL.

[17] Theodore M. Vestal, "Consequences of the British Occupation of Ethiopia During World War II," 18 *Horn of Africa* 60-69 (2000).

[18] UPI, "Selassie's Gift Yacht Runs into Heavy Seas of Protest in Congress," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 August 1962.

[19] Cable, Haile Selassie to JFK, 30 Oct 62, JFK President's Office files, Box 116, Ethiopia, General, 1962, JFKL.

January 1963: a $10 million, four-year project for the aerial photographing and mapping of the entire country.

On the eve of Haylä Selassé's state visit in 1963, the U.S. "country team" in Addis Ababa analyzed the situation in Ethiopia and recommended possible U.S. actions to speed reforms. The Americans noted that "even without Kagnew, U.S. influence would be of great importance because of heavy public commitment U.S. has already made here." The size, population, and location give Ethiopia strategic importance. "For better or worse" the United States was "inescapably identified with Haylä Selassé and the present regime." The country team worried about the "repressive nature of present police state alienating increasing numbers of Ethiopians from all classes." The analysis concluded: "We believe that regime is too aware of the tangible benefits which flow to Ethiopia as a result of Kagnew to attempt to secure its removal. They realize it accounts in large measure for generous military assistance programs and other evidences of U.S. favor, both past and anticipated."[20]

The State Department viewed the Emperor's visit as an opportunity for the United States to do honor to HIM as an important world figure. Indeed, at that time Haylä Selassé was a more significant world leader than he had been during the previous decade. In meetings at the White House, Kennedy and the Emperor could discuss major issues confronting the world and those of specific pertinence to relations between the two countries. Finally, State hoped that the personal relationship between leaders established during the visit would contribute to the success of whatever negotiations might subsequently ensue.[21]

In the spring of 1963 Kennedy's newly-appointed ambassador to Ethiopia, Edward M. Korry, a former journalist and editor for *Look* magazine, arrived in Addis Ababa and was to be a significant presence in U.S. policy towards Ethiopia and Africa during the next four years. In a letter to the President, Korry described the positive impact Kennedy's speeches on civil rights and the Cold War had on the Emperor who described them as "masterpieces." Wrote Korry, "All these recent events made him that much more eager to meet you again (HIM says he met you in your Senatorial capacity in 1954)."[22]

Korry was a proactive ambassador and shortly after his arrival, he began to entertain Ethiopians at the embassy in a manner never before seen. As he described it, he "threw 'an enormous bash' which produced the highest percentage turnout and the greatest number in absolute terms of invited Ethiopians in the history of our [U.S.] presence here—some 300 of the best minds in the country."

But the new ambassador soon encountered problems in U.S.-Ethiopian relations from the perspective of frustrated officials of the Imperial Ethiopian Government (IEG). They informed Korry that the Emperor was only going through with the state visit to the United States "because it was too late to back out." The IEG was convinced that "nothing would come out of it." For Korry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rehearsed the accomplishments of the IEG that had provided the U.S. Government with vital military facilities, refrained from recognizing the Peoples Republic of China, steered clear of any close ties with the Soviets, provided troops for the UN's Korea and Congo

[20] Airgram, Sheldon Vance to Dept State, Country Team Analysis of Situation and Recommendations on Possible US Actions to Speed Reforms in Et, 19 Dec 62, JFK President's Office files, Box 116, Ethiopia, General, 1962, JFKL.

[21] Airgram, Ball to Amembassy AA, 30 April 63, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 11/62-5/63, JFKL.

[22] Letter, Korry to JKF, 28 June 1963, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 6/63-7/63, JFKL.

operations, been a moderating influence in African affairs, and been responsible for the best possible OAU Charter at the Summit, "for whose success it also was largely responsible." By comparison, pointed out the IEG spokesman, Somalia had done none of those sterling deeds, but the United States was granting help to the new nation.[23] By hearing the Foreign Ministry's lament, Korry was introduced to the IEG's now-you-see-it, now-you-don't, one-step-forward, two-steps-back rhythm of policies for getting the maximum amount of dollars from the United States as "rent" for Kagnew Station. Always implied in these rhetorical exchanges was the subtle threat that if a substantial increase in grants of military assistance was not forthcoming, the Asmara facility would be in jeopardy. Such ploys frequently were used by the IEG to demand U.S. attention to its perceived needs just before an important importunate moment. Public criticism of the United States of this sort played well with some segments of Ethiopian society and also burnished Ethiopia's non-aligned credentials.

Kagnew was one of four world-wide U.S. bases for future satellite communications in addition to regular military uses. Ethiopia made full use of this fact in negotiations for economic and military aid—even though the IEG remained solidly in the pro-Western camp. The United States and Ethiopia had signed a secret executive agreement in 1960 to equip and train a 40,000 man Ethiopian army, and the United States had reaffirmed its opposition to any activities threatening Ethiopia's territorial integrity. As part of the agreement, the U.S. Department of Defense and the IEG carried on negotiations to expand Kagnew by more than 800 acres, build enormous installations including larger antennae, and double the U.S. personnel on the base in anticipation of future space-probes. In exchange, the United States was to give the IEG $2 million in military assistance over a five year period. A new Kagnew Station lease finally was signed on 29 July 1963.

Three weeks later in a meeting at the Dire Dawa Palace, the Emperor subjected Korry to what the Ambassador called the "lengthiest and bitterest criticism of U.S. policies in the Horn." In a thirty minute "excoriating of Korry," Haylä Selassé, "loaded for bear" but in a tone courteous and dignified, lambasted the United States for every perceived slight, shortcoming, or error committed against Ethiopia. Bewailed the Emperor, "What had the Ethiopian people done to deserve such treatment at the hands of the U.S. Government? It fills our hearts with sorrow." HIM said he intended to make a similar presentation to President Kennedy during his upcoming state visit.[24] This exchange was followed by attempts by well-placed Ethiopians to cancel the Emperor's trip to the United States.

Cooler heads prevailed, however, and the state visit occurred as scheduled. Haylä Selassé was persuaded that U.S. aid was the key to Ethiopia's development efforts to affect substantial tangible improvement in his people's well being and thus bolster his prestige and undercut his critics.

On 29 September, HIM and his party were flown by Presidential jet from Addis Ababa to Geneva. The next day they flew nonstop to Philadelphia, where amid pomp and ceremony, Haylä Selassé paid a late afternoon visit to Independence Hall. After an overnight stay in the City of Brotherly Love, the royal party left by train for the U.S. capital. They were escorted on their eight-day trip to the United States by Ambassador Korry.

[23] Telegram, Korry to Sec State, 25 July 1963, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 6/63-7/63, JFKL.
[24] Telegram, Korry to Sec State, 21 Aug 63, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 8/63-11/63, JFKL.

A Triumphant Return to New York City

Having concluded his business with the U.S. Government, HIM continued his state visit with the international community and the American public. Accompanied by Secretary of State Rusk, the royal party arrived at New York's LaGuardia Airport at 4:45 p.m. on 3 October. There the Emperor was greeted by Mayor Robert Wagner, Adali Stevenson, the chief U.S. delegate to the UN, and fifty members of foreign delegations to the UN. That evening Mayor Wagner was the host at a reception in honor of HIM at the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.[25]

At noon on the next day, Haylä Selassé joined a very select group of people--those who have been honored two or more times with New York City's traditional welcome—a ticker-tape parade up Broadway. An enthusiastic crowd of onlookers, about ten deep, cheered the short, black-clad figure who got out of his limousine to walk the last five blocks of "hero's mile" from the Battery to City Hall. He was greeted in Amharic by some Ethiopians shouting, "May he live long for our glory." They were rewarded with a rare wide smile by HIM. The Emperor "worked the crowd" and veered to the curb to shake hands and to exchange personal greeting with admiring spectators. He was even accosted by a woman seeking his autograph. U.S. protocol officers and New York police officials described the city's welcome as the warmest since President Kennedy's first visit after his inauguration.[26]

At the conclusion of the eventful, confetti-strewn procession, Haylä Selassé was greeted by Mayor and Mrs. Wagner at City Hall. The Emperor, dressed in a dark double breasted business suit and the image of royal dignity, recalled his 1954 visit and parade and his receiving the city's Medal of Honor. He added, "We hope our second visit helps to strengthen the already good relations between Ethiopia and the United States."

Haylä Selassé then was driven to the United Nations where he was guest of honor at a formal luncheon for 60 hosted by Secretary General U Thant. The Emperor deposited with the Secretary General the charter of the OAU signed by the heads of 32 African states at the Addis Ababa conference earlier in May. At 3:00 HIM addressed a jam-packed attentive General Assembly session. A hushed silence hung on his measured phrases. He recalled a day 27 years earlier when he made a vain appeal to the League of Nations to help his country against aggression. In his remarks, the Emperor referred to the League as the U.N.'s "discredited predecessor." Haylä Selassé said, "History testifies to the accuracy of the warning that I gave in 1936." He had words of praise for the organization that succeeded the League. The UN's action in Asia, in the Congo, and in Suez "has thus far proved an effective safeguard against unchecked aggression and unrestricted violation of human rights." The monarch stated proudly: "The UN is perhaps the last hope for world survival." Speaking at a time when the Civil Rights Movement was struggling to end *de jure* segregation in the United States, the Emperor said: "There is no one who is not sad about the current racial conflict in the United States." But he found consolation in the efforts of the Kennedy Administration to find a just solution. The Emperor concluded: "It is the sacred duty of the UN to win real equality for all men everywhere." When he finished his thirty-five minute speech, the audience rose as one and gave HIM a standing ovation.[27] It was in its way, historic

[25] Hedrick Smith, "Selassie Is Still Unconvinced by U.S. Reason for Somali Aid," *New York Times*, 4 October 1963.
[26] "Selassie Strolls Amid Ticker Tape," *New York Times*, 5 October 1963, 3.
[27] Sam Pope Brewer, "Selassie at U.N., Recalls 1936 Plea to League," *New York Times*, 5 October 1963, 1; Darius S. Jhabvala, "Once More He Prods the Conscience of the World," *Herald Tribune*, 5 October 1963, 1; Louis B. Fleming, "Selassie Addresses U.N. Assembly, Praises Kennedy's Racial

compensation for Haylä Selassé, now so widely hailed and so deferentially received. At that moment, his appeal to the League of Nations that had seemed so fruitless was in vain no longer.

The Emperor's address to the UN was the highlight of his New York stay. He also enjoyed meeting General Omar Bradley and having power luncheons and dinners with Mayor Wagner and the Salzbergers of the New York Times and a mining executive aboard his 190 foot yacht in New York Harbor. HIM received 100 Ethiopian students in his suite at the Plaza Hotel and later in the day went to the R.C.A. Building to make a video tape for a Sunday broadcast of NBC's "Meet the Press" radio-television show. He wore a military uniform and spoke in Amharic with a member of his cabinet, Dr. Menassie Haile, translating for him. The Emperor forcefully said "the UN should seek to solve the problem of colonialism. If all other methods fail, the African states will have to consider the use of force against the remnants of colonialism on the continent."[28] He still believed in the efficacy of collective security.

The royal party had planned to fly to Florida and tour the National Aeronautics and Space Agency, but a hurricane caused the tour to be cancelled and Haylä Selassé to prolong his stay in New York City.[29] The Emperor's state visit to the United States ended on 7 October with Haylä Selassé saying some extremely complimentary things about America at Idlewild Airport. He said his talks with President Kennedy had strengthened the existing cordial relations between Ethiopia and the United States. Then he flew on a Canadian Department of Transport plane to Ottawa where he began a three day state visit.

The Results of Haylä Selassé's Second State Visit to the United States

The Emperor's second state visit to the United States was again a resounding public relations triumph. The monarch's Q rating—how well people are known—was astronomical. Still a commanding figure, slight of stature, whose beard was flecked with gray, Haylä Selassé won over the American public with just the right combination of exotic royal spectacle and dignity. He was an iconic personality--that is anybody that is celebrated. And celebrated he was! At a time when there was no internet, no satellite communications, no CNN, no network television news—no way of knowing quickly or reliably what was going on 7,000 miles away, the Emperor seemed to stand tall for ideas then deemed virtuous in the United States. His Christian genteelism, reliability as a Cold War ally, service as a moderating voice in the councils of African nations and among the non-aligned countries, and staunch support of the United Nations and the concept of collective security played well in Peoria and on the sidewalks bedecked in fluttering flags and royal crests in America's political and cultural capitals. Whenever he appeared in public there was still a critical mass of spectators whose graying heads testified to memories of 1935 to lead successive waves of applause. The Emperor basked in the admiration, and having learned from his first state visit, played up every opportunity to enhance his celebrity--especially with the photogenic Kennedys.

Upon his return to Ethiopia in October, HIM played a mediating role in settling a dispute between Algeria and Morocco—an action appreciated by the United States that sought order in the Maghreb. More troubling to Americans was the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from the UN force in the Congo on 20 November. Haylä Selassé

Policies," *Washington Post*, 5 October 1963, A9.

[28] "End Colonialism, Selassie Urges," *New York Times*, 7 October 63, 3.

[29] Selassie Cancels Trip to Florida," *New York Times*, 6 October 1963, 81.

ordered two battalions home because the troops were urgently needed in view of Somalia's decision to accept a Soviet offer of $30 million in military assistance.[30] The United States immediately terminated its half million dollar military aid program to Somalia but stayed in that country with limited economic assistance and a Peace Corps program. Three months later, when Somali forces attacked Ethiopia and Kenya to create Greater Somalia, HIM might have said "I told you so" while repulsing the invaders.

Although Ambassador Korry had admonished the President that "trying to out-Byzantine" the Emperor "would be futile and counterproductive" and that Kennedy therefore should "spell out details of the U.S. program and justification from the start,"[31] Washington tried to outsmart HIM by providing a few of the IEG's requested items but holding back on others by insisting that first a survey team should be sent to Ethiopia to determine what was really needed. The United States shied away from the Emperor's new military requests believing that economic and governmental reform and a better trained military were more pressing needs.

After reviewing the survey team's findings, the United States offered to give the Ethiopian Army additional training but no more equipment. The Emperor had requested $20 million in military assistance, but the United States only agreed to give $2 million over a five-year period. More significant in terms of military hardware was the agreement for the Americans to send a squadron of twelve F-5 jet fighters for delivery in 1966. By that action, Ethiopia became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa and one of the few third world countries to receive supersonic jet fighters. For its part, the United States expanded Kagnew with the "Stonehouse project" that added in 1964 huge parabolic antennas to intercept Soviet space transmissions.[32]

Did the personal diplomacy between the heads of state of Ethiopia and the United States pay off? If friendship on the international political scene is a pay off, then the answer is yes. The Emperor returned to Addis Ababa a closer friend of the President and of the United State than before he arrived. Throughout the rest of his reign, he remained a staunch ally of America, a rarity in Sub-Saharan Africa during the Cold War. From another perspective, the end result of the short-lived Haylä Selassé-Kennedy diplomacy was that both sides got what they wanted: the Ethiopians, the military hardware they desired although not as costly nor as modern as they had sought; and the United States expanded facilities at Kagnew Station and maintained a strong presence in Ethiopia in the face of a spreading Soviet and Chinese activities in the region.

Who knows what different political outcomes might have resulted from the Haylä Selassé-Kennedy friendship and the possible visit of the President to Ethiopia? Would the private communication and candor preferred by Kennedy have paid off to the mutual benefit of both nations in additional ways?

The questions remain academic. The personal ties between the leaders were ended by the assassination of the President in Dallas only a few weeks after Haylä Selassé's visit and three days after the Emperor withdrew his troops from the Congo. HIM returned to the United States for Kennedy's funeral to honor the fallen leader. Haylä Selassé was a colorful figure in that largest gathering of heads of state in the 20th Century, and a new chapter in U.S.-Ethiopian relations was begun.

---

[30] Memo, Benjamin Reed to McGeorge Bundy, 2 Oct 63, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 8/63-11/63, JFKL.
[31] Letter, Korry to JKF, 28 June 1963, NS Files, Box 69, Ethiopia, General, 6/63-7/63, JFKL.
[32] David H. Shinn, "One Hundred Years of American-Ethiopian Relations," Unpublished paper, n.d., 24.

References

Brinkley, David. 2003 *Brinkley's Beat*. New York: Random House.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. Jr. 1965. *A Thousand Days: JFK in the White House*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Shinn, David H. "One Hundred Years of American-Ethiopian Relations." Unpublished paper, n.d.

Vestal, Theodore M. 2000. "Consequences of the British Occupation of Ethiopia During World War II." *Horn of Africa*, Vol. 18, pp. 60-69.

Vestal, Theodore M. 2003. "Emperor Haile Selassie's First State Visit to the United States in 1954: The Oklahoma Interlude." *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 1, pp. 133-152.

In: ***Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,*** **ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim 2009**

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY IN THE SHADOW OF THE DERG, 1974-1991

Randi Rønning Balsvik[1]

This paper explores aspects of the relationship between the Addis Ababa University and the state after the fall of Emperor Haile Sellassie. It deals with the conditions given for free expression among students during the time of the military regime, 1974-1991, the regime's use of the students for bringing the revolution to the countryside, the students' opposition to military rule, the deadly conflicts on the civilian left as well as the killings of unknown numbers of intellectuals and students by the state.

The destructive relationship between African states and universities has made students pay a heavy price for their struggle for free expression.[2] It is also commonly acknowledged that the capacity for independent thinking and expression have not been encouraged within African universities.[3] Indeed, persecution has often been the reward for speaking out in favour of civil and political rights. The struggle for "university autonomy" and "academic freedom" has a longstanding history in the development of universities worldwide. When legitimate methods of voicing concern on public issues were scarce, staff and, in particular, students of African universities have taken cover under "academic freedom", because they in reality were denied freedom of expression and assembly.[4]Over the past three decades, institutes of higher education all over Africa have been important, although exceedingly painful, practice grounds for the development of a democratic political culture. Crises and closures of higher institutions of learning have been rampant on a continent where only about 5 percent of the relevant age group has been enrolled, as against nearly 60 percent in the western world. Ethiopian enrolment is considerably lower than the African average. [5]

The development of student protest in Ethiopia preceded that of many other African countries after the liberation. The student movement became a dominant factor in the fall of Haile Selassie's regime in 1974 and in the political direction taken by the military dictatorship that took over from the imperial polity.[6] The students had contributed significantly to creating whatever political consciousness existed when the crisis came in February 1974 that led to the demise of the imperial regime. What can be called the "intellectuals" or the "civilian left" ,of the teachers and trade unions having their roots in the student movement at home and abroad, drove the revolution forward.

---

1 Professor of the Department of History, University of Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø, Norway.
2 Balsvik 1998.
3 Ade Ajayi, Lameck Goma and Ampah Jonson , 1996.
4 *Africa Watch*, April 1991.
5 World Bank. 2000. Higher Education….Statistical tables.
6 Randi Rønning Balsvik, *Haile Selassie's Students: Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution 1952-1977*, Michigan State University Press 1985. The following is drawn from the research for this book as well as from the article by the same author: "An Important Root of the Ethiopian Revolution: The Student Movement" in Abebe Zegeye & Siegfried Pausewang (eds.), *Ethiopia in Change: Peasantry, Nationalism and Democracy*, British Academic Press 1994.

In the autumn of 1974, a military junta, the *Derg,* established itself. The university was a troubled place, with the disruption of most regular activities throughout the academic year 1973-74, as well as during the autumn of 1974. [7] From the first day of the massive demonstrations that followed February 1974, the students stopped attending classes and were at the forefront of forces that ended the imperial order. There existed neither the trust nor the patience for the idea that the system could transform and reform itself. Political suppression under Haile Sellassie had prevented the development of leadership within civil society and a political debate about the future of Ethiopia. Repression had also secured that only the really true believers of Marxist- Leninism-Mao tse Tungs's thoughts gained the hegemony among students, there was no place for doubtful reflections. Only the military had the power and organization to take over the reins of the state.

A number of sources from 1974 illustrate the situation within the university, the demands for reinstatement of student unions and paper, *Struggle*, and the views of student activists on university autonomy and the political direction of the state.[8] The government was admonished to declare a national emergency with regard to the famine-stricken areas, and grant equal status to all religions.[9] The "progressive" sections of the military were seen as co-partners in the struggle for the "immediate establishment of a provisional people's government".[10]

In September 1974 students were again allowed to form their union and publish what was to become the last issue of *Struggle.*[11] It is significant that the editorial heading was "Power to the Peoples" (not just "people"), indicating that the question of nationalities had not been forgotten. In the discourse that took place during the autumn of 1974, students were to struggle in co-operation with the "left wing" of the military to form a "Provisional Democratic Government" that would eventually lead to a "Democratic Republic". Political parties were to be formed and the "heroic Ethiopian masses" were admonished to "send the Lion to the Zoo", to "throw the crown into the museum and eliminate the blue-blooded blood suckers!!" The *Derg* government had good reasons to believe that student rhetoric could serve a useful purpose in their attempts to legitimize their own seizure of power.

The zämäĉa

The government created the *zämäĉa, the development through cooperation campaign,* unique in the African context, as a programme in which every student would be required to take part, in order to implement the changes to be brought about by the revolution. In order to obtain legitimacy, the military regime had to take into consideration the political demands that had been raised, particularly in the student movement, over the last ten to fifteen years. It had to deliver development, driven by the demands of the civilian left. The government also wanted students out of the urban areas due to their ability to create spectacular demonstrations and situations of crises.

[7] Haile Selassie I University (hereafter HSIU) From the President To: University Community, 20 December 1973. (IES Library, Manuscript Collection)
[8] HSIU From: The President To: The University Community, 13 March 1974, IES Library Manuscript Collection 2395/05;
[9] HSIU To: The Prime Minister's Office from the Executive of USUAA, 23 April 1974, ibid.
[10] HSIU To: The Student Body From: Executive Committee of USUAA Congress, ibid. 2395/05/84.
[11] *Struggle* 26 September 1974 (HSIU/USUAA)

In spite of the government announcing time and again their intention of drafting a new constitution that would give Ethiopia a federal structure of autonomous regions,[12] nationalize landed property of the aristocracy without compensation,[13]oppositional agitation did not subside.[14] The students did not want a military dictatorship, nor did the leadership of the labour movement, nor the teachers. It was looked upon as a dishonourable replacement of the imperial regime. Their desire, however unrealistic, was for the military to act as intermediaries prior to a democratically elected "people's government". A great struggle took place between the university community at large and the government. [15] Students were told that their role was to create the conditions considered to be a prerequisite before civilian and democratic rule could be installed.[16].

Large student demonstrations in Addis Ababa and the Agricultural College in Alemaya on October 11 1974 demanded laws about land redistribution as a prerequisite for any participation in the development campaign.[17] Scholarshipstudents had come from abroad in the summer of 1974 (EPRP), and in early 1975 (Meison) The publication of papers from both of these groups appeared before the start of the campaign. (*Democracia, The Voice of the Masses)* The formation of embryo political parties, particularly among students and former students, like the EPRP (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party) and MEISON (All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement) became a factor in the development of events. Strong pressure from thousands of young people waiting to go out on the *zämäča* hastened the promulgation of very radical land redistribution laws, which took place in March 1975, just a few months after the students had departed. The historian Bahru Zewde has characterized these laws as "one of the most radical land reform proclamations that any regime has ever issued".[18]

The participants [19] were both women and men. Approximately six thousand university students and teachers, and nearly fifty thousand secondary school students from all over the country, were sent to 437 places in the countryside to build schools and clinics, latrines and wells with the local people. They were also to bring literacy and knowledge of hygiene to remote places. For the first time, literacy material was prepared in five languages, demonstrating the initial concern of the new regime with the "question of nationalities", which had proven to be so explosive when it was first raised by student activists in 1969.[20] The students were also to organize peasant associations and handle the redistribution of land, and in addition they were to aid the formation of women's and youth associations. In short, their task was the huge one of bringing the revolution to the countryside, of emancipating the peasant who had previously had to prostrate himself and kiss the feet of his landlord while presenting him with half of his family's agricultural produce.

---

12 *Ethiopian Herald*, 18, 21 September 1974.
13 *Ethiopian Herald,* 24 September 1974: Editorial: Land to the Tiller.
14 *Ethiopian Herald*, 19 September 1974: Military Council Gives Warning to People Opposing the Change.
15 *Ethiopian Herald,* 29 September 1974: Editorial: Education first!, and An Open Letter to our University Students by Assefa Tiruneh.
16 *Ethiopian Herald*, 6 October 1974: Yacob Wolde-Mariam: Speaking Man to Man; *Ethiopian Herald, 13* October 1974.Editorial : United we stand, and 15 October 1974. Yared Hailemariam. The student Ruling class in HSIU.
17 Andargachew 1993:73.
18 Bahru op.cit.:242.
19 *Ethiopian Herald*, 6 November 1974.
20 Balsvik 1985.

The report,[21] written after the campaign, contains more about the intentions than the achievements. It demonstrates an initial, very strong optimism and a very high level of ambition as to what changes student intervention could obtain in the field. [22]

The students went out on the mission half consenting enthusiastically and half feeling that they were being forced, both by the military and by circumstances. The mass rally and parade on December 22, organized by the government, the participants were fired with emotion, shouting "Viva Mengistu." As events unfolded, the perception of having been forced to join increased. The regime had threatened in no uncertain terms to cut off those who refrained from joining the campaign from any further education or employment in Ethiopia.

A ten-point policy statement announced that there was to be equality between peoples, languages and religions. There was to be no Amhara nor Christian supremacy. Islam was to be recognized officially. The right to own land was to be restricted to those who worked the land. The programme upset a hierarchy that was deeply rooted in the people's mentalities.[23] However, only when the proclamations concerning the redistribution of rural land in March 1975, and the same for urban land a few months later, did students feel that they were embarking on the process of profound change that was longed for. The assignment of campaign participants was directed toward the formation of peasant associations in the countryside and urban administrative neighbourhood councils in the towns.[24]

The task was formidable, and the trust in the students likewise. The tension in the countryside, the zeal of the campaign students and the resistance of the landowners, supported by many of the local police and administrators who had also invested in land, led to life-threatening situations. Students had obtained a lot, but the activists were not willing to give the military regime a chance. Students had contributed to the atmosphere of emergency and immediacy where there was little time for reflections nor debate (had it been allowed) on the steps to take in the course of the revolution. Free expression as experienced in the early part of the revolutionary process had soon come to a stop.

In the manuscript section of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies there is a collection of clandestine papers, written mostly in Amharic, often undated, by *zämäča* campaign participants, The analysis of social and economic conditions in the country is a central focus, together with the demand for democratic elections and a peoples' government, and an avalanche of attacks on the military, "fascist" government, whose practice was said to be so different from its revolutionary proclamations.

The content of one of the few dated issues of the *Voice of the Zemach* (Hidar 14, 1968 E.C.), contains an uncompromising quest for democracy, attacks the *Derg*'s policy in Eritrea, asks the government to stop the "fascist" measures against the people of Eritrea and instead find a democratic way to let the people assert their right to self-determination. Eleven demands are presented to the government, such as respecting free peasant associations, destroying reactionary landlords, arming the rural population, disarming the landlords, a countrywide organization for campaigners, releasing campaigners from prison, announcing the names of the dead students and paying compensation to their families, electing campaign leaders democratically, and allowing

[21] The Development Through Co-operation Campaign's Summary Report 1967/68 E.C. Sene 30th 1968, 112 pages IES, Addis Ababa University.
[22] Institute of Development Research, IDR, HSIU: *Information Bulletin*, November 1974: Edget Behebret Zemacha.
[23] Ibid.: 113.
[24] *Addis Zemen* Nehasse 8, 1967.

workers' and teachers' associations to be heard. As so often, the students saw themselves as the spokesmen and advocates of the "suffering masses" and continued their policy of confrontation and relentless impatience.

Things often got out of hand. It is not known how many died. Most sources speak of unknown numbers.[25] One estimate says that 116 students lost their lives during the campaign, the "first martyrs of the revolution".[26] Amnesty International states that between two and three thousand students were killed during the campaign.[27]

The campaign pamphlets also reflect the existence of a division in the perceptions of the government, student activists and peasants as to what land reform was all about. Would redistribution lead to private ownership or state ownership with use-rights. The government became particularly alarmed when students encouraged peasants to hoard their grain, eat to their own satisfaction and wait for better prices. A split developed among the campaign participants, one similar to the division that developed within the vanguard of the intelligentsia, between those who chose to work with the government and supported its reluctance to press revolutionary issues in the field, and those who did not want to compromise on any of their principles. The EPRP had a lot of support among intellectuals and students and party representatives infiltrated *zämäča* students in their localities, encouraging them to leave the service in order to undermine the military government. Indeed, the campaign was instrumental in spreading support for the EPRP all over the country. In the autumn of 1975, many students left the service and went to work for the further expansion of the EPRP.

Large numbers of students became deserters, because they were disappointed, frustrated, embittered and degraded, sometimes tortured and beaten. Hundreds fled to neighbouring countries.[28] They had a perception of having been stabbed in the back by the *Derg*, that *Derg* policy had made their mission intolerable. The clandestine papers offer a strong defence of the reasons why students left the stations and their "miserable conditions."

Not all the students left, however, perhaps as many as half continued their work. Their attitudes are not revealed in any clandestine papers. Those who left were mostly from the university and schools in Addis Ababa. Those who remained were mostly campaigners from provincial secondary schools. They were more inclined to support *Derg* policy and were also often older and more mature than their counterparts from the secondary schools in Addis Ababa, because there had also been recruitment from those who went to night classes. There was, however, considerable variety in the local conditions, and in relationships between students and the locals. The conflicts have overshadowed the fact that many students, even in the south (in Illubabor, for instance, where the landlords were mostly absentee and the conflict level low), worked under fairly peaceful conditions and experienced their own contribution as meaningful, an accomplishment they look back on with pride.[29]

What did the campaign accomplish? The numbers are impressive. The report says that between five and six million rural labourers were enrolled in 19,314 associations; 65,500 tribunals and 55,000 defence committees had been set up; a literacy campaign had been conducted in many languages; 4.5 million literacy books had been published

[25] Markakis and Nega 1978: 151.
[26] Lefort 1983:100.
[27] *Amnesty International*, March 1977 (Index Afr. 25/01/77).
[28] Samuel Tassew: *The Legal Aspect of the Ethiopian Student Movement: 1960-1978*, BA Dissertation, Faculty of Law, July 1992: 37.
[29] My notes of conversations, May 2005.

in the Amariñña, Tigriñña, Oromiffa, Wolaytiñña and Somaliñña languages, and almost 800,000 people had registered for literacy classes. A total of 206 clinics and 158 schools were built, 750 health assistants trained, 500,000 vaccines prepared and 500,000 head of cattle inoculated.[30]

Among the great achievements of the *zemecha* was a kind of shock injection to the common people's mentality as to what kind of life and treatment they as human beings had the right to expect. Working the land and speaking Oromiffa were no longer factors that would diminish the human dignity of an individual. Lefort, who has written extensively about the campaign, concludes that the Ethiopian countryside changed more in a few months than in hundreds of years previously, and that this happened with unique speed and intensity, while Christopher Clapham holds that it is doubtful the agrarian reforms could have happened without the student *zämäča*.[31] The students had been instrumental in the formation of thousands of peasant associations, youth and women's associations. Even though the local resistance to women's associations was sometimes so strong that their survival was threatened when the students left,[32] a seed of inevitability was sown. The fact that female students in both secondary and tertiary learning institutions participated in the campaign side by side with their male counterparts, sharing their conditions and tasks, has resulted in a great push towards freeing young female students from the strict rules, norms and expectations of their families. It has been noted that young women obtained a new freedom of movement.[33]

Many who experienced the campaign maintain, in retrospect, that the students went out full of enthusiasm and put their hearts and souls into what they did. More often than not, however, the experience ended in a sense of sorrow, despair and defeat, and in traumatic memories that the participants want to forget. So many "comrades" died for their ideals concerning how to attain a better future for Ethiopia. Participation, even from the same school, serving in the same area and experiencing more or less the same events, has provoked very different retrospective reactions. Some tend to say that they threw away two years of their lives on something resembling collective madness, whilst others point to a personal growth in independence and the acquisition of indispensable knowledge concerning the realities of their own country. [34]

The Red Terror

Mengistu Haile Mariam's dictatorship killed thousands of intellectuals, students and schoolchildren in the process of wiping out civilian opposition, in particular in 1977 and 1978. Thousands were imprisoned, tortured or fled the country.[35] The number of lives that were lost is highly uncertain and will not be dealt with here. What happened has been labelled "the Ethiopian Holocaust".[36] The Addis Ababa University does not seem to have any documentation nor the names of students and staff killed during the *Derg* regime as a whole. In May 2005 a meeting at the University, chaired by Professor Gebru Mersha, discussed the erection of a Never More memorial monument to those

[30] Lefort 1983:100, and Report from the Development Through Co-operation Campaign… op.cit..
[31] Clapham 1989.
[32] Marina and David Ottaway 1978:169.
[33] Notes from conversations, Gebru Mersha, May 2005.
[34] Senait Seyoum: "Mon experience de la "zemetcha"", in Kling and Molnier 1997.
[35] The front page of *Ethiopian Review*, February 1992 (Los Angeles) calls this extermination "The Ethiopian Holocaust".
[36] *Ethiopian Herald,*13.5.05, Professor Kinfe Abraham, President of the Ethiopian International Institute of Peace and Development: From Genocide to Constitutionalism.

slaughtered during the post-revolutionary years.[37] Bahru Zewde and Yeraswork Admassie has recently published a book, *Martyrs of Confrontational Politics (EC 1998)*

How did this spiral of violence start? There has been a tendency to blame the new party, EPRP, for this.[38] Students returning from the campaign agitated against the government, and in particular went into the town councils to reach the new youth associations in their agitation for a civilian government. There was a sharp rise in politicizing among students at all levels in the educational system. A kind of civil war developed between different politically active factions of the civilian left, demonstrating that they had the capacity to kill one another over political disagreements. At the root of this could be found conflict and even hatred between groups of students that had returned from abroad and who held different views on the policy of land reform. [39]Amnesty International viewed the level of political violence as high, and refers to EPRP "death squads" having assassinated up to 50 government supporters by March 1977.[40]. The government labelled the EPRP as "counterrevolutionaries" who represented White Terror. "We shall beat back White Terror with Red Terror" was Mengistu's cry, according to Dawit Wolde Giorgis in his book *Red Tears*.

The EPRP view of who started this spiral of violence is that the Red Terror was the climax in a process that erupted after the government declared a war of annihilation against all opposition of "counter revolutionaries" in September 1976.[41] A newsletter, *Fight Back,* signed by Ethiopian student organizations in Europe, USA, the Middle East and East Africa, as well as by the World Wide Ethiopian Women's Study Group, contains horrible descriptions of the persecution and execution of students and members of the EPRP, and reports of students fleeing the violence of the regime.[42] During 1977 MEISON also became too troublesome for the dictatorship; its members withdrew from government service and went underground.

The re-opening of the university in the autumn of 1976

Addis Ababa University re-opened in the autumn of 1976, after two years of closure due to the *zämäča*. Many students continued to recruit EPRP members, both inside and outside the university, in spite of warnings about the annihilation of all opposition.[43] The uncompromising treatment of the opposition contributed to the de-politicization of the university. The Red Terror campaign turned so violently against educated young people for their resistance to military rule that those who survived either went into exile, hid in the countryside or joined guerrilla movements. The pressure to keep silent also came from the families of the students. .

The specific experiences of the students also demonstrate that those who rule by the gun do not permit anything that may remotely be called free expression. During the second half of the 1990s there were court cases against those who had committed atrocities under the former regime. A systematic study of the evidence, which has not been undertaken here, would provide a description of how the university was affected during the time of the worst persecutions. The Minister of Education, Genet Zewde, gave evidence that is representative of unknown numbers, about how, as a student in

37 Personal notes, conversations Mulumebet Zenebe and Gebru Mersha, May 2005.
38 Ottaway op. cit.: 146, Clapham op. cit.: 53.
39 Andargachew 1993: 151.
40 *Amnesty International*, Index Afr.25/01/77, March 1977, Colin Legum 1975/76: B 197.
41 Kiflu op. cit. : 271,*Amnesty International,* Afr. 25/01/77, 14 December 1977.
42 *Fight Back*, November 1976, IES Library, Manuscript Collection, 2395/03.
43 My notes April/May 2002: Conversations with Alemu Geda.

July 1977, she was arrested at the university and imprisoned for more than six years without trial. She was tortured and accused of being a member of the EPRP and a CIA spy.[44]

After the Red Terror came to an end in 1978 persecution and punishment were still directed towards young, educated people who were suspected of supporting the resistance and the Oromo, Tigray and Eritrean liberation movements. As it was believed that the Oromo Liberation Front was supported by Protestant religious churches such as the Mullu Wengel, and in particular Mekane Yesos, active students in Protestant movements also had every reason to fear sudden and brutal arrest.[45] Important aspect of the times was the agitation against the Christian religion. There were instances where priests were commanded to burn their Bibles.[46]

Calm efficiency

For many years there was calm at the university. The regime appointed people they could trust as President and Vice-Presidents, who were members of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, following its creation in 1984. Fisseha Haile's doctoral dissertation on Addis Ababa University underlines the fact that the government had people in its service who understood the important role of the university and defended the institution against complaints of excessive opposition to the government. Fisseha speaks of "enabling linkages" between the government and the university. Nevertheless, by his own account, the best achievement during the *Derg* years of Duri Muhammed, the University President at that time, was "keeping the ship floating".[47] After the university's re-opening in 1976 there were unprecedented shortages of financial resources, as well as a great shortage of teachers. Some teachers were in prison and many had left the country, mostly for the United States; in addition, the university had lost most of its links with other, supportive universities. In 1982, 60% of the academic staff had only a first degree.[48] In 1978, University President Duri Muhammed went to institutions of higher education in the Soviet Union, East Germany and Yugoslavia to obtain agreements on co-operation, and to recruit teachers.[49]

The university faculties were allowed to elect their own department heads and representatives to the Faculty Council. Curriculum details were mostly left alone, with one important exception: as was the case in all schools and workplaces in the country, there were compulsory classes for both staff and students in the Marxist-Leninist thinking to which the state had declared its adherence.[50] A twelve-page *Declaration of the Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia – the Philosophy and Direction of the New Regime: Ethiopia Tikdem* formed the new official guidelines for the university's teaching, as for all other educational institutions in the country.[51]

---

44 *Ethiopian Register* (Los Angeles) May 1997:11.

45 *Amnesty International Newsletter,* Ethiopia August 1979, June 1980 (Reverend Gudina Tumsa of the Mekane Yesos Church arrested and "disappeared", accused of supporting the OLF), March 1986, July 1989.

46 Dawit 1989:121.

47 Fisseha Haile, *A study of Institutionality: Addis Ababa University 1961-1981.* Doctor of Education Degree, Indiana University, May 1984:54.

48 Ibid.:87.

49 Addis Ababa University: Deans' Council, Minutes of meeting 31 May 1978. Collection: IES, WMMH.

50 Personal notes, 25 April 2002: Conversation with Professor Haile Gabriel Dagne on the *Derg* period of the university.

51 *Declaration of the Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia,* HSIU Department of Government Affairs, 20 December 1974. Archived files from the University President's Office (UPO) in IES

The archived files from the University President's Office at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies department at Wolde Meskel Memorial House contain only a few accounts of the difficulties of university life after the revolution, and hardly anything on the Red Terror. However, they reveal the fact that faculty members were intrigued by the question of how to meet the challenges of teaching when the university re-opened and the students returned after the *zemecha*. There were discussions on how to teach and what to teach under the new conditions. How could the revolution and the overwhelming experiences of students during the *zemecha* be taken into account and reflected in the teaching? Judging from this, the power of the students had increased: they were not expected to be passive consumers of whatever the university might offer. Then there were the well-known problems of making up for all the disturbances and closures of the university, this time connected to the 1974 spring term, during the revolutionary process.[52] During the spring term of 1977, before a suppressive silence descended on the institution, the university was once again faced with the problem of students withdrawing from their studies in order to protest at the government's repression and imprisonment of fellow students. In view of government threats, demanding that the normal activities of the university should be resumed, it is revealing to see how many people supported the cause of student solidarity. Just a few representative examples of overall student attendance are given here: In the Medical School, 16 out of 76 students showed up for classes towards the end of February 1977; in the Faculty of Technology, 10 out of 250 did so; in the Science Faculty, 54 out of 400 attended classes; in the Faculty of Education, 150 out of 600 students had formally withdrawn, while 15 came to classes.[53] Thus, fewer than 10% of the students were willing to resume classes at the height of the Red Terror, in the ongoing struggle with the *Derg* government.

Needless to say, students had no freedom of assembly and no press. They were permitted to set up a branch of the government's youth organization, and later on a branch of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, which had an office on campus. These opportunities were ignored to a great extent. We hear of heated student opposition to the teaching of history. Members of academic staff in the History Department were accused of being anti-Marxist, of not teaching the history of the masses as this related to the Ethiopian people. There was a period, in 1977-78, of considerable underground ethnic secessionist activism from which the University and in particular the History Department, did not escape. Students interfered, created chaos and "dictated" to a number of teachers. A lecture on feudalism might be mistaken for praise of that hated social order. The representation of the Oromo in Ethiopian history caused bitterness and alarm. It became very difficult to teach history without this being used or perceived as a contribution to the political debate. This caused a lot of tension among the staff as well.[54] In May 1979, government directives in the name of a new proletarian culture, presumably inspired by the Chinese Cultural Revolution, called for and initiated the

Wolde Meskel House (IESWMH)

52 Addis Ababa University, Faculty of Education: Minutes, Deans' meeting on the action to be taken to accommodate returning *zemecha* students, 26 November 1975. Collection of Department of IES, WMMH.

53 Addis Ababa University: Minutes, Deans' Council, meeting on student attendance.

54 Addis Ababa University: Letter to Academic Vice-President Abiy Kifle from Aleme Eshete (Dr.), senior researcher IES, 21 October 1983 (20 pages). Collection IES/WMMH.

burning of "thousands of Ethiopian books". Intervention by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies was able to stop this.[55]

To a considerable extent it may be said that disciplinary learning was strengthened during these years of calm, and student enrolment expanded steadily. There were five thousand students in 1976 and eleven thousand by 1980. Students came from all parts of Ethiopia, to a greater extent than before. Under the *Derg*, a new quota system provided more admission places for students from schools in rural areas. Thus, there was great competition to be admitted to university. In 1980, sixty thousand students sat the ESLC (Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate) examination; only four thousand were admitted to the university, and one thousand to other institutions of higher education.[56] Compared to universities in other African countries that were experiencing troublesome unrest, due to student protests and violent governmental repression (this was particularly the case in neighbouring Kenya, for example), Addis Ababa University appeared to be functioning well as an institution,[57] despite a chronic shortage of study materials. The war in Eritrea had devoured half of the state budget[58] and lack of foreign currency prevented the purchase of books, journals and other kinds of equipment, a situation more or less similar to that found in most African universities.

One effect of the revolution was a heavy brain drain, a situation that remains chronic to this day. New teachers were recruited, mostly from Eastern Europe, and young Ethiopians with only a bachelor degree were recruited to teach. The university started its graduate school around 1980, in a few disciplines only. It had to continue to send their most promising graduates to pursue their research in universities abroad. The problem was that only about half returned. Thus, Ethiopia lost the cream of its crop of university graduates.

Literacy and resettlement

The military showed a greater willingness than the imperial regime to make use of the students in developing projects, particularly to raise the level of literacy. The literacy campaigns have been judged to be "one of the regime's most impressive achievements".[59] After the two-year closure of the university in which the large-scale *zämäča* had taken place, there was a requirement that all students who had sat the twelfth-grade examination were to teach a course of approximately three months' duration in the literacy campaign. This participation was a prerequisite for entering university. Looking back, former participants seem to have appreciated the experience of this teaching effort as happy and rewarding. The literacy campaigns are one positive aspect of an otherwise tragic relationship between government and students during the Mengistu regime. The government was given the annual UNESCO Literacy Award in 1980.

After the great starvation disaster in northern Ethiopia in 1984, the government moved some six hundred thousand people from the exhausted soil of the Tigray, Wollo and Shoan highlands to various lowland areas, some as far as approximately one thousand kilometres to the south, to settle in a tropical and humid climate among people with a different language and culture. Several international agencies supported such a

[55] Ibid.
[56] Fisseha 1984:120.
[57] Conversations from time to time in the late 1980s with Dr. philos. Tertit von Hanno Aasland in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
[58] Clapham, op. cit.: 249.
[59] Clapham op. cit.: 97.

scheme. The state also wanted to use the resettlement projects to further its socialist policy of creating producers' co-operatives, which had otherwise met with stubborn resistance among rural labourers. This resettlement has been labelled "perhaps the most cruel chapter of the entire famine".[60]

In the course of approximately one year, overcrowded lorries brought exhausted, depressed and weak people to the south and west. Students and academic staff, cooks, gardeners, messengers and sweepers – the entire university community in Addis Ababa – were all commanded by the government to go and aid the great "resettlement" of the northerners. This was to a large extent against the will of the university community, where many questioned the wisdom of the resettlement project, because it was forced, not voluntary, but the leaders of the university were both members[61] and instruments of the new, government-initiated Workers' Party of Ethiopia,[62] and thus in no position to refuse. It was a tremendous effort. Former participants remember the intense speeches by Mengistu, in which he used to say "everything is possible" and admonish students that they had to "contribute to the development of the country".

On the whole, both the villagization and the resettlement schemes were failures in revolutionary social engineering terms, since people tended to move back to where they considered they belonged, in spite of state efforts to prevent this. The initially very high death rates in the new areas, the repressive co-operative system (in spite of considerable government aid to help establish this) and the enmity of the indigenous people whose resources were diminished because of the newcomers all contributed to a high percentage of deserters.[63]

When I visited Ethiopia in 1984, ten years after the revolution, I found that the university, as well as society in general, was permeated with fear in a way that I did not experience either under the rule of the Emperor or at the end of the century, under the Meles Zenawi regime. The ears and eyes of the government were believed to be everywhere. It was a well-known fact that even the university had informers among both staff and students; in fact this was always the case, no matter what the regime.

Before the time of the *Derg*, the atmosphere in the classrooms, the mingling on the way to and from classes and the queues at the cafeteria had been friendly. There had been a strong sense, then, of 'them' (the political establishment) and 'us' (the students). Now, students frequently did not know each other and did not speak to each other, and dared not express themselves in class. When completely out of earshot of any other Ethiopian, individuals would release a stream of violent criticism of the regime's perceived ridiculous and absurd ideological dogmatism and ruthless brutality.[64]This sort of communication also took place between trusted friends. However, it has been noted that the experience of the 1986 *zemecha*, when students had to sleep together approximately ten to a tent, forged a new sense of togetherness and the will to challenge authority. Indeed, the telling of jokes and stories and the recital of poetry was, as it had

[60] Dawit 1989.

[61] My notes from a conversation with Agaredech Jemaneh 16 May 2003, and Michael Daniel Ambatchew: *Roses Die,* Commercial Printing Enterprise, Addis Ababa 2003, a story with the Gublak Camp as a setting.

[62] Conversation in June 1996 with Professor Arregai, former member of the Institute of Development Research, then Visiting Professor at the Agricultural University of Norway. My notes from Addis Ababa, Autumn 1984. Clapham op. cit.:191-1994

[63] Alula Pankhurst, "When the Centre Relocates the Periphery: Resettlement During the Derg", *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective Papers of the XIIIthe International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* Volume II Kyoto December 1997.

[64] Notes, November 1984, conversations.

always been, a way of expressing criticism. (I experienced a particular form of resistance on my visit in 1984. When I walked about I was often approached by young people walking in small groups who asked me about my religion and professed that they were Christians.)On some occasions the need for expression among students became so strong that they marched on the campus at Sidist Kilo during the night, to shout out their stand on specific issues.[65] Students knew that outside the walls, in the town, there were people hungry for their message. [66]

The happy demonstration

The Mengistu regime took no account of the perestroika politics in the USSR. However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the apparent victory of market liberalism on the world stage, some signs of a change of direction had to be announced, particularly since the guerrilla army from the Tigray People's Liberation Front and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front were together approaching the seat of power in Addis Ababa.

In March 1990, Mengistu announced in a speech that private initiative also had its place in the Ethiopian economy; in particular, he promised to discontinue the hated quotas within agricultural production that had had to be delivered to the state. Although the land belonged to the state and could not (and still cannot) be sold on the free market, the produce of the land was acknowledged to belong to the farmer by rights, and the use of the land could be inherited within the farmer's family.[67]

At the university it was felt that the pressure had been eased. The students went out on a jubilant demonstration in the main streets that lasted for five hours, celebrating the change in policy.[68] It was rare indeed to see so much youthful energy and joy displayed in favour of a policy of the hated government. Demonstrations were a kind of street theatre (widely used during the times of the Emperor) in a society barren of any expressive voice, and thus a supportive demonstration was a golden opportunity for the government.

In March 1991, when the guerrilla army from the north approached Addis Ababa, Mengistu appealed in a number of speeches for action and preparation for resistance on the part of the students.[69] Large numbers of students went to camps to receive military training, not only in Addis Ababa. However, no resistance took place when the opposition forces marched into Addis Ababa, since President Mengistu fled the country.[70]

Concluding Remarks

In the process of modernizing Ethiopia the educated younger generation has paid a heavy price. During the time of the Derg, 1974-91, the conditions for developing a political culture of dialogue and openness in Addis Ababa University were discouraging due to brutal repression. Opposition was interpreted as insurrection and still considered

---

65 Colin Legum, *Africa Contemporary*...op. cit. 1987/89: B 301.

66 Ragnhild Balsvik, Report from a visiting student of Addis Ababa University 5.1-7.7 1990. Personal notes, 6.1. 1990, conversation with Professor Eshetu Chole, 25.04.2002, conversation with Professor Haile Gabriel Dagne.

67 Stefan Brüne: "Economic Policies under Review", in A. Zegeye op. cit.:

68 Ragnhild Balsvik, Report…op. cit.

69 *Ethiopian Herald,* 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 March 1991.

70 The *Ethiopian Herald*, 21 June 1991, reports that 700 students were stopped at the border town with Kenya, Moyale, and returned. Dimitros Birku: *Intellect Versus Brutality: a retrospective view of students' movement*, Kenya Human Rights Movement 2002.

to be against the cosmological order, disturbing deep cultural strands of reverence for authority.

The military presented ideological slogans such as "Ethiopia First",[71] and "Scientific Socialism", and engaged in revolutionary law-making. The student voice had been heard and students were sent out into the country to make an enormous effort to redistribute land, to organize people and to teach them to read. However, the students did not accept military rule. In the process of opposition, educated activists killed each other and horrendous numbers of young people were decimated by the state.. The outcome was that the university became de-politicised and was kept going efficiently in an atmosphere of discouraging fear.

The guerrilla army that ousted Mengistu Haile Mariam and fought its way into power in 1991 also had its ideological roots in the student culture of thinking under the Emperor. Indeed, its leader, Meles Zenawi, had been a student protester himself towards the end of the Emperor's rule. The Derg had seen its political mission linked to the redistribution of land. The new regime addressed the second great question raised by the student movement: the question of how to grant justice to the large number of oppressed ethnic groups. The regime of Mengistu early set up an Institute of Nationalities.[72] The change of regime in 1991 announced a lot of promising freedoms of organization and expression. Yet, there were profound ambiguities and uncertainties as to where the limits of expression and action were placed.[73]In the university the story of student quest for expression repeated itself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Aalen, Louise. 2002. Ethnic Federalism in a Dominant Party State : The Ethiopian Experience 1991-2000. Bergen, Christian Michelsen Institute.

Aalen, Louise, Siegfried Pausewang, Kjetil Tronvoll (eds.) Ethiopia since the Derg. A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance.London-new York: Zed Books.

Abebe Zegeye& Siegfried Pausewang. 1994. Ethiopia in Change.London. New York. British Academic Press

Academic Freedom & Human Rights Abuses in Africa 1991. An Africa Watch Report. New York,Washington, London.

Ade Ajayi, Lameck Goma & Ampah Johnson. 1996. The African Experience with Higher Education. The Association of African Universities, Accra, James Currey, London, Ohio University Press, Athens.

Andargachew Tiruneh. 1993.The Ethiopian Revolution 1974-1987: A Transformation from an Aristocratic to a Totalitarian Autocracy. Cambridge University Press.

Balsvik, Randi Rønning. 1985. Haile Sellassies's Students. The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution. East Lansing. Michigan State University.

Balsvik, Randi Rønning Balsvik. 1994.An Important Root of the Ethiopian Revolution: The Ethiopian student Movement. Zegeye & Pausewang, op.cit..

[71] *Ethiopian Herald,* 31 October and 1 November 1974, where the concept is elaborated on extensively.

[72] Louise Aalen, *Ethnic Federalism in a Dominant Party State: The Ethiopian Experience 1991-2000,* Christian Michelsen Institute, Bergen 2002 and Pausewang, Tronvoll, Aalen op. cit.

[73] Kiflu, *The Generation*, op. cit.:396-399 and *Ethiopian Register*, December 1997. Letter of Ato Kahsay Berhe and Ato Tesfay Atsbeha to the Special Public Prosecutor of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 06.09.1997 with the heading: Can one accuse a tyrant in Ethiopia?

Balsvik, Randi Rønning. 1998. Student Protest- University and State in Africa 1960 - 1995. Forum for Development Studies No.2, NUPI,Oslo.
Boahen, Adu A. 1994. The Role of the African Student Movements in the Political and Social Evolution of Africa from 1900 to 1975. Paris:UNESCO.
Clapham, Christopher. 1989. Transformation and Continuity in Revolutionary Ethiopia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Dawit Wolde Giorgis. 1989.Red Tears: War, Famine and Revolution in Ethiopia. Trenton, New Jersey.
Fisseha Haile. 1984. A Study of Institutionality: Addis Ababa University 1961-1981.Dr. of Education. Indiana University.
Heller, Henry. 2006. The Cold War and the New Imperialism. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Kiflu Tadesse 1998. The Generation Part Two. New York, Oxford: University Press of America.
Lefort, Renè. 1983. Ethiopia: An Heretical Revolution?London: Zed Press.
Legum, Colin. 1975/76. Africa Contemporary Record – Annual Survey and Documents. London.
Markakis, John and Nega Ayele. 1978. Class and Revolution in Ethiopia. Nottinghan: Spokesman.
Ottaway, Marina and David. 1978. Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution. New York and London. African Publishing Company.
Pankhurst, Alula. 1997. When the Centre Relocates the Periphery: Resettlement During the Derg. Ethiopia in Broader Perspective. Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies. Vol. II. Kyoto.
Samuel Tassew. 1992. The Legal aspect of the Ethiopian Student Movement. 1960-1978. BA dissertation. Addis Ababa University. Faculty of Law.
Senait Seyoum 1997. Mon experience de la zemetcha. Kling J.F. and Molinier T.. Mèlanges pour la cinquantenaire du Lycèe Guebre Mariam, 1947-1997. Addis Ababa.
World Bank. 2000. Higher Education in Developing Countries. Peril and Promise. World Bank/ UNESCO. Statistical Tables.
Other sources, newspapers, unpublished reports, items from archives and interviews as given in the footnotes.

www.svt.ntnu.no/ices16/

ISBN 978-82-90817-27-0 (printed)

NTNU