



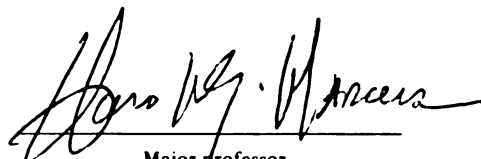
3 1293 10381 5472



This is to certify that the
thesis entitled
REACTION TO ETHIOPIAN EXPANSIONISM:
THE CASE OF DARASA, 1895-1935

presented by
Charles W. McClellan

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for
Ph.D. degree in History


Major professor

Date 3 August 1978



101

~~SECRET~~

UK-083

~~AS-011~~

~~SECRET~~

401 2051

113 06 502

001 21 704

042 705

© 1978

CHARLES W. McCLELLAN

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

REACTION TO ETHIOPIAN EXPANSIONISM:
THE CASE OF DARASA, 1895-1935

By

Charles W. McClellan

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

1978

ABSTRACT

REACTION TO ETHIOPIAN EXPANSIONISM:
THE CASE OF DARASA, 1895-1935

By

Charles W. McClellan

Ethiopia's late-nineteenth-century expansionism was influenced profoundly by two external events: the European colonial scramble in which Ethiopia herself participated and a burgeoning European industrial capitalism. Emperors Menilek II and Haile Selassie I sought to preserve their country's independence in the face of these external threats. The former endeavored to acquire the riches of the south to resolve Ethiopia's internal political struggle and to prop up the north's sagging feudal economy while acquiring a broad territorial buffer zone to protect the nation politically and economically from European colonial encroachment. Haile Selassie utilized the south's resources to begin the country's modernization and thereby win international recognition for himself and his nation.

These external events helped shape Ethiopia's policies towards her dependencies. While the colonial programs and structures mostly reflected traditional

Amhara-Tigre feudal organization and ethnocentrism, they revealed, as well, northern concerns about Ethiopia's survival. This dissertation focuses upon the evolving relationship between the core Ethiopian state and its periphery by studying the Darasa of northern Sidamo province. Commencing with Darasa's conquest in 1895, I endeavor to illustrate a pattern of ever-increasing centralization of power and decision-making in the hands of the ruling northerners. Although imperial and individual settler interests were not absolutely congruent, both were dedicated to the fullest possible exploitation of the subject populations. Consequently, Darasa lost the freedom to guide their own destiny and were left to adjust to the forces imposed on them, an adaptation studied in this dissertation.

The accommodation, including considerable conflict and protest, was multi-faceted. Two agricultural peoples with different social organizations struggled over a division of the region's wealth. Through northern settlers, the government exploited the most accessible resources, insuring that some surplus reached Addis Ababa. Initial objectives involved harvesting wild animal resources and utilizing indigenous labor to produce an agricultural surplus to support the local settler population. The extermination of the wild game and a growing settler population in the 1920s dictated a reassessment of priorities. Consequently, northerners were given more direct

control over land and labor, while many Darasa were proletarianized. Land alienation coincided with the rise of coffee as an important cash crop and the development of improved commercial facilities such as more numerous markets, better roads, new settler towns, lorry transport, and the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway. Northerners were enabled, therefore, to encroach steadily upon the south's traditional commercial structure, coming to dominate its more profitable aspects due to greater availability of capital, mules, time, labor and firearms. Darasa were reduced to inefficient competitors, oriented increasingly to the less profitable and most labor-intense alternatives.

Economic forces also dictated a subtle restructuring of many aspects of Darasa social organization. Traditional leadership declined as economic rewards and status-respect were reoriented to rival Amhara-approved authorities. Settler exploitation and the rise of coffee further stimulated an indigenous population expansion, which, in the longer run, acted to weaken the Darasa's sense of community and social cohesion. The improved economic well-being and independence of some Darasa promoted acculturation, a process that was frustrated by northern settlers who resisted changes in the existing exploitative arrangements. Despite their victimization under Ethiopian rule, Darasa today demonstrate a willingness to cooperate in the nation's future, but only on the basis of equality and a fair division of the region's important productive resources.

TO MY MOTHER

AND THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER

Same old song,
Just a drop of water in an endless sea;
All we do crumbles to the ground,
Though we refuse to see;
Dust in the wind,
All we are is dust in the wind.

--Kansas, "Dust in the Wind" from the album
"Point of Know Return" © 1977 CBS Records.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Researching and writing a doctoral dissertation is at once both a frustrating and rewarding experience, one the author asserts he would recommend to no other, yet one he recognizes helped him grow and mature both individually and scholastically. The effort elicits from him a multiplicity of self-doubts and glaringly reveals some of his own worst faults. More than any one else, he is aware of the weaknesses of his work--the unanswered questions, the insufficiency of data, and the necessarily imprecise phrasing. Yet his disaffection is often masked by the arrogant pride he feels for his "creation." Lest this writer lose all sense of reality, deluding himself with self-congratulations, I endeavor here to express my appreciation to all those who, in numerous ways, assisted my research and contributed to my personal development.

In a project such as mine, the largest debt is owed to the more than three hundred interviewees whose information and recollections provide the basis of this dissertation. My field experience, carried out under rather difficult and precarious conditions in 1974-5, increased my already tremendous respect for Ethiopia and its peoples.

Indeed, to talk openly and honestly to a self-seeking, nose-y "ferenji" during times of great personal adversity and tribulation was an act of true courage. To those who devoted their valuable time to share with me their memories, I offer my heart-felt thanks, and hope that my work, in some small way, might contribute to a better understanding of their incomparable country.

In addition to my informants, I am indebted to many others who variously facilitated my research efforts: to my assistants, Sintayehu Tessema, Mekonnen Mangasha, and Taddesse Hida, who did their utmost to ensure a succession of interviews, occasionally smoothing ruffled feathers (including my own) and frequently querrying matters they perceived as either "inconsequential" or "emotional"; to the associates and employees of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, headed at that time by Dr. Richard Pankhurst, and particularly to Weyzerit Tsehai Berhaneselassie who shared with me her previous research experience in Sidamo; to numerous Ethiopian officials from the ministries in Addis Ababa to Sidamo woreda administrators who facilitated personal contacts and access to records, as well as ensuring my personal safety, despite my occasional protestations; to my many friends and former students all over Ethiopia whose generous conversation and hospitality invariably taught me more about their country and her peoples than I could ever have learned on my own; and lastly to Klaus and Charlotte

Wedekind, whose home was a source of companionship and constant inspiration.

The Midwestern Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA) generously financed my year-long field effort and I am indebted to its staff and that of Michigan State University's African Studies Center for their sponsorship and support. Special appreciation goes to Dr. Harold Marcus, chairman of my doctoral committee, who sweated with me through several drafts of this dissertation, and whose critical comments and witty marginalia gently coaxed, sometimes provoked, this writer into action. Dr. John Hinnant played a vital role in the project from inception, frequently sharing his Guji experiences with me as a point of departure and comparison. Dr. Gordon Stewart and Dr. Harry Reed as well suffered through a reading of the final product. Finally, the graduate students at Michigan State, both in seminars and in private, listened patiently and critically to my many ideas, helping often to clarify or further explicate points I thought already "crystal clear." Their fresh, unadulterated zeal, while often amusing, served, by example, to reinvigorate my sagging spirits and push me to a conclusion.

Although the efforts of this dissertation draw upon the resources and inspiration of numerous individuals and institutions, the final product is my own. I must, and do, take ultimate responsibility for its content; any

misinterpretations, gross generalizations or factual errors
are my own.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLESviii
LIST OF FIGURES.	x
 Chapter	
INTRODUCTION	1
1 DARASA AND THE EMERGENCE OF ETHIOPIAN EXPANSIONISM.	39
2 THE NORTHERNERS: RECRUITMENT, MOTIVATIONS AND ORIGINS	81
3 ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES: THE ALLOCATION OF LAND AND LABOR	119
4 CHANGING PRIORITIES: THE STRUGGLE OVER RESOURCES.	164
5 COMMERCIAL MANIPULATION: CHANGING PATTERNS IN REGIONAL AND LOCAL TRADE.	205
6 DARASA SOCIAL ADAPTATION: THE FRUSTRATIONS OF ACCULTURATION	266
GLOSSARY.	299
APPENDIX.	306
BIBLIOGRAPHY	308

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Ethiopian Commercial Profile for the Years 1905-6, 1928-9, 1951	26
2. Ethiopian Coffee Exports as Percentage of World Production, 1924-50	28
3. Coffee and Cotton Goods as Percentage of Ethiopian Export-Import Trade by Value, 1945-54	28
4. Origins of Neftenyas in Northern Sidamo Province	113
5. Gabbars Allocated to Military Personnel . .	139
6. Darasa Extended Family Size Correlated to Ghibbr Payments.	144
7. Percentage of Gabbars Providing Various Labor Prestations	146
8. Distribution of Darasa Awraja Churches, 1895-1970.	176
9. Distribution of Darasa Awraja Churches, 1925-30	177
10. Fertility Ratings of Darasa Awraja Land . .	195
11. Fertility Ratings of Measured Land in Selected Balabatanets in Darasa Awraja . .	196
12. Ethiopian Exports Through Moyale Customs Post, 1913-28	218

Table	Page
13. Internal Customs Taxes	229
14. Ivory Exported Via Djibouti, 1909-34 . . .	239
15. Primary Products Used to Pay Patron. . . .	247
16. Comparative "Abyssinian" Coffee Prices Per Farasulla, 1900-1930	258
17. Coffee Exported Via Djibouti, 1910-34 . . .	259

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Ethiopia in 1930	7
2. Northern Sidamo Province	56
3. Darasa and Environs	63
4. Darasa Clans and Distribution of the Chief Leadership Posts	70
5. Operation of Darasa Gada System (Simulated) .	75
6. Partial Geneology of Dejazmach Balcha . . .	83
7. Plan of Dejazmach Balcha's Palace, Agere Selaam.	94
8. Schematic Representation of Darasa Population Movement	160

INTRODUCTION

Present-day Ethiopianists have focused increasingly on that country's late nineteenth and early twentieth-century expansionism, an historical event significant not only because of the consequent formation of the modern empire, but also because of its exemplification of a unique, indigenous African imperialism that competed successfully against European rivals. While we possess broad general descriptions of this movement, we know little about how expansionism was effected locally. Marcus and Darkwah, for example, concentrate upon Shoa and its ruler, Menilek II, who primarily directed this expansion.¹ Markakis augments our knowledge of the subject by contributing a comprehensive analysis from a political scientist's viewpoint of several aspects including class formation, urbanization and governmental structure.² Levine attempts an even more general, synthetic approach placing expansionism in a broader

¹Harold G. Marcus, The Life & Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975); R. H. Kofi Darkwah, Shewa, Menilek & the Ethiopian Empire, 1813-1889 (London, 1975).

²John Markakis, Ethiopia, Anatomy of a Traditional Polity (Oxford, 1974).

historical perspective; he examines past and present contacts among Ethiopia's peoples, assessing their reactions in terms of societal structures.³ But in view of the paucity of available materials, Levine can treat adequately only Ethiopia's two largest ethnic groups, the Amhara-Tigre and the Oromo.

All of these works, each in its own way, are worthwhile contributions to the field. But the generalizations propounded, while challenging, are still to some degree unsubstantiated. In addition, most of the writers, with the possible exception of Levine, view expansionism largely from a northern focal point. My work endeavors to approach the issue from the opposite end of the spectrum. The basic question will be as follows: "How did the peoples of the south react to Ethiopian expansionism"? I strive not to refute the valuable work already completed, but to build upon it. The general framework now needs to be tested and possibly modified; I, therefore, propose to utilize a Darasa case study for this purpose.

Just as earlier works were not necessarily impartial, my own also can make no such claim. My views of expansionism have been shaped to a large degree by the testimonies of my informants. The individuals were not, for the most part, policy makers; instead, they reacted and adapted to policies imposed on them. Their view of these programs

³Donald N. Levine, Greater Ethiopia (Chicago, 1974).

was restricted by their subordinate positions; they could not always perceive policies in their broadest intent. I endeavor, fairly I believe, to present both sides of the story, and to mesh variant viewpoints as much as possible. The pitfalls of this approach are apparent. To a degree, they are problems consistent with local as opposed to national history, and with research that focuses on the ordinary folk in contrast to the leadership. Mine is only one of an increasing number of case studies which are needed before a "true" Ethiopian history can be written, i.e., one dealing with all the cultures within the modern state and lacking an Amharacentric bias.

A quick perusal of the growing available literature impresses one with the great cultural diversity of Ethiopia's peoples. While there is much to be said for Levine's concept of an historical "Greater Ethiopia," support for Conti-Rossini's "museum of peoples" persists.⁴ Ethiopia's nineteenth-century expansion clearly reunited related peoples who had evolved separately for centuries. What to many Amhara-Tigre was a reincorporation was to most subject peoples outright imperium.⁵ Though many of these peoples

⁴Ibid., pp. 19-22.

⁵I cannot accept Michael Ståhl's, Ethiopia, Political Contradictions in Agricultural Development (Uppsala, 1974), p. 52, contention that "Shoan dominance cannot . . . be described as imperialism . . . since the appropriation of surpluses from the subdued peripheries to the center in Addis Ababa occurred largely in the form of paying tribute

recognized, via traditions and folklore, ties to their neighbors, the differences were paramount. Given the diversity, the task of forging a modern nation-state was difficult.

Neither was the Ethiopian approach toward building national unity necessarily conducive to harmonious relations. Ethiopian ties to her subject dependencies were feudal in character, reflecting the organization of northern Ethiopian society itself.⁶ The northern Amhara-Tigre conquerors were dominant and imposed their own economic, political and cultural system in the south. Yet clearly, Ethiopia was dealing with a population several times larger than its core and so disparate as to require an open-ended approach. Within narrow confines, Ethiopian policy was adaptable. Change was to be gradual, with northern

and was not used for capitalistic accumulation" Ståhl, like most Marxists, assumes that imperialism can derive from capitalist structures only.

⁶The debate as to whether Ethiopia was, in the European sense, a true feudal society continues. It has variously been described as semi-feudal, pseudo-feudal, and feudal-like. The new socialist government makes much use of the tag to describe the deposed imperial regime. Clearly, the Ethiopian system was a unique African variant that defies easy classification. Allan Hoben, "Family, Land, and Class in Northwest Europe and Northern Highland Ethiopia," Proceedings of the United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies (1st, East Lansing, 1973), pp. 157-70, is one of the few scholars to deal adequately with this issue. Gene Ellis, "The Feudal Paradigm as a Hindrance to Understanding Ethiopia," Journal of Modern African Studies, XIV, 2 (1976), 275-95, warns against a too close association with the European model.

manipulation of economic forces stimulating requisite political and social development. Although each society did experience periodic violence, brutal conquest and suppression were not the conqueror's preferred policy, even though sometimes necessary. Ethiopians were intent on preserving a conquered society's productive capacity, utilizing it to its maximum. Tribute was imposed and indigenous intermediaries appointed to insure its collection; rule was subsequently indirect. Over time, the use and allocation of local resources were reordered as the needs of the core society itself required; the economies of the various southern societies thus complemented and benefited the center. The particular nature of the interaction between the Ethiopian state and its periphery was also largely determined by the unique natures of the dependent polities themselves. Despite indirect rule, the clearly exploitative nature of Ethiopian administration was not one that engendered a great deal of trust and cooperation.

While the primary focus of this dissertation, then, is centered upon the relationship between the Ethiopian core and its periphery, one should not forget that Ethiopia as a whole was experiencing closer contact with the world capitalist economy, and this movement tended to influence Ethiopia's treatment of her own periphery. Ethiopia's own subject role is a topic that so far has been little studied,

and cannot be adequately undertaken here, but a limited perspective must be presented.

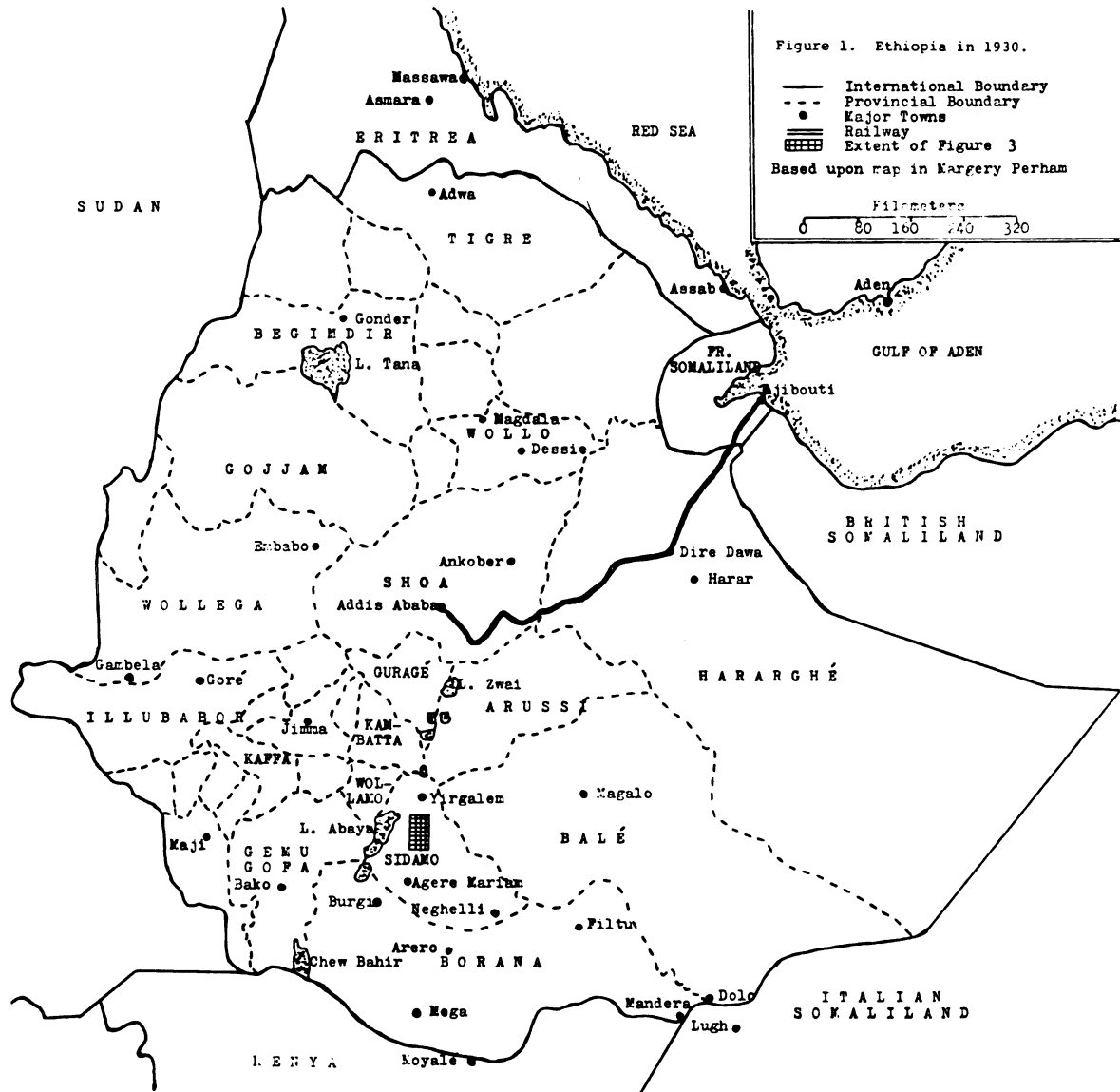
As Samir Amin argues, Ethiopia's dependent position was clearly recognizable after 1935, yet evidence of this emergent relationship existed earlier.⁷ Certainly Ethiopia had been in touch with merchant capitalism from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Her trade, emphasizing luxury products such as ivory, slaves, civet, ostrich feathers and gold,⁸ mirrored that described by Alpers for East Africa in the same period, and she was, to a degree, tied to that commercial system. I will not enter here into the argument espoused by Alpers that Africans within this system were already dependent.⁹ I am more concerned with the dependency that emerged from contact with European industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century.

I have alluded already to Ethiopia's unique position among African nations. Not only was she successful in fighting off European attempts to colonize her, but she was

⁷Samir Amin, Unequal Development (New York, 1976), pp. 332-33.

⁸See Richard Pankhurst, "Indian Trade with Ethiopia, the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, XIV, 3 (1974), 453-97.

⁹Edward A. Alpers, Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa (London, 1975), see particularly pp. 201-03, 264-67.



also an important participant in the scramble for Africa. The initial phase of her expansionism was primarily offensive; she sought to gain control over the trade and resources of areas to her south. In the last phase, particularly after the Battle of Adwa in 1896, Ethiopia's stance became relatively defensive. She sought to protect her gains by surrounding herself with a wide buffer zone, a traditional technique common among African societies. Increased contact with Europeans throughout the nineteenth century gradually accustomed Ethiopia's leaders to dealing with foreigners on a more sophisticated level; they became adept at playing off one power against another.¹⁰ This ploy benefited Ethiopia immensely in acquiring the fire-arms utilized at Adwa; ironically, the Italians themselves provided many of the weapons used for their own defeat. This Italo-Ethiopian conflict required a tremendous human expenditure, one that Ethiopia was willing to pay. Although the evolution of the modern Ethiopian state was not yet complete, Adwa probably marked the first time that she acted as a nation to protect herself against outside interests. Ethiopia's subject peoples played a major supporting role.

Adwa did not necessarily end attempts to colonize the country. Ethiopia retained her right to deal with European nations individually and, unlike her African

¹⁰Sven Rubenson, The Survival of Ethiopian Independence (London, 1976).

neighbors, was not trapped within a colonial structure. Except for Italy, whose national pride was at stake, European nations after 1896 demonstrated less inclination to occupy the country, although clearly they were ready, as the 1906 Tripartite Treaty demonstrated,¹¹ to step in at a moment's notice to protect their stated interests there.

Yet while Ethiopia remained independent, her freedom of action was already endangered. Although participating successfully in the African scramble, she had failed to procure maritime access. As a landlocked country, Ethiopia had her outside contacts monitored constantly by Italy, France and Britain, the three nations which colonized the Red Sea and Indian Ocean coasts. All of Ethiopia's modern emperors, from Yohannis on, had a prime interest in negotiating either a seaport or a free trade status on the coast. Even after Ethiopia was united with Eritrea under Haile Selassie in 1952, the acquisition made little real difference, since Ethiopia's foreign trade was reliant upon European shipping.

But as an independent nation, Ethiopia did have options and could continue to play off the European powers. Her distrust of Italy continued after Adwa, and Addis Ababa

¹¹See Harold G. Marcus, "A Preliminary History of the Tripartite Treaty of December 13, 1906," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, II, 2 (1964), 21-40, on this topic.

acted to keep her at arm's length. Such a policy was basically wise, yet Italy took particular affront. She believed that she was being singled out for exclusion from the Ethiopian market,¹² and such treatment strengthened her determination to gain a proper share by whatever means. Although Menilek did not exactly play favorites, he does seem to have placed more trust in the French. His judgment was based on some simple truths.

First, both Britain and Italy had previously invaded the country, and the two powers had seemed to act in collusion to turn Massawa over to the Italians in 1885.¹³ Based on local colonies, Britain and Italy seemed the powers to be feared; France controlled only a small, desolate coastal holding. Both Menilek and French officials were aware that Djibouti, without Ethiopian trade, was of little economic

¹²The following quotation, though flowery, provides a bit of the flavor of the Italian feeling. Not only did she feel thwarted by the Ethiopians, but as well saw a British-French collusion as those two nations repaired their relations in the period just prior to World War I:

Like a many-tentacled polypus, the English have developed the immense western territories and without care for the sacrifice made, have knowingly drawn to themselves an immense preponderance and inestimable benefits of the commercial markets to their colonies. Like a fistula directly fixed in the heart of the country, the French have boldly pointed their railway toward Addis Ababa. The commerce of all the southern zones and a great part of the central are secured to them.

A. Spaletta, "Il Caffè nell'Abissinia," L'Agricoltura Coloniale, XI (1917), 220.

¹³Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, Yohannis IV of Ethiopia (Oxford, 1975), pp. 152-93.

importance.¹⁴ These factors played an important part in Menilek's railway concession to a French company to tie the Ethiopian capital to Djibouti. Logistically, this route was the most feasible; it was shorter and less difficult than others; enroute to Addis Ababa, it passed near Harar, which in the early twentieth century, produced a type of coffee that already was Ethiopia's chief export commodity.¹⁵ By the time the railhead reached Addis Ababa in 1916, the Djibouti route garnered 70 to 80 percent of Ethiopia's commerce.¹⁶ While Menilek might seem to have placed too heavy a reliance upon the French in this regard, he retained considerable leeway. If he wished, the Italian and British links could be developed despite restrictive treaty obligations, and the emperor realized, as well, the effects upon the French colony if trade were channeled elsewhere.

The French "connection" continued for a time under Haile Selassie I (the Ras-Regent Teferi Mekonnen from 1916-1930), who was himself educated by French missionaries in Harar and was the first emperor, known to us, since Axumite days who could speak a European language. Unlike Menilek,

¹⁴M. Bouçoiran, "La Situation Economique de l'Ethiopie," Renseignements Coloniaux et Documents (1918), 192.

¹⁵Reports for the Year 1899-1900 on the Trade of Adis Ababa and Harrar (Cd. 852-27), British Parliamentary Papers.

¹⁶Bouçoiran, 188.

who was confident that Ethiopia could fight off new European intrusions, Haile Selassie was less convinced of this fact, unless the nation modernized. He had a better sense than Menilek of Europe's industrial might, a lesson no doubt impressed upon him by his French teachers as well as by his progressive father, who had visited Europe as a diplomat. While Menilek had sought to gain international recognition of Ethiopia's nationhood by negotiating commercial and boundary treaties, Haile Selassie went one step further, endeavoring to guarantee her independence by gaining League of Nations' admission. In this successful attempt, Paris proved Ethiopia's most persistent ally, even if the French link was weakening in the late 1920s.

This reversal had been brought about in part by the effects of World War I, an event that had profound influence upon non-belligerent Ethiopia. The war revealed the dangers of a too heavy dependence on the European powers: war-time scarcities in shipping and industrial production disrupted the marketing of Ethiopia's exports while greatly increasing the prices of her imports; also her currency, tied to the world silver market and minted in Europe, was subsequently restricted. The war did have some encouraging results as well, stimulating the development of alternative markets. Ethiopia's chief import, cotton cloth, previously supplied by the United States and Great Britain, was taken over in the interim by Japan. As well, the war aided coffee production, particularly in the southwest, where a Sudanese

and Egyptian demand developed to replace Latin American coffee, stymied by trans-Atlantic shipping difficulties.¹⁷ Although France maintained control over the Djibouti railway after the war, her commercial position had been eroded, and there was little chance of recouping the losses. Treaty-bound to preserve Djibouti's duty-free status, France could not favor her own goods. Paris thus came gradually to drop her "protective" stance toward Ethiopia and look more kindly at Italian ambitions in the country.¹⁸

If Haile Selassie was determined to limit Ethiopia's dependence on any one nation, he was also intent on acquiring European technology to modernize his country. Thus in 1924, as ras-regent, he became Ethiopia's first ruler to visit Europe, a journey undertaken admittedly "to see with my own eyes European civilization . . . and possibly to initiate some [of its] aspects . . ."¹⁹ The trip proved decisive in a number of ways. First, the ras endeavored to play upon European curiosity, utilizing the press to fashion

¹⁷United States Department of Commerce [hereafter USDC], Abyssinia, Present Commercial Status of the Country. . . . Special Consular Reports, No. 81 (Washington, 1918), pp. 59-60; Addison E. Southard, "The Story of Abyssinia's Coffees," Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, XXXIV (1918), 214.

¹⁸Harold G. Marcus, "The Infrastructure of the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis: Haile Sellasse, the Solomonic Empire and the World Economy, 1916-1936," Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (5th, Chicago, 1978), forthcoming. The author argues that France exchanged her Ethiopian interests for Italian concessions in Tunisia.

¹⁹Haile Selassie I (Emperor), Autobiography, translated by Edward Ullendorff (London, 1976), p. 83.

an image of himself and of his country as respectable, civilized and favorable to modernization. While western racial conceptions were not easily overcome, Teferi did succeed in raising a good deal of long-term interest in his country.²⁰ Secondly, the trip seems to have reinforced his perception of Europe's strength and of the need for Ethiopian development. In fact, his conceptions of development were to a great extent shaped by the trip. Shuttled from one European country to another, the ras viewed a vast array of public monuments, museums, factories and experimental farms.²¹ For the next fifty years, Haile Selassie's Ethiopian tours followed a similar pattern. His country began to be fashioned in the image of Europe, as he perceived it.

²⁰The emperor's success in this endeavor over the next decade is apparent. Time, XXVII (January 6, 1936), 17, which chose Haile Selassie as its "Man of the Year," revealingly said of him:

In Addis Ababa warrior chiefs of the Noble Savage type bitterly and contemptuously complain, "Our Emperor is a businessman!" They should thank Ethiopia's stars. The astounding marvel is that Africa's unique Museum of Peoples has produced a businessman--with high-pressure publicity, compelling sales talk, the morals of a patent medicine advertisement, a grasp of both savage and diplomatic mentality, and finally with plenty of what Hollywood calls IT.

²¹Haile Selassie I, pp. 81-124. The importance the emperor attached to this trip seems evident from the amount of space he devoted to it in his autobiography. While many might view this book as a collection of trivia, it reveals, I believe, much about the emperor's sense of priorities.

It would be naive to believe that a ruler who so well understood the nature of his own people and their politics could possess such a limited vision of development. To the present generation, his sense of priorities seems unjustified. Yet he appreciated the necessity of the "window dressing" that characterized much of Ethiopia's early modernization. These programs, centering on Addis Ababa and environs in the 1920s, were vital in order to establish an immediate, if transparent, impression of Ethiopia's progress that would stimulate European interest while providing an example to his own countrymen. While the emperor was perceptibly a paternalist, he was also a realist, convinced that Ethiopia's development would have to be gradual and directed from the top. The historical lessons of Tewodros had proven that broad social change was not only difficult, but politically dangerous.²² A ruler would have to induce the country's ruling classes to collaborate, while simultaneously educating a new elite that would facilitate modernization.

To carry out his transformation, Haile Selassie needed capital, which prior to 1935 was mainly generated internally and therefore was extremely limited. The emperor was rightly suspicious of foreign financing, for he recalled the almost disastrous 1889-loan his own father

²²Richard Pankhurst, "Misoneism and Innovation in Ethiopian History," Ethiopia Observer, VII (1964).

had negotiated with the Italians.²³ Conversely, European nations themselves, insistent upon self-development for their own colonies, were unlikely to channel funds to an insecure country.

That investment which did come to Ethiopia was private and directed largely into commerce and a few plantation schemes. Foreign traders long had dominated Ethiopia's export-import trade. Following Menilek's incorporation of Harar in 1889, expatriate firms penetrated inland to Addis Ababa and, thereafter, followed Ethiopian armies into the provinces.²⁴ A stigma associated with commercial activity in Ethiopia hindered Christian entry into this field, but wealthy aristocrats, following Menilek's lead, developed close relationships with traders whom they helped capitalize and who conducted trade for them on the coast.²⁵ In 1918, the American consul, Addison Southard, confirmed the significant transformation that was taking place:

The more influential classes of Abyssinians have never been interested in commerce. . . . This order . . . is now changing. Some of the wealthier Abyssinians have been investing in commercial undertakings and are showing an inclination to make systematic and

²³

Marcus, The Life and Times, pp. 118, 128.

²⁴

Pankhurst, "Indian Trade with Ethiopia," 484-92.

²⁵

Fan C. Dunckley, Eight Years in Abyssinia (London, 1935), p. 55; Rosita Forbes, From Red Sea to Blue Nile (New York, 1925), p. 158; also Marcus, The Life and Times, pp. 59-61.

businesslike arrangements to market the produce of the districts that they control.²⁶

Of course, not all local rulers were equally open to expatriate commercial endeavors, but those who hindered foreign traders might be removed from office, as the result of pressure applied through European consulates or indirectly through partisan Ethiopian officials.²⁷

In fact, traders and diplomats were always interested in finding Ethiopian allies and thus closely scrutinized the future Haile Selassie. The American consul, Hoffman Philips, noting Teferi's "amiable disposition" and his ease with European ways, said of him:

He gives me the impression of being entirely without force of character, but, perhaps, he might in time become a desirable medium for the furtherance of foreign interests were he invested with the above office [i.e. the Governorship of Hararghé], and subjected to good influences.²⁸

That same year, when the young Teferi did receive the aforementioned post, the British minister Wilfred Thesiger took an even more optimistic line: "As regards British interests, no appointment could have been more hopeful."²⁹ These

²⁶USDC, Abyssinia, p. 8.

²⁷I deal with the particular case of Dejazmach Balcha's removal from Harar in chapter 2.

²⁸Hoffman Philips to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, January 17, 1910, No. 72 Diplomatic, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1910-29, 884.

²⁹Thesiger to Sir Edward Grey, Addis Ababa, March 3, 1910, No. 41, Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910, FO 401/14.

statements reflect a European belief that Teferi could be swayed, a pliant image that Haile Selassie himself fostered to preserve European interest in himself and his country.

Throughout his early years of power, Teferi hosted nearly all European visitors to the capital, carefully examining and questioning each guest, determining how they might best be useful. Hardly a visitor departed who was not profoundly impressed with the emperor's ingratiating manner. Yet the monarch was playing a dangerous game. While adroitly balancing European interests, he also induced a conservative, xenophobic reaction domestically that endangered his personal power. For many Ethiopians, no emperor had been so closely associated with Europeans and taken with their ways as was Haile Selassie. The emperor thus was never free of critics who taunted him with charges of having sold out to the foreigners and of having abandoned Menilek's legacy. He would always reign in the shadow of his predecessor, an awesome burden for anyone.

If Teferi convinced foreigners of his tractability, he similarly deceived his own countrymen, who aided his rise to power believing in his docility. He was the meek sacrificial lamb upon whom the dethroned Lijj Yasu's opponents concurred.³⁰ For fourteen subsequent years, Teferi shared power with Menilek's daughter, Zewditu, a partnership that was at very best uncomfortable. Already

³⁰Markakis, pp. 198-99.

in this period, Teferi's moves were aimed at convincing all observers that he was the real power in Ethiopia. The campaign to minimize Zewditu's historical role came chiefly after her death,³¹ yet many of her loyal supporters were early cognizant of the regent's stance. Their resentment played a part in the many intrigues against him, and Teferi learned to bide his time, waiting for Menilek's old guard to die off; an excellent intelligence service also allowed him to forestall many of the insurrections that might otherwise have become serious. Teferi's efforts worked superbly, and gradually Zewditu became increasingly isolated, allowing the regent to take an ever larger hand in shaping the country's course.

Haile Selassie's 1930-accession to the throne is viewed by many observers as a turning point in Ethiopian history. Such analysis probably is correct, yet it is clear at the same time that many of the new emperor's policies were not radically different. He built upon and expanded earlier precedents. Much of the subsequent growth, particularly in Addis Ababa, derived from Menilek's groundwork. Like the old emperor, Haile Selassie also granted concessions to enterprising Europeans for exploration and development of Ethiopia's resources. While Menilek was often satisfied

³¹Harold G. Marcus, "T' sehai Negus," Paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (5th, Nice, 1977), mimeo.

with a percentage share, Haile Selassie invested in many of these projects and encouraged other monied Ethiopians to do likewise.³² He also continued the centralization begun under Menilek and followed his lead in utilizing cabinet ministers. Menilek's systems of posts, telephone and telegraph were improved and extended. Likewise, banking, health and educational facilities continued to penetrate the provinces, being located first in areas of prime commercial concern: Dire Dawa, Goré, Dessie. As well, a limited, privately financed road improvement scheme was underway in key areas, so that by the Italian war, Ethiopia possessed a modest transport system adapted to lorries.³³

Haile Selassie inherited from Menilek a basic framework upon which to begin his transformation of the Ethiopian economy. Menilek's railway opened the country to the outside world, promoting opportunities for a wider

³²A degree of risk was involved, and European entrepreneurs did not always prove reliable. For example, the Imperial Ethiopian Rubber Regie, which had contracted to pay MT\$ 47,000 per year for its monopoly, soon defaulted and had its concession taken over by the Bank of Abyssinia. By contrast a fifty year tobacco concession seems to have proved much more profitable. USDC, Abyssinia, pp. 27-28. 50.

³³At least two examples of such projects can be cited. E. J. Bartleet, In the Land of Sheba (Birmingham, 1934), p. 140, notes the Goré-Gambela road financed by the Ethiopian Motor Transport Company. An improved Dire Dawa-Harar route is discussed by Richard Pankhurst, "The Harar-Dire Dawa Road and the 'Road Construction Association' of 1934," Paper delivered at the History Society of Ethiopia meeting (Addis Ababa, June 1975), mimeo; similar developments in Sidamo are dealt with in chapter 5.

range of imports and new export commodities. The old emperor's ill-health probably prevented the undertaking of other progressive measures. Certainly he recognized the importance of coffee as an export commodity and may have encouraged the measurement and distribution of suitable land that occurred in the years after his death.³⁴ Menilek also oversaw the slow transition from a tribute to tax-paying system, a reform more successfully promoted by Haile Selassie who could exploit the cash economy of the 1920s based on coffee.

The profits of the coffee trade stimulated a rising consumerism as evidenced by Ethiopia's changing pattern of imports in this period. While taxes on internal trade and monopolization of certain luxury items had been the chief source of Menilek's revenue, under Haile Selassie the focus seems to have shifted gradually to external trade, primarily taxes on imports. By the early 1940s, 30 percent of Ethiopia's ordinary revenues derived from this source, and by the end of that decade, external customs yielded around 40 percent.³⁵ The elimination of internal customs and the

³⁴Harar provided the chief example where coffee exports doubled in the twenty years after 1898. Considerable revenue from taxes on coffee collected in kind filled government coffers. Southard, 325, 328, noted that the "entire grounds around the Harar customs house are . . . covered with drying coffee."

³⁵Ethiopian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Economic Progress of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1955), pp. 103, 105.

rise of a tighter fiscalism improved the business environment and provided the government with vital revenues.

The 1920s thus brought growth to Ethiopia, particularly to the south. Land alienation there created a market economy in both land and labor; the tenancy relationship which arose in many areas transformed southern peasants into wage laborers who received a portion of the crop they produced in return for their work.³⁶ This conversion also helped to bring an end to the domestic slave trade, as did Haile Selassie's vigorous efforts. He acted under increasing international pressure, but was assisted by diminishing external demand. Internal domestic slavery had been a popular institution in many areas, and was not particularly harsh, nor characterized by perpetual bondage. Children of slave parents often acculturated and were freed. As with other reforms, Haile Selassie sought to eliminate the institution gradually. More effective than his measures, however, was the rise in many areas of the cash crop economy and the elimination of a tribute-paying system. Heretofore, slaveholders possessing client cultivators (gabbars) had collected enough agricultural surplus to support a limited system of domestic slavery. In a cash economy, where one had to purchase foodstuffs or set aside

³⁶Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System, Concepts of Comparative Analysis," Comparative Studies in Society and History, XVI, 4 (1974), 399-400, develops this concept.

valuable land for its production, and where the emphasis on agricultural labor became more important, slaves were a luxury that reduced potential profits.

The cash crop economy also promoted the spread of urbanization. Administrative centers in Ethiopia's conquered regions were traditionally situated in easily defensible, isolated locations, an arrangement which often hindered these sites from becoming commercial centers. But as security increased and a region was opened to economic development, new urban centers arose in locations conducive to attracting trade, often outstripping the earlier towns and leading to their demise. The abandonment of Liché and Entotto for the site at Filwoha (Addis Ababa) set a precedent that was to be followed in many parts of Ethiopia in the early twentieth century.³⁷ A linking of the administrative and commercial sectors gradually took place. In Jimma, the market center at Hirmata soon outshone the administrative headquarters at Jiren. The rise of Dire Dawa, situated on the rail line, although not causing the shift of administration from Harar, did reduce the latter's commercial importance.³⁸ Coffee production in Sidamo, as

³⁷ Richard Pankhurst, "The History of ~~Y~~äwänan Towns from the Rise of Menilek to the Founding of Addis Ababa," Paper presented at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (5th, Nice, 1977), mimeo.

³⁸ Akalou Wolde Mikael, "Urban Development in Ethiopia (1889-1925), Early Phase," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, XI, 1 (1973), 1-16.

we shall see, caused the creation of new commercial centers to market the commodity.

Clearly, the changes in Ethiopia prior to 1935, while modest, had profound implications for the future. Growth in the Ethiopian economy would be tremendous after the Italian war, by which time Ethiopia would be rather firmly in the capitalist orbit. By the 1950s, Ethiopia had become increasingly dependent on foreign aid to modernize and strengthen her military and to develop her economy. Her trade had become, like that of her colonized neighbors, outward-oriented, i.e., it emphasized import-export ties instead of promoting the development of internal commodity relations.

Although Haile Selassie had struggled valiantly to retain Ethiopia's economic freedom, the Italian war destroyed his efforts. Prior to 1935, a solvent Ethiopia enjoyed commercial relations with many nations.²⁹ Haile Selassie had made great initial strides toward self-development; in fact, as Marcus argues, the very success of the emperor's programs played a significant part in the Italian decision to conquer the country.⁴⁰ Yet even in the pre-war period, certain danger signs were already apparent in the Ethiopian economy. A brief examination of Ethiopia's commerce in

³⁹ USDC, Abyssinia, p. 35.

⁴⁰ Marcus, "The Infrastructure," mimeo.

three representative years will, I believe, illustrate the general point.

From 1900 to 1951 Ethiopia's export trade grew from an estimated value of MT\$ (Maria Theresa thalers) 3,000,000 to nearly Eth\$ (Ethiopian dollars) 117,000,000; in the same period, her import trade expanded from MT\$ 4,000,000 to over Eth\$ 104,000,000.⁴¹ Both imports and exports quintupled again from 1951 to 1974. Despite the rapid growth in Ethiopia's commerce, she enjoyed a favorable balance of trade in only five of those last twenty-four years, incurring a deficit of over one billion Ethiopian dollars.⁴² But let us examine her commercial profile seventy years earlier (see Table 1).

One notes that the Ethiopian export economy in 1905-6 was fairly balanced. While coffee dominated in terms of earnings, strong contributions were made by skins, ivory and beeswax. If Ethiopia were able to maintain this balance, she could protect herself against the vagaries of the world capitalist market. Such was not to be the case. Ivory was a depletable resource which, along with slaves and certain other luxury products, had dominated the trade in the nineteenth century. Beeswax had only a limited

⁴¹Cd. 852-27; Ethiopian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Economic Progress, pp. 90, 92.

⁴²Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1975), p. 102.

Table 1. Ethiopian Commercial Profile for the Years 1905-6, 1928-9, 1951.

Commodities	1905-6 ^a	1928-9 ^b	1951 ^c
EXPORTS:			
Total Value	MT \$ 3,377,400	MT \$ 11,751,788	Eth \$ 116,771,000
Percentage by value:			
Coffee	36	58	54
Skins	31	8	8
Hides	3	28	18
Ivory	14	--	--
Gold	5	--	--
Beeswax	11	3	1
Cereals & Pulses	--	--	7
Oilseeds	--	--	7
IMPORTS:			
Total Value	4,046,100	20,545,140	104,560,000
Percentage by value:			
American gray sheeting (aboutjedi)	49	29	14
Other cotton goods including yarn	32	38	28
Motor cars, parts & tires	--	1	6
Rubber products	--	--	3
Petroleum including kerosene	1	1	6
Corrugated iron sheeting	2	1	--
Metal & metal manufactures	--	--	6
Machinery	--	--	3
Soap	--	1	1
Salt	1/2	9	5
Alcoholic beverages	1	3	1
Sugar	--	--	6

^aGreat Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Report for the Year 1905-6 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 3283-8).

^bEthiopia, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Economic Progress of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1955), p. 88.

^cIbid, pp. 90, 92.

demand in the outside world, while skins and hides required a more sophisticated processing to improve quality. Coffee, on the other hand, was easily expanded. Less than 10 percent of Ethiopia's coffee exported via Djibouti in the early part of this century was of the Abyssinian variety (from the interior provinces).⁴³ The high-quality Harari type provided the bulk of the earnings, but by 1925 Abyssinian coffee had reached par in volume with the Harari-variety exports.⁴⁴ As we have noted already, the measurement and distribution of forested lands where coffee grew in a wild state, as well as the introduction of a more efficient and profitable means of transportation stimulated this development. By 1930, coffee far outdistanced any other export and generally retained that position. A "perverse," unbalanced development thus resulted. Since Ethiopia produced only about 1 percent of the world's supply, a position that would improve only slightly over the next twenty-five years (see Table 2), she was thus not a vital economic force within the world market. Her export earnings were much dependent upon world production and prices.

⁴³Cd. 852-27; Report for the Year 1905-6 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 3283-8), British Parliamentary Papers.

⁴⁴Adrien Zervos, L'Empire d'Éthiopie (Athens, 1936), p. 157.

Table 2.--Ethiopian Coffee Exports as Percentage of World Production, 1924-1950.*

Year	Percentage	Year	Percentage
1924-5	.89	1934-5	.91
1925-6	.66	1935-6	.95
1926-7	.72	1936-7	.57
1927-8	.97	1937-8	.53
1928-9	.71	1938-9	.64
1929-30	.79	1939-40	Unavail.
1930-1	.71	1940-4 (av.)	.60
1931-2	1.08	1945-9 (av.)	1.00
1932-3	1.05	1950	1.40
1933-4	.63		

Sources: 1924-39, League of Nations, Economic Intelligence Service, Statistical Yearbooks (Geneva).
 1940-50, Pan-American Coffee Bureau, Annual Coffee Statistics, No. 14 (New York, 1950-1),
 p. 9.

*My own calculations.

Table 3.--Coffee and Cotton Goods as Percentage of Ethiopian Export-Import Trade by Value, 1945-54.

Year	Percentage of:	Coffee	Aboujedi	Other Cotton Goods
1945		45	34	29
1946		33	25	31
1947		23	20	28
1948		19	23	27
1949		31	20	28
1950		46	15	25
1951		54	14	28
1952		47	12	25
1953		59	9	23
1954		62	8	20

Sources: Ethiopia, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Economic Progress of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1955), pp. 90, 92.

Her other potential exports declined. Ivory and gold⁴⁵ disappeared from the list, while a few new products like cereals and oilseeds appeared, but with no real government impetus to their development. Coffee and agricultural products of the above type did not compete for land, since each was adapted to different parts of the country;⁴⁶ yet, to a large degree, the feudal-like land tenure arrangements of the north impeded the promotion there of agricultural exports. The government feared that attempts to change the system would be politically unsettling and thus took no concerted action. By contrast, in some parts of the newly conquered south, the government moved quickly, as we have noted, through a feudal-like phase into a capitalist-like agriculture.

An emerging pattern of dependent growth is evident as well in Ethiopia's import economy. In 1905-6 a wide variety of foreign manufactured cotton goods made up over 80 percent of her imports. The strong role played by these products can be explained partly by the fact that cloth served as a form of currency within the Ethiopian economy. In areas lacking modern money, cloth held an intrinsic value

⁴⁵Gold continued to be mined and exported but its proceeds were kept strictly secret and benefited the royal purse.

⁴⁶Teketel Haile Mariam, "The Production, Marketing and Economic Impact of Coffee in Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1973), p. 80; I discuss this concept further in chapter 5.

of its own and could be transported and subdivided rather efficiently. During the twentieth century, however, this import declined in a relative sense as the money economy began to take hold, losing its role as a currency and becoming a simple commodity. On the other hand, during these years, we see a small, but expanding demand for luxury items, e.g., more expensive types of cloth such as silk and velvet, and goods such as automobiles and accessories,⁴⁷ kerosene for lighting, corrugated iron sheeting for roofing, and alcoholic beverages.

Increasingly after 1945, Ethiopia developed import substitute industries in manufactured cloth, soap, sugar and alcoholic drinks to reduce her foreign dependence. The 1952 addition of Eritrea to the empire was a tremendous step in this direction. Yet overall, these commodities were soon replaced on the import list by items such as machinery, electrical appliances, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and canned foodstuffs. Import substitution thus did less than was hoped to aid Ethiopian development. To be sure, economic growth was underway, yet its continuation depended on numerous external factors--shipping, technology, prices. While Ethiopian manufactures saved on foreign exchange, in

⁴⁷ Alfred M. Bailey, "Journal of the 1926-7 Abyssinian Expedition" (Library, Field Museum, Chicago), p. 25, notes that there were some 200 cars in Addis Ababa in 1926 and that a complete car could be purchased for \$700 (U.S.). Five years before, the city contained only a few autos.

reality most of the savings were redirected to newer, more expensive imports. As well, Ethiopian products tended to be consumed locally and did not enter the export market where they might have enhanced capital accumulation.

By 1951, if not earlier, Ethiopia's path to underdevelopment was apparent. Although she had retained her political independence, like her colonialized African neighbors, she was not economically free. Her development pattern reflected that of the East African colonies, and her overall economy was unbalanced, oriented primarily to the production of coffee, mostly procured by the United States.⁴⁸

Just as the European powers demonstrated a heightened interest in colonial investment in the 1950s, so Ethiopia as well received increased attention. The American Point Four Program focused upon the improvement and expansion of Ethiopia's coffee exports to meet world demand. A National Coffee Board was instituted to regulate marketing and to standardize grading of the product. Ethiopians were denied the bulk of the profits, since foreign firms controlled 83 percent of the coffee exports.⁴⁹ Industrialization in Ethiopia remained weak and that which did develop seems to

⁴⁸ Ethiopian Economic Review, I (1959), p. 11; Pan-American Coffee Bureau, Annual Coffee Statistics, No. 26 (New York, 1962), p. 71; Teketel, p. 24.

⁴⁹ Pierre G. Sylvain, "Ethiopian Coffee--Its Significance to World Coffee Problems," Economic Botany, XII (1958), 126-32; Teketel, pp. 89-90, 102-05.

reflect the outmoded and unproductive sectors which the world capitalist system allocates, technological advances permitting, to the underdeveloped world.

As I have endeavored to demonstrate, Ethiopia's post-war economic transformation was based on earlier precedents. Whereas the conquest of the south had helped initially to prop up the north's sagging feudal economy, the south later served to bring Ethiopia into the world capitalist system. As early as 1912, changing priorities encouraged the Ethiopian administration to manipulate land and redistribute resources in such a way as to make agricultural tenancy in the south much more attractive. The economic and social transformation brought about by these changes altered the traditional patterns of life in these areas. Overall, the pressures for social, political and economic adaptation were felt most strongly starting in the 1920s. The subject peoples of the south, although the patterns probably varied, had to adjust themselves shortly after conquest to a feudal-like arrangement imposed on them by local administrations; yet, within a generation, both the indigenous and settler populations were adapting further to capitalist pressures being exerted from Addis Ababa. We can now proceed with our case study, first laying out our general organizational format.

In trying to illustrate the change that affected Sidamo under Ethiopian administration, it is convenient to periodize the events. The chronology used here is primarily

local, but its general features apply to all areas incorporated by the Ethiopians. The chronology to be utilized is demarcated as follows: 1895-1900, 1900-1917, 1917-1935. While periods of change can seldom be so sharply defined, the administrative transitions which I have chosen represent basic shifts in policy. Chapter 1 deals essentially with the initial conquest and administration of northern Sidamo, placing it within the general framework of national Ethiopian objectives. We attempt as well a quick overview of traditional Darasa society, focusing upon those aspects most vital to this study.

Chapter 2 commences with the period after 1900. I place particular emphasis upon Dejazmach Balcha who administered Sidamo for over half of this forty year period, and upon the individual northern settlers with reference to their origins and motivations. In this period, we see successful Ethiopian attempts to occupy the area permanently, dispersing troop strength to various garrison towns around the area. To support these, the Ethiopians moved quickly from a system of communal to individual tribute collection known as neftenya-gabbar, which is the focus of chapter 3. This system allowed the direct expropriation of surplus labor and produce by individual patrons, but its utility was restricted by inherent structural limitations. Neftenya-gabbar could support only a limited settler community without totally pauperizing the indigenous population.

Yet other factors probably played even a greater role in restricting its growth, and encouraging the rise of a new agricultural system based on land alienation as described in chapter 4. Thus in the second decade of this century, resource priorities were redefined by the Ethiopian administration and a program pushed that would give northern settlers direct control over land. In so doing, northerners manipulated the labor supply to fit their new needs. While the Ethiopians, unlike the British in Kenya,⁵⁰ did not set up actual reserves, they in some ways achieved a comparable effect. By expropriating most available free land, the administration restricted the local inhabitants to crowded and overfarmed acreage, areas legally encompassed by the neftenya-gabbar system; at the same time, tenancy was made relatively attractive by profits to be made on more fertile, productive and less crowded estates. Concurrently, Darasa were under increasing pressure to pay tax in cash to both patron and government, and coffee provided the best possibility of achieving commodity conversion. This pressure, while not as concerted as the Hut Tax in Kenya,⁵¹ achieved much the same goal. Ethiopia's land measurement policy and the improved efficiency of her transport system promoted the

⁵⁰Cf. Richard D. Wolff, The Economics of Colonialism, Britain and Kenya, 1870-1930 (New Haven, 1974), pp. 97-100.

⁵¹Cf. Wolff, pp. 116-19; E. A. Brett, Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa (New York, 1973), pp. 188-90; Justinian Rweyamamu, Underdevelopment and Industrialization in Tanzania (Nairobi, 1973), pp. 20-22.

expansion of coffee whose impact was to be felt in the early 1920s. If World War I had not restricted available shipping and if Ethiopia's internal situation had been more stable, this impact may have been felt slightly earlier. General world prosperity in the 1920s contributed to a higher demand for coffee, while a stable administration under the reform-minded Ras-Regent Teferi brought Ethiopia's gradual linkage to the world capitalist system.

Changes resulting from Ethiopian administration took place also in the commercial and social spheres. These changes are the topics of chapters 5 and 6. In the early period, Ethiopians concentrated on garnering the most accessible resources of the south and orienting the trade in these commodities to the north along officially recognized and protected routes. In this regard, the Ethiopians employed a number of effective techniques which discouraged the commercial flow in other directions, irritating the Italians in particular. The rise of coffee brought a linking of the settler and indigenous economies which previously had intersected but remained largely apart. Coffee's gradual emergence as the area's chief trade item replaced ensete, Darasa's traditional staple, as the prime commercial product. New towns also emerged to serve this new commodity, displacing many of the older, administrative garrison centers. While traditional patterns of inter-ethnic trade continued, northern settlers encroached commercially and profitted from more efficient mule transport,

free time, and greater capitalization. Competition from northern settlers and increasing pressure on Darasa labor gradually reduced the commercial role that the local population played. Darasa were left to deal in those commodities little valued by northerners and even developed a few new ones. Most became dependent on northern traders for many of those commodities they had traditionally acquired through direct exchange.

The economic transformation wrought by Ethiopian administration also brought fundamental changes to Darasa social organization. While Ethiopians rarely stimulated these changes directly, their control and distribution of resources greatly affected traditional patterns in ways that assisted northern control. Traditional indigenous leaders were incorporated, if possible, into the new administrative structure, but sometimes, as in Darasa, were cast aside to wither away gradually, along with their associated institutions. The role of the indigenous liaison, or balabat, recognized by the administration, altered over time to reflect the general changes taking place. As the balabat assimilated, he was effectively co-opted into a system of direct rule. Since in Darasa the position of balabat was not founded upon traditional, legitimate authority, it was always rather weak and could be easily discarded if need arose.

The switch from neftenya-gabbar to tenancy brought individual Darasa into closer contact with their patrons.

This relationship affected Darasa in several ways. First, it increased the desire on the part of some to assimilate, but many were frustrated because the means of assimilation were not readily available. These means, in the form of churches and schools located in the towns, were hardly sufficient to meet settler demands let alone those of an enormous indigenous population. Clearly, Ethiopian authorities did not intend actively to promote acculturation. As in other spheres, settler attitudes toward assimilation changed as security and needs permitted, yet settlers were always intent on insuring their own control. Darasa, noting this settler passivity, sought increasingly to raise their social status through alternative channels: contacts with European mission Christianity and, after the Italian war, intermarriage with certain settler families, many only partially assimilated themselves.

The few Darasa alive today who can recall firsthand the advent of Ethiopian rule have witnessed a vast transformation. By its very nature, change is both tangible and amorphous at the same time, and affects whole societies as well as individuals but never exactly alike in any two instances. Darasa adapted to innumerable changes: some, like land alienation, immediate and drastic, and others, like the decline of gada, gradual and almost imperceptible. But we are in a sense ahead of our study.

We begin, then, in the mid-nineteenth century, when the Shoan state and a segmentary Darasa society existed

apart and largely isolated from each other. The Ethiopian expansionism that was to arise was not yet a reality, and in fact could not proceed until the core Abyssinian state itself was reunited and strengthened. Traditional Darasa, pressured by a growing population and insufficient agricultural lands, competed successfully against their neighbors, primarily the Sidama and the Guji Oromo, for additional cultivable areas.

Chapter 1

DARASA AND THE EMERGENCE OF ETHIOPIAN EXPANSIONISM

With the crowning of the peasant-king Tewodros II in 1855, the traditional Abyssinian state began emergence from a century-long civil war known as the Zemenemesafint (Era of the Judges). This conflict, pitting regional factions against each other for control of the imperial throne, exploited peasant manpower and resources, creating excessive hardship and suffering. For at least four generations, the land and inhabitants of northern Ethiopia were devastated. The people yearned, the chroniclers report, to be delivered from their fate; various unorthodox figures arose to lead the way, but only one, a man named Kassa, successfully established his imperial claim.

A product of these difficult times, Kassa himself equally suffered the brutality of the era, but, despite any legitimate birthright, he proceeded to establish order from chaos. By 1855, he had unified the country securely enough under his leadership to be crowned Emperor Tewodros. Throughout his thirteen year rule, the gallant monarch

struggled against chronic regionalism, compounded by a century of weak imperial power. Like all succeeding emperors, Tewodros was imbued with a desire to recreate the Abyssinian state in its fifteenth-century greatness. The task was immense, as each sovereign found out in his turn. Yet Abyssinian expansion was unrealistic until full political unity was restored.

Thus, Tewodros's greatest challenge was to regulate Abyssinia's fissiparous tendencies, a task at which he never completely succeeded. The emperor was not a diplomat; he had been weaned on the violence of the Zemenemesafint, and he ultimately resorted to force to accomplish his goals, thereby brutalizing the people upon whom his support depended. In the end, his uncompromising ways provoked a British invasion to free various diplomatic and missionary hostages, prompting the emperor's suicide.¹ Although Tewodros ultimately failed in his unity efforts, one must respect the monumental nature of his task. Few probably could have accomplished as much by any means, and in final analysis, one must at least credit him with gaining periodic and limited control over Ethiopia.

With Tewodros's demise, regionalism again seemed ascendant as local claimants competed for the throne.

¹See Sven Rubenson, King of Kings Tewodros of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1966); Donald Crummey, "The Violence of Tewodros," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 107-25.

Among these, only Wagshum Gobezie proved daring enough to take the prize, declaring himself Emperor Tekle Giorgis in 1868. The strongest contender, Kassa Mercha of Tigre, aided by the discarded firearms of the recent British expedition, successfully forwarded his own claim, decisively defeating the imperial pretender in battle three years later. Kassa quickly took the throne as Yohannis IV, reducing the number of competitors to three, and demonstrating to his two remaining opponents the importance of firearms in the ultimate struggle.²

Sixteen years after Tewodros's rise, Ethiopia's chief political tool remained force in the form of firearms. Yet Yohannis was a more astute politician than was Tewodros. He was willing to allow a degree of regional autonomy within an imperial state, coercing only when necessary. Yohannis stuck to his policy during his seventeen year reign, allowing each of his opponents, Ras Adal (later Negus Tekle Haimonot) of Gojjam and Menilek of Shoa, considerable local autonomy as long as each declared loyalty to the throne.

While professing fealty, both Menilek and Tekle Haimonot were unwilling to accept permanently their subordinate positions. With their own imperial ambitions, each realized that the acquisition of firearms was vital to attain his goal. Both examined their alternatives,

²See Zewde Gabre-Sellassie, Yohannis IV of Ethiopia (Oxford, 1975), pp. 21-24.

seeking to acquire modern weapons in any conceivable way, whether by purchase, treaties of friendship with European powers, or outright military victory. Purchase, of course, required commodities acceptable to foreign merchants, but both Gojjam and Shoa, while rich agriculturally, possessed no products of high export value; luxury items from the south such as ivory, civet, coffee, and gold were required. Accordingly, Gojjam and Shoa evolved their own indigenous types of expansionism, sustained by the idea of restoring the empire as a whole to its medieval prominence; yet the more immediate cause remained a desire to control the sources of export wealth needed to purchase firearms for capturing the imperial throne.

In this pursuit, Gojjam always remained a weak contender. Despite her strong commercial ties to the southwest, Gojjam's imperial ambitions were probably never very realistic, isolated as she was in the interior; they were further dimmed after 1882, when Gojjami and Shoan expansionism clashed directly in Wollega, resulting in a humiliating defeat for Tekle Haimonot. Shoa's position was much better: she was nearer the sea, but her trade routes were largely undeveloped and controlled by non-Shoans. Thus, Menilek's quest for the throne was based upon the premise that he could contain and incorporate Gojjami expansionism while

improving Shoa's coastal contacts. At both he proved quite capable.³

Meanwhile, in the north, Emperor Yohannis was attempting to regain Ethiopia's access to the sea. Yohannis's efforts, however, were directed to a ceaseless defense of his empire's northern boundaries against successive Egyptian, Italian and Mahdist encroachments. The emperor, nonetheless, remained interested in the resources of the south. His own province was certainly among Ethiopia's poorer, but geographical distance and Shoaan obstructionism dictated that he could not control the southern areas directly. Thus, Yohannis permitted the expansion of both Gojjam and Shoa, hoping to divert their imperial ambitions while he dealt with problems in the north. Meanwhile, he benefited by indirectly appropriating part of the southern riches through periodic tribute received from his competitors.⁴ This policy involved a calculated risk on Yohannis's part; he doubtlessly expected not to be kept so busy with external problems. Thus, while southern expansionism from 1871-1889 may have been an imperial interest, its impetus was primarily regional. Largely left to herself, Shoa subsequently emerged as a counterforce equal to traditional "Abyssinia" in power and resources.

³Harold G. Marcus, The Life and Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975), chapter 3.

⁴Zewde, pp. 101-04.

Menilek's growing economic and political vitality appeared a problem that Yohannis eventually would have to confront. But the emperor's untimely death at the hands of Mahdist troops in 1889 opened the way for Menilek to become the undisputed ruler of what was to become the modern Ethiopian state. In a real sense, then, Menilek's coronation marked the end of the Zemenemesafint, for he, more than any of his immediate predecessors, exercised relatively firm control over the provinces that emperors had not enjoyed for a century and a half. Regionalism remained a problem, but never again to such a divisive extent.

With the core provinces united once again, and the imperial crown securely his, Menilek could begin to complete the creation of the larger Ethiopian state. As emperor, he reassessed his expansionist goals:

As King of Shoa, Menelik had exploited the south and southwest to purchase weapons; as emperor, he used its wealth to bolster the north's sagging economy and to ensure the continuation of Amhara-Tigrean political and cultural hegemony.⁵

Parochial Shoan policies were reshaped to fit national objectives. Instead of utilizing the south's resources solely to benefit Shoa, Menilek aided the revival of the northern provinces, devastated by generations of political strife and periodic drought, pestilence and famine. While insuring Shoan political hegemony, he found ways to enlist reliable northerners in the national venture. Finally,

⁵Marcus, p. 140.

Menilek now had to concern himself with the defense of Ethiopia's borders, a task he had left previously to Yohannis.

While much of the strength and vitality of Shoa's expansionism derived from Menilek's personal leadership, his strategies and policies often owed much to his Shoaan forebears and had evolved over a period of 150 years. For the most part, Shoa had avoided the scourges of the Zemene-mesafint, her economy remaining resilient, while states further north exhausted themselves. Shoa's kings acknowledged fealty to the nominal emperor and paid tribute when necessary, thus avoiding outside interference. At the same time, the Amhara rulers began a period of local expansion against nearby Oromo settlers who had moved into the area in the sixteenth century. Although the contacts between the two peoples were relatively long-standing, assimilation was minimal as Amhara remained isolated in highland strongholds and Oromo cultivated the lowlands.⁶

Thus, in the early eighteenth century, Menilek's ancestors began to incorporate neighboring Oromo, developing and perfecting practices that Menilek later would use so successfully. Concerted raids on adjacent regions were undertaken periodically so that an area was both militarily and economically weakened before actual occupation resulted.

⁶Volker Stitz, "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shoa During the 18th and 19th Centuries," Rural Africana, XI (1970), 70-81.

Care was taken not to disrupt areas through which organized trade passed. Abiye, a local Manz ruler (ca. 1720-45), initiated a policy of building outposts in the subjugated areas from which to conduct future raids; Menilek's great grandfather, Wossen Sagad (1803-13), was the first to implement a policy of indirect rule, designating an indigenous leadership to administer each area for him. Menilek also owed much to his grandfather, Sahle Selassie (1813-47), who first claimed the title of Shoan negus (king), and who doubled the dynasty's territory. Moreover, Sahle Selassie made contacts with Europeans, impressing upon them his need for firearms, and sought to gain control over the prosperous trade routes to the south. Shoans remembered his reign as a Golden Age of prosperity, justice and security.⁷ Menilek was undoubtedly awed by the legends surrounding his illustrious ancestor and determined to follow his footsteps, a goal which he had to defer temporarily in his youth.

Tewodros's 1855-invasion briefly interrupted both Shoa's independence and expansionism. Incidental to the campaign was the death of Menilek's father, Haile Malekot. The young heir was captured and carried off to Tewodros's court, where, for the next ten years, he was educated and

⁷R. H. Kofi Darkwah, Shewa, Menilek and the Ethiopian Empire, 1813-1889 (London, 1975), pp. 8-12, 18-19, 25-29; Ed Simone, "The Amhara Military Expeditions Against the Shawa Galla (1800-1850): A Reappraisal," Proceedings of the United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies (1st, East Lansing, 1975), pp. 135-41.

grew to manhood. Life with Tewodros was undoubtedly an important influence in the young boy's development. Menilek perfected his military prowess, while, at the same time, watching his foster parent move ever closer to disaster. Incarcerated at Magdala with other political prisoners, the youth became keenly aware of the hatred and violence engendered by Tewodros's rule. He was reminded constantly of his birthright, and the desire to assume Shoa's crown subsequently inspired him to escape and return home.⁸ For the next twenty-four years, Menilek consolidated his personal power there and sought to secure a more comfortable and peaceful existence for his people.

During Menilek's tour as Shoan king (1865-1889), he reimplemented the expansionist plans of his forebears. Yet he could not safely dispatch his armies southward without protecting his rear. Thus, during much of this period, Menilek campaigned in and obtained limited control of Wollo, the province to his north, using it as a natural buffer against Yohannis, who acted to block Menilek's endeavors there. The emperor needed his own supporters in Wollo so that Menilek's loyalty could be insured. Yohannis's counter-strategy proved effective, and by 1878, Menilek's expansion in Wollo had been contained. After affirming Yohannis's sovereignty, Menilek was allowed to retain for the time being most of his Wollo conquests.

⁸Marcus, pp. 18-27.

Relatively secure in the north, Menilek redoubled his efforts in the south.⁹ As Afework Gabre Iyasus put it:

Already the dominion of Abba Dagno [Menilek's horse name] placed his feet in Wollo and his navel in Shoa; he then stretched out to Chercher [Hararghé] on the left and to Wollega on the right with his head pointing to Jimma and Kaffa. Henceforth, the sun did not burn him [Abba Dagno], the deserts did not make him sweat, the descents did not tire him and the ascents did not slow him; he sped around thundering and saying as he went: "This land is not enough for me; the plains are too confining."¹⁰

By the time Menilek became emperor in 1889, he had acquired control over the most important trade centers of the southwest and diverted to Shoa much of the trade that traditionally had travelled north from those points to Gojjam and Tigre. His jurisdiction also was nearer the coast, facilitating contacts with Europeans and arrangements for fire-arms.¹¹

After 1889, Shoa's expansionism was transformed into a national program and carried further to the east, south and southwest until Menilek had included all the highland territory; he then incorporated wide areas of semi-arid lowlands to provide an effective buffer against European encroachment, again doubling the size of the Ethiopian state and bringing it to its present boundaries. While

⁹Ibid., pp. 35-36, 53-56, 64-65; Zewde, pp. 86-93.

¹⁰Luigi Fusella, "Il Dagmawi Menilek di Afawarq Gabra Iyasus," Rassegna di Studi Etiopici, XVII (1961), 30.

¹¹Marcus, 64 ff., pp. 88-93.

Menilek's territorial claims were often grandiose, he competed effectively and equally with the European powers in the area and the machinery of Shoan expansionism worked efficiently enough to portray an image of effective occupation. At the far reaches of the empire, expansionism proceeded under its own impulses and stimuli, eventually forcing European powers to negotiate border agreements with Menilek in order to contain Ethiopia's growth.¹² Nonetheless, the vitality of the expansion was not necessarily curbed and tended to transmogrify into border raids that Menilek and his successors found nearly impossible to control.¹³

In addition to the economic and strategic factors motivating Shoan expansionism, one must consider also a deeper psychological driving force that influenced the Shoan and national leadership. To varying degrees, the Amhara-Tigre were heirs to the legends of Abyssinia's fifteenth-century greatness, a period during which the

¹²Ibid., pp. 134-39; 177-90; Edward G. Keefer, "Great Britain and Ethiopia, 1897-1910: Competition for Empire," International Journal of African Historical Studies, VI, 3 (1973), 468-74.

¹³British intelligence reported Ethiopian raids as far afield as El Wak in Kenya; near Mogadishu in Somalia; and Dodinga country in Uganda. See the following despatches from Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910, FO 401/8: Sir D. Stewart to Lyttelton, Telegraphic, April 18, 1905, Enc. 1 in No. 74; Sir D. Stewart to Lyttelton, Telegraphic, April 24, 1905, Enc. in No. 81; Report of Sub-Commissioner C. W. Fowler for June, 1905, Enc. in No. 135.

emperors had expanded the borders of the empire to include many non-Christian elements. The church, hand-in-hand with the state, had grown correspondingly by nominal conversion of part of this population to Christianity.¹⁴ But the Moslem jihad of the sixteenth century and the subsequent Oromo migrations had forced a rapid contraction of the state. Even so, the legends of past grandeur were preserved and as the Amhara-Tigre state revived in the nineteenth century, irridentism emerged, a desire to reincorporate the lost Christian areas. Menilek himself was influenced by these traditions. His chronicler, Guébrè Selassié, relates that Menilek was intrigued by stories of remnant Christians surviving on the islands of Lake Zway and undertook a campaign in that vicinity to verify their existence.¹⁵ The church-educated elite viewed the nineteenth-century expansion partly in terms of religious revival, and, for many, it was a case of reincorporation of lost peoples, rather than simple conquest.

Yet the psychological aspects of expansionism go even deeper, into the very soul of Amhara-Tigre culture.

¹⁴Taddesse Tamrat, Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527 (Oxford, 1972).

¹⁵Guébrè Selassié, Chronique du Règne de Ménelik II, Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie (Paris, 1930), I, pp. 335-37; R. R. Azais and R. Chambard, Cinq Années de Recherches Archéologiques en Éthiopie (Paris, 1913), pp. 266-67, reports that Menilek rebuilt the Birbir Mariam church near Chenchä on the site of one destroyed by Muhammad Gran.

Within this framework was a manifest destiny, a divine mission, a God-given duty not only to recreate the glories of the past Christian empire but to rule it as well. As Levine aptly points out, this cultural self-assurance was the product of a centuries-long evolution in which the Christian Amhara-Tigre cultural complex competed against and gradually came to dominate other cultures and religions. This evolutionary struggle, with its doctrinaire prescriptions, was manifested in the thirteenth-century document, the Kebre Negest, which Levine calls Ethiopia's "national script"; as an aeteological charter, it should not be underestimated in terms of its influence on Abyssinian expansionism in both the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁶

This script, as Levine argues, has shaped the attitudes and perceptions of Amhara-Tigre culture, legitimizing and sanctifying its monarchy, Christian religion, and heirarchical social organization. These cultural symbols have subsequently been defined as superior to all others, to be cherished but made available to less fortunate peoples.

Thus, assimilation implies acceptance of these main components of Amhara-Tigre culture. While the framework has never been totally rigid, the process of acculturation has always been tightly enough controlled to insure that

¹⁶Donald N. Levine, Greater Ethiopia (Chicago, 1974), chapter 7.

the dominant peoples would not be swamped by their neighbors. Thus, historically, the process has been slow and well-ordered, reflecting the basic organization of the dominant society itself.

Both the rapidity and extensiveness of Ethiopia's nineteenth-century expansion may have required a further tightening of these cultural rules. A large number of participants in this conquest were semi-assimilated Ethiopians from the core Shoan region, themselves only recently incorporated into the empire and not necessarily constant in their new cultural identity. To many Amhara, these semi-assimilated countrymen still practiced an aberrant lifestyle, while their participation in Ethiopia's southern expansion left ample opportunity for backsliding. Thus, economic and social sanctions were applied against northerners who mixed too freely with the subject population. Intermarriage was frowned upon and often made such individuals the target of land litigation. Thus, I would argue that Ethiopian expansion, with only a limited capacity for acculturation in the short-run, promoted the rapid assimilation of disparate core peoples while retarding the overall integration of those at the periphery.

Whether one speaks in economic, political or psychosociological terms, on a national or personal level, Ethiopia's national destiny was fulfilled in the decade following Menilek's coronation. On several fronts, Ethiopian commanders pushed imperial control into the Ogaden,

Balé, Gemu Gofa and Kaffa. At the same time, another front was extended into Sidamo and pushed from north to south until the Sidama,¹⁷ Wollamo, Guji, Darasa, Burgi, Boran and Konso had been incorporated, the last in a long series of peoples gathered into the empire over many centuries.

Little is known about the attempts of these various peoples to deal with and adjust to the realities of this expansion. We get some sense of the consequent disruption and panic by reading the accounts of a few foreign travellers in the affected areas just prior to and after incorporation. For example, Vannutelli and Citerni reveal certain of the fears, strategies and attitudes manifested by local people toward the invaders. The pair noted the existence of small groups of mounted northern raiders plundering the countryside; deserted villages; and terror-stricken inhabitants in hiding. In Wollamo, recently devastated by the conquerors, people begged for firearms; in Amarro, about to be invaded, the ruler sought to use the European presence to discourage the Ethiopians, intimating to his visitors:

. . . I know you foreigners are good people. Ah!
The Amhara instead are our ruin! You foreigners are

¹⁷ Throughout this dissertation, the term "Sidamo" will imply the administrative region as a whole excluding Wollamo, part of Arero awraja and Borana. "Sidama" refers to the specific ethnic group which resides in the north of that province.

beneficent as the rain; they are destructive as a river in flood.¹⁸

The Amarro were threatened as well by the neighboring Badditu, their traditional enemies, who took the opportunity to raid. The Borodda, west of Lake Abaya (called locally Ghediccho), were divided, some choosing to assist the northerners in raiding and subjugating their kinsmen.¹⁹ Many southern societies have subsequently periodized their local histories in terms of the happy, prosperous times "before the Amhara came" and the obviously less joyful post-conquest period.²⁰ The coming of the northerners thus marked a clear and decisive turning point for most of Ethiopia's subjugated peoples.

While the incorporation of certain Ethiopian peoples proved quite difficult, the Darasa became Ethiopians relatively quietly in 1895 with the submission of a peace mission, the appointment of local administrators, and the payment of a token tribute.²¹ As early as 1889, the

¹⁸L. Vannutelli and C. Citerni, L'Omo, Viaggio d'Esplorazione nell'Africa Orientale (Milan, 1899), p. 174.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 172-73, 176, 252, 258-59.

²⁰E.g., the Boran. See P. T. W. Baxter, "The Social Organization of the Galla of North Kenya" (Ph.D. thesis, Lincoln College, Oxford, 1954), p. 19. The Darasa also make such a distinction.

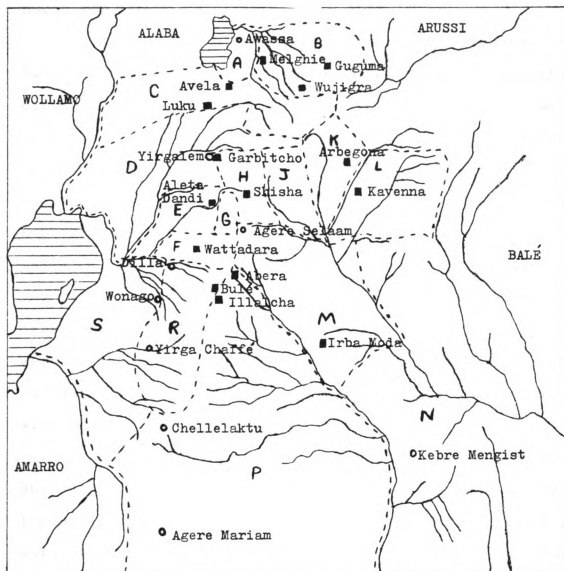
²¹Guido Guidi, "Nel Sidamo Orientale," Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana [hereafter BSGI], Series 7, IV (1939), 377. My own informants were unable to verify this date, but it seems correct based on chronology from other areas.

Ethiopians had begun to reconnoitre northern Sidamo. At that time, Dejazmach Beshah Aboye established a base camp at Shisha in Sidama from which he possibly raided Darasa, although local traditions do not recall this. In any case, his Guragé foot soldiers were likely not well armed or provisioned, and he withdrew them after six months.²² Such raiding was common strategy in advance of the actual Ethiopian occupation, providing concrete forewarning, and thereby softening local resistance to make final incorporation easier.

Two years later, Dejazmach Lulseged established himself in Sidama, turning his predecessor's camp into a permanent garrison. Within a year, he had succeeded in obtaining the peaceful submission of most of the Sidama clans, except for the belligerent Hadicho, a caste group bordering the Darasa to the north. Lulseged quickly crushed their

²²Tsehai Berhaneselassie, "Menelik II: The Conquest and Consolidation of the Southern Provinces" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1969), pp. 20-22; Getachew Kelemu, "Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970), pp. 17-19; L. Traversi, "Informazioni Geografiche dallo Scioa," *BSGI*, XXXI (1894), 390-91 makes reference to a Dejazmach Pashia (Basha) who raided northern Sidamo. The use of firearms, while decisive in the southern expansion, was probably limited until after the Battle of Adwa in 1896. As negus and as emperor, Menilek likely concentrated the major and most modern part of his armaments in the north, where the greatest threats existed. The lack of firearms in the early period of expansion made permanent garrisoning extremely precarious, see Marcus, p. 36.

Figure 2. Northern Sidamo Province.



ETHNIC LOCATIONS (Approximate) - - -

A Havella	M Mati	} GUJI	o Modern Towns ■ Early Garrisons
B Melgha	N Hoku		
C Yenassi	P Uraga		
D Shabadino	S Alabdu		
E Aleta	} <u>SIDAMA</u>		
F Hadicho			
G Garbitcho			
H Hollo Sabola			
J Arbegona	} R Darasa		
K Arbe			
L Kavenna			

Based upon the U.S. Defense Mapping Agency, Operational Navigation Chart, ONC L-5 with additional detail from the works of Stanley and Hamer as cited in the bibliography.

opposition, consolidating his position before returning north for the Wollamo campaign in 1894.²³

Meanwhile, Dejazmach Asfaw Dargé, from his base in Balé, led a force that penetrated Darasa country from the east.²⁴ Local traditions clearly recall his arrival, which introduced the Darasa to the terror of firearms. Several warriors were killed by the "mysterious and frightful" weapons, and the new "magical" method of warfare created consternation. Following Asfaw's unexplained departure, Lulseged arrived, the way made easier by word of devastation and carnage wreaked upon the resisting Wollamo.²⁵ Taking first the submission of the Mati and Hoku Guji, he proceeded westward to the edge of the Rift Valley escarpment where Darasa, already demoralized by their initial experience with modern weaponry, offered little resistance.

As this strange army "possessing long tails (sabers) and carrying black sticks (rifles)" approached the Didabulé forest, the traditional frontier between Darasa and Guji, mura (traditional messengers) sounded their antelope horns

²³Tsehai, pp. 22-26; Getachew, p. 20.

²⁴Ethiopian commanders fiercely competed for conquered territory, hoping to gain its administration as an imperial reward. One Amhara informant reported that in Sidamo, Asfaw Dargé ordered the tails of all area sheep cut off to indicate to the emperor that he, not Lulseged, had conquered the area.

²⁵For descriptions of this campaign, see J. G. Vanderheym, Une Expédition avec le Négous Ménelik (Paris, 1896), pp. 168-86; Guébrè Selassié, pp. 359-64.

in alarm. Spear-carrying Darasa warriors mobilized to confront the enemy, while the abba gada (religious leader), Beeftu Robé, fled south for protection. After a few initial encounters, a follé (assembly) decided to send a peace delegation to the military commander. At about the same time, the Darasa neighbors to the west, the Alabdu Guji, made a similar decision.

Lulseged withdrew to Shisha while the Darasa convened their council, and a few days later, received their delegation there. The eight-member mission was led by Shundé Karro and brought a token tribute of a sheep and some honey. Members seem to have had no special qualifications and no apparent status in Darasa society. Some informants claimed selection was undertaken by a kayyo (harispicator), while others indicated delegates were volunteers. After blessing by the abba gada, who gave Shundé a protective amulet to wear around his neck, the commission set out with considerable trepidation. They need not have worried.

After receiving the symbolic tribute, Lulseged enlisted the commissioners as officials, although without military rank. Shundé was appointed balabat for all the Darasa, the others his korros.²⁶ Northerners thus erected an administrative hierarchy that, to a degree, mirrored the indigenous structure. The balabat was drawn from one of two

²⁶At about the same time, Lulseged confirmed Tekabo Gocho as the Alabdu Guji balabat.

senior clans which shared the traditional office of abba gada, while the seven korros represented all the Darasa clans. This selection was determined by the Darasa themselves, not imposed from above.

Since Darasa traditional leadership had not cooperated with the invaders and had encouraged resistance, the northern conquerors were obliged to recognize alternative appointees, individuals lacking legitimate, traditional authority. Shundé was therefore accepted as the chief Darasa intermediary by the invader, and the abba gada bestowed his blessing upon the balabat whom he considered his personal envoy to the garrison commander. Association with traditional organization provided Shundé with a degree of vital political legitimacy. However, as the true nature and importance of the balabat post emerged, a rivalry between Shundé and the abba gada developed and two competing structures evolved.

The duties of the balabat and his korros commenced immediately. Seeking to secure themselves, the northern conquerors assigned two urgent tasks to the korros. They were to supervise the provisioning of foodstuffs and firewood and the acquisition of building materials to construct a permanent fortification. Following their habitual pattern, the Ethiopians located their garrison on a high strategic point, overlooking the Guji to the east and the Darasa to the west. Placing the fortress town (ketema) here helped to police Guji and Darasa raiding, and preserved

productive agricultural land. Thus, Bulé ketema took shape in early 1896. Besides the necessary housing and storage facilities, an Orthodox Christian church dedicated to Selassie (the Trinity) was erected. Throughout, Darasa contributed foodstuffs and labor. Some were puzzled, even irritated, by these forced donations, but the new balabat and his subordinates did the best they could to explain the realities of the situation.

While a small garrison supervised the construction at Bulé, the remainder of Lulseged's army continued southward, along with a number of Darasa interpreters, guides and porters. Recently incorporated peoples thus played an immediate role in the furthering of Ethiopian expansionism. Although non-combatants, they facilitated the movement and support of the armies. By 1897, they helped Lulseged to complete his conquests in Sidamo, subjugating the Uraga Guji, Burgi, Boran and Konso. For many peoples in Sidamo, incorporation was relatively painless, even if most felt the immediate effects of the occupation; if they grumbled about their new status, they also realized there was little they could do. At the same time, most of their leaders advised against violence.²⁷

To varying degrees, all the societies incorporated into the Ethiopian empire at the turn of the century

²⁷ Apparently not all were happy under the administration. In 1894 Tulli Tosha and his followers attacked the garrison at Shisha and slaughtered many of its inhabitants. See Tsehai, p. 26; Getachew, p. 21.

underwent change. Among the Darasa, the changes were more monumental than for neighboring peoples. Within eighty years, many Darasa had become landless peasants whose agricultural output was reoriented; their political and social institutions had been so devastated that only a weak facade remained. Before we can describe these changes in more detail, we must attempt to portray traditional Darasa society as the conquerors found it in 1895. The task is not an easy one. Few observers, other than Jensen,²⁸ have attempted such work. I have collected additional information, yet considering the damage to institutions involved, the picture probably can never be totally reconstructed.

Today the Darasa number about 250,000 and occupy an area in excess of 1,200 square kilometers of land.²⁹ Both the population and territory have grown considerably over the last eighty years. We lack suitable demographic data on the late nineteenth century, but the Darasa population was no doubt smaller, even if population pressure was intense. The Darasa were confined to the upper slopes of a chain of hills running southward along the Rift Valley escarpment east of Lake Abaya. Despite their intensive cultivation of ensete ventricosum, Darasa in the 1890s

²⁸Adolf E. Jensen, Im Lände des Gada (Stuttgart, 1936).

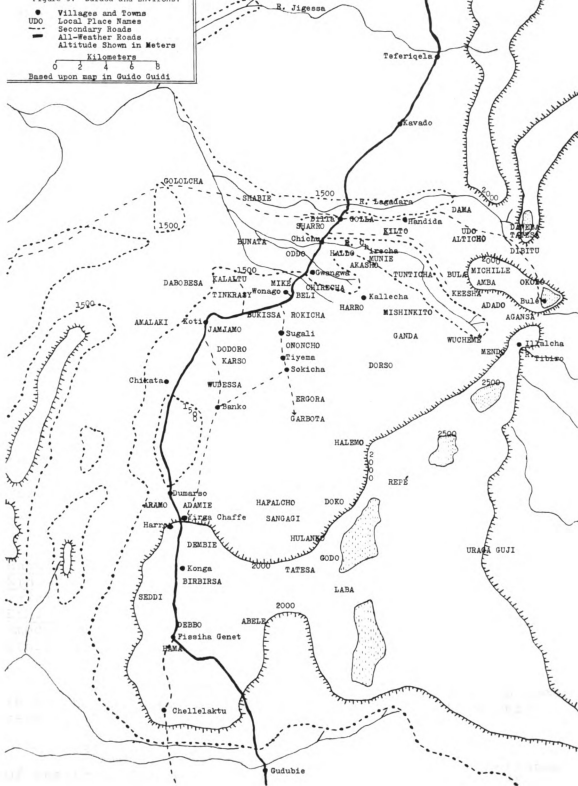
²⁹M. Lionel Bender, "The Languages of Ethiopia: A New Lexicostatistic Classification and Some Problems of Diffusion," Anthropological Linguistics, XIII, 5 (1971), 219; Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana (Milan, 1938), p. 560; Guidi, 377.

needed new lands to accommodate a growing population. Rivalry for land between Darasa clans had increased and in some cases conflict had broken out. At the same time, some Sidama, probably feeling the same pressures, were spreading southward across the Lagadara River into an unpopulated, forested inter-ethnic zone, used seasonally by Alabdu Guji pastoralists and Darasa cultivators. The Sidama seem to have enjoyed the upper hand until the coming of the Ethiopians who stabilized ethnic boundaries (when it was to their advantage) and confined the Sidama north of the river. This policy permitted Darasa to settle permanently in areas that once had been too highly contested for them to control effectively. Darasa also expanded down-slope into areas utilized by Guji made weak by a recent drought and famine.³⁰

After the Ethiopian occupation, individual Darasa used this forested no-man zone to escape their northern overlords; by the 1920s, as the demand for the forest's wild coffee rose, Ethiopians actively encouraged the clearance and cultivation of these areas by Darasa settlers. This expansion continues today with Darasa farming land to the west of Dilla and Wonago and around Koti, the traditional home of the Guji kallu (religious leader). They have migrated southward to the vicinity of Agere Mariam in Uruga country and probably eastward as well. Even with

³⁰Eike Haberland, Galla Süd Äthiopiens (Stuttgart, 1963), p. 286, confirms this movement.

Figure 3. Darasa and Environs.



this expansion, Darasa population densities have remained among the highest in Ethiopia, estimated, despite the lack of satisfactory demographic data, at 150-200 persons per square kilometer with concentrations as high as 500.³¹

Fortunately for the Darasa, they cultivate a unique food crop which permits high population concentrations. Their traditional ensete, high in carbohydrates, but protein-deficient, nevertheless provides one of the highest caloric intake ratios per hectare of any agricultural crop.³² The plant's luxuriant foliage also provides fodder for housed livestock as well as thatching for housing; it can be fashioned into clothing, containers, or binding for the packaging of market produce. While ensete cultivation requires little land, intensive care and fertilizing are necessary.³³ Yet within the confines of a densely populated area, it has been difficult to find sufficient pasture for livestock. Darasa thus have developed a system of

³¹Guidi, 377. Detlev Karsten, The Economics of Handicrafts in Traditional Societies: An Investigation in Sidamo and Gemu Goffa Provinces, Southern Ethiopia (Munich, 1972), p. 28; S. Stanley, "Ensete in the Ethiopian Economy," Ethiopian Geographical Journal, IV, 1 (1969), 36; Helmar Smeds, "The Ensete Planting Culture of Eastern Sidamo, Ethiopia," Acta Geographica, XIII, 4 (1955), 36.

³²Eshetu Yimer, "Land Use Study in Hanasho (Sidamo)" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1972), p. 66.

³³Smeds, 1-39; few have appreciated the importance of ensete in Ethiopia's domestic economy. Stanley, 36, estimates that one million tons are produced annually in the country, 40 percent from Sidamo.

livestock stalling within their homes, a technique which facilitates the efficient collection of manure. Larger livestock are maintained for short periods and are generally acquired from the Guji, who either own them or care for them on contact.

Darasa country averages 2000-2500 meters in altitude, with extremes ranging from 1500 meters near Dumarso to 3100 meters in the mountains. The area is thus amenable to the production of both ensete and coffee,³⁴ and in recent generations, the crops have been grown together. A 1968-Ethiopian government survey revealed the following: 32 percent of the cultivated hectares in Darasa awraja (a sub-provincial unit) were allocated to mixed coffee-ensete production, with an additional 8 percent for ensete alone and 5 for coffee.³⁵ These figures, of course, would be much higher were the Darasa ethnic area considered apart from the unsuitable lowland Guji zones.

Darasa soils are relatively fertile, though the agricultural balance must be carefully maintained. The hilly terrain inhibits the production of northern Ethiopian grains, but both coffee and ensete are well adapted, helping to prevent the serious soil erosion that would

³⁴Guidi, 373.

³⁵Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, Report on a Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 26.

otherwise occur.³⁶ As well, neither crop necessitates use of the imported northern Abyssinian plow, so that the hoe and digging stick remain the chief agricultural implements. Bamboo, another erosion deterrent, is grown in many of the gullies at higher altitudes. For official tax purposes, the government has rated the land in Darasa as fertile,³⁷ a judgment corroborated by my own incomplete survey of government tax receipts from 1945. This classification though is probably as much a reflection of the area's suitability to coffee as of its fertility. In fact, the ever-present lushness of the area, in sharp contrast to the desolate dry-season plains below, can lure the casual observer into believing that the area is naturally prolific.

Darasa have maintained long-standing contacts with their neighbors. Linguistically, Darasa are members of the Highland East Cushitic complex,³⁸ and thus related to the

³⁶Eshetu, pp. 69-70.

³⁷Reliance upon official government material can be misleading. For example, the Ethiopian Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, Report on the Land Tenure Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), pp. 7, 9, 12-13, classifies over 50 percent of both Darasa awraja's measured and unmeasured land as infertile, but this percentage is greatly weighted by the presence of much poorer land in Guji territory. Guidi, 383, from a European standpoint, rated only about 40 percent of Darasa land suitable for extensive cultivation.

³⁸Grover Hudson, "Highland East Cushitic," in The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia (East Lansing, 1976), pp. 232-77.

Burgi, Hadiya, Sidama and Kambata, with whom they share numerous cultural and social similarities.³⁹ As a people, the Darasa are relatively homogeneous, with only slight linguistic variations.⁴⁰

A special relationship is evident with the neighboring Guji, particularly the Alabdu, with whom they recognize a common ancestral origin. Communications between the neighbors has been eased since Darasinya has incorporated much Oromo vocabulary and many Darasa themselves understand Gujinya. The extensive Guji connection has been labeled by Haberland as "symbiotic,"⁴¹ and certainly is. Beyond the ordinary exchange of predominately agricultural for pastoral commodities, Guji have enjoyed direct access to Darasa markets and vice versa, a privilege denied to other, more hostile neighbors. Darasa has served as a Guji

³⁹For a description of the Sidama systems, see Bruno Lonferini, I Sidamo, un Antico Popolo Cuscita (Bologna, 1971); John H. Hamer, "Sidamo Generational Class Cycles: A Political Gerontocracy," *Africa*, XL, 1 (London, 1970), 50-72; S. Stanley, "The Political System of Sidama," Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (3rd, Rome, 1966), III, pp. 215-28; Getachew Kelemu, pp. 4-9, 46-59; on the Burgi, see Kenneth A. Mude, "A History of the Amaro Burji" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, University College, Nairobi, 1968); and on the Kambatta, Norman J. Singer, "The Relevance of Traditional Legal Systems of Modernization and Reform: A Consideration of Cambata Legal Structure," paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (5th, Nice, 1977), mimeo.

⁴⁰Hudson, p. 233; Guidi, 380.

⁴¹Haberland, pp. 272, 298-300.

refuge in times of drought, and, in return, Guji have tended farmed-out Darasa livestock. Darasa blacksmiths have settled in Guji areas, serving a needy constituency there.⁴²

Under Ethiopian administration, this symbiosis continued. Darasa farmers rented their labor to wealthy Guji clients who employed it to avoid odious corvée obligations. Guji traditionally traversed Darasa territory each year on their way to Lake Abaya to gather bolé (earth salt) for their livestock. Darasa, although many would deny it, traditionally visited the Guji kallu. Relations were not always peaceful, but skirmishing was limited to the taking of hostages and a demand for ransom.⁴³ The ecological niches occupied by each group no doubt contributed to such limited hostility; economically each group needed the other, and subsequently competition was minimal.

Aside from their recognized relation to the Guji, Darasa trace their own origins to a polygamous ancestor named Deresso,⁴⁴ who fathered the seven patrilineal Darasa

⁴²Karsten, pp. 53-54, 64-65.

⁴³Haberland, pp. 290, 298; John Hinnant, The Guji of Ethiopia (New Haven, 1972), I, pp. 191, 195, 199, 207.

⁴⁴Despite origins from this eponymous ancestor, Darasa call themselves "Gedeo." Like the usage of "Galla" for Oromo, "Darasa" also is a term with negative connotations deriving from Amhara usage. The military government, recognizing this fact, has renamed Darasa awraja, Gedeo. I have chosen not to make use of it here, as the older name is better known.

clans (torbanigosa), three from the senior wife (Hemba, Logoda and Bakarro) and four from the junior (Darasha, Hannuma, Doba and Gorgosha). Upon his death, Deresso divided the land among the seven sons. Each clan thus was awarded specified territory, even if individuals were free to settle where they wished.⁴⁵ Clans were probably less territorially dispersed in the past than they are today. Darasa thus appear to have an asymmetrical moiety organization with the senior clans dominating the society's more important leadership posts.

Overlying this kinship organization is a gosa or territorial structure called by the Darasa sassseroga (literally three rogas). Like the neighboring Guji who also have three gosa, the Darasa units (Subbho, Ributa and Rikuta) each have more or less defined boundaries. One would find representatives of all clans within each gosa, yet in the Darasa case, certain clans dominated particular areas.

Three leaders shared power in each gosa: the roga, djellkeba and huletiki heiycha. Informants portrayed the functions of these leaders as political, military and judicial respectively, but it is unlikely that duties were

⁴⁵Cf. Roberto Asinari di San Marzano, Dal Giuba al Margherita (Rome, 1935), p. 234. The author presents a chart of Darasa clans with associated locations; he creates confusion, though, by identifying certain sub-clans as full ones. Guidi, 380, notes that the Bakarro live in the extreme south, while the Hemba reside in the north. Jensen, pp. 330-32.

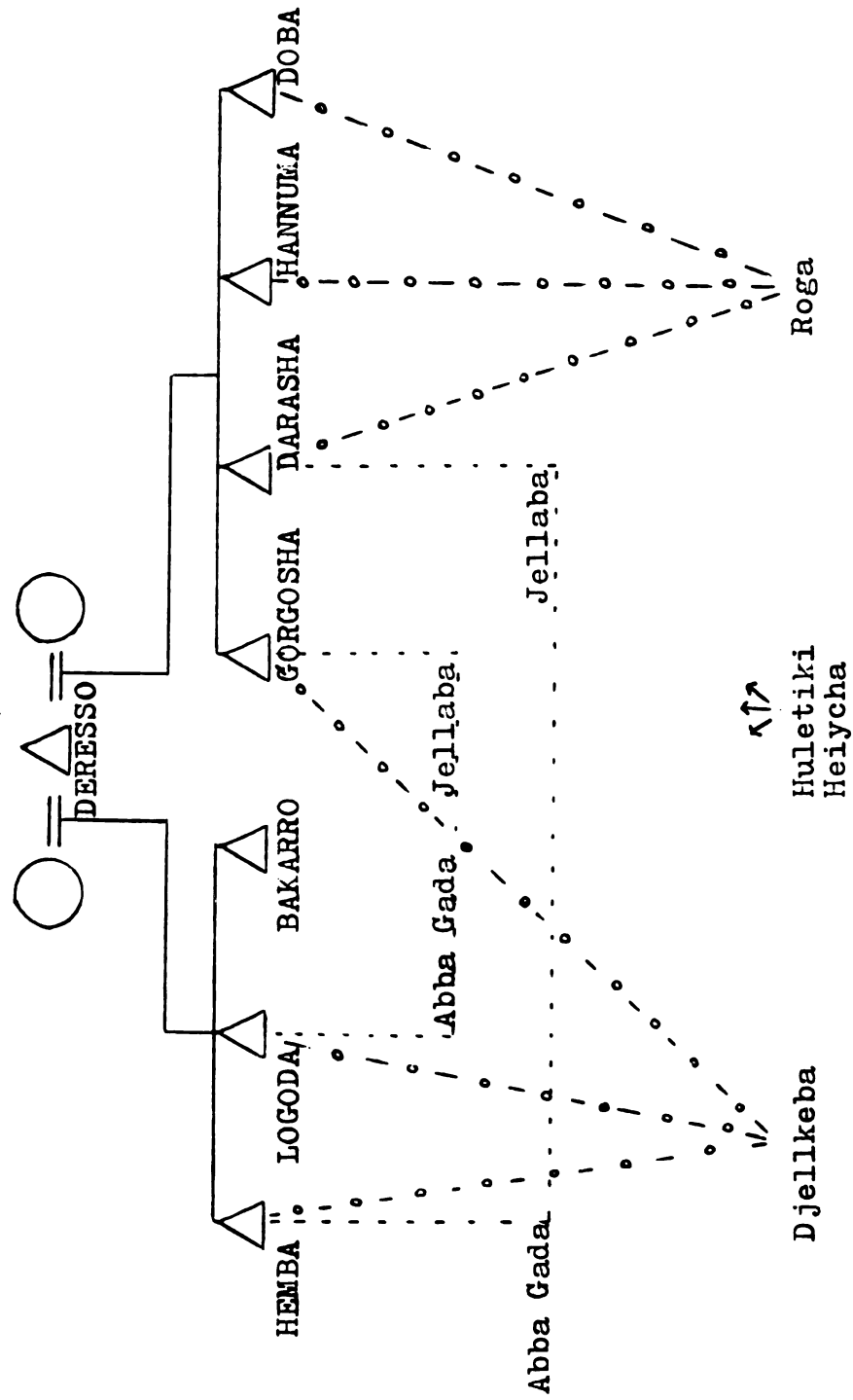


Figure 4. Darasa Clans and Distribution of the Chief Leadership Posts.

so clearly defined. The posts within each gosa were specifically allocated to particular clan heads with the senior clans dominating that of roga, and the junior that of djellkeba⁴⁶ (see Figure 4). The huletiki heiycha was the chief judicial functionary within the gosa and handled appeals from the numerous lesser heiycha, drawn from all the clans and sub-clans and dispersed widely throughout the society.

Decision making was decentralized in a series of ya'a councils conducted at various levels from the neighborhood to the gosa, each dealing with its specific parochial needs. Local ya'a councils still function informally and are centered around a grassy knoll called a shongo, used by the heiycha to hear local cases and by men to socialize and discuss problems of mutual concern. Often a thatched building was erected on the site. Lastly, muras, attached to various Darasa officials at all levels, acted as messengers, sounding their horns to warn of attack, disbursing news and bringing disputant individuals before proper councils.

The gada system provided a transcendent unity to an otherwise segmented society. Like the Guji counterpart upon which it was based, it was not strictly an age grade organization, but did provide a means of marking

⁴⁶Jensen, pp. 330-31.

generations and equitably sharing political power. One informant described the acquisition of gada as follows:

The Guji kallu called Woma first started gada. Darasa admired it, thinking it to be a proper way for people to elect their leaders, but the Guji were not willing to let Darasa learn the system. Finally, several Darasa men, disguised as women, slipped into the kallu's compound, and there were granted asylum from the angry Guji. The kallu permitted them to learn the secrets of gada. Upon their return home, the two men, Fifu and Dacho, disputed which of them was to be the first abba gada. A contest was subsequently held to decide the issue: first each contender had to carry water from Ghediccho in a sieve which Dacho was able to accomplish. Next, they slaughtered oxen and Dacho's was found to be without a heart, a true miracle. From that time, abba gadas have been associated with miracles.⁴⁷

This myth probably helps to explain several features of the Darasa organization: the great similarity in the Darasa and Guji systems, the close relationship between the Darasa and the Guji kallu, and the shared nature of the Darasa abba gadaship.

The two chief posts within the system, abba gada and jellaba, were shared between two of the junior and senior clans with the latter always holding the abba gadaship. As in Guji, the functions of the abba gada appear to have been more ritual than political,⁴⁸ and neither leader ever travelled far from his traditional

⁴⁷My informant had held the post of djellkeba. The characters are similar to those recorded by Jensen, pp. 110-11, but in a different context.

⁴⁸John Hinnant, "The Gada System of the Guji of Southern Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1977), pp. 181-83.

residence in Agansa. The two posts, as with those of the gosa, were chiefly hereditary, but both the choices were expected to be of exemplary character and possess no physical disabilities. The well-being of Darasa society was tied up in the health and character of the abba gada and each holder was believed to reflect the goodness of his illustrious ancestors. As Darasa's chief functionaries, they were busy making sacrifices for the good of the whole society, hearing final legal appeals and dealing with inter-clan conflict. The jellaba acted as the abba gada's chief assistant and surrogate, reportedly succeeding him in office if death occurred.

These leaders were advised in council by the gosa administrators. Included on this council as well was the clan head from Bakarro, a simple heiycha possessing no prescribed gosa position. Gada provided a framework for peaceful political transition and marked historical time by undertaking annual ritual events. Darasa males were organized into a succession of grades, the ritual progression through which marked their evolving and ever-changing status within society and allocated to them specific functions and obligations. Luba was the grade of greatest political responsibility and, like other grades, lasted eight to ten years depending upon the pressure that subordinate grades exerted to bring about political transition. Changeovers were ritually conducted during several months according to clan seniority; the clan of the

future abba gada performed its rites first, followed in order by those of the incoming jellaba, rogas, djellkebas and huletiki heiycha.

Within gada, sons followed two grades behind their fathers; thus a generation of sixteen to twenty years was likely.⁴⁹ Alternate grades were linked together into gada classes, either Lalata or Belbenna, organized around the leadership of one of the two alternating abba gada clans. Thus fathers, sons, and grandsons were linked together into the same gada class sharing the same class name, despite their generational differences⁵⁰ (see Figure 5).

Retired luba members moved gradually toward political retirement but retained great status, serving locally in various ya'a councils and as respected intermediaries and ritualists. These ya'a councils appear to have been more important in decision making than was the ruling abba gada. Yet one should not forget, of course, that the abba

⁴⁹ The duration of the Darasa gada cycle remains clouded. Guidi, for example, 378, describes a four grade cycle of twenty-four years; Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Popolazioni del Borana e del Sidamo," Rivista delle Colonie, XVI (1937), 1558, portrays seven grades totaling seventy years. Informants described eight grades (kudado, lumasa, raba, luba, yuba, gudurru, kolulu, and tschwodji); since the first in reality is a pre-grade and the latter a post-grade, I conceive of six grades totaling 48-60 years.

⁵⁰ Hinnant, "The Gada System," pp. 137-38, reports that the Guji name for this organization is missensa; for the Boran, Asmarom Legesse, Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society (New York, 1973), pp. 189-97, records the term gogessa. Darasa referred to it as bali, a term they also equated with the gada classes.

Class Name: BELBENNA Abba Gada from: HEMBA clan		Grade Name:		Number of Years Before (-) or After (+) * Attaining Luba		Class Name: LALATA Abba Gada from: LOGODA clan	
Position of Ego (x) and Ancestors						Position of Ego (x) and Ancestors	
Present	In 10 Years					Present	In 10 Years
x	↗	Kudado (pre-grade)		-30			
		Lumassa		-20		x	↗
father	↗	Raba		-10			
		LUBA		0		father	↗
grandfather	↗	Yuba		+10			
		Gudurru		+20		grandfather	↗
great-grandfather	↗	Kolulu		+30			
		Tschwodji (post-grade)		+40		great-grandfather	

* The ten-year intervals used here are approximate. Some grades are sub-divided. As well, all transitions do not take place simultaneously. For example, when a new luba grade is initiated, the old grade does not immediately retire to yuba.

Figure 5: Operation of Darasa Gada System (Simulated).

gada could use his spiritual sanctions to influence political events.

While gada provided a degree of tribal unity, kinship ties seem to have been generally more important. Gada did not provide a unitary military organization and gada transition ceremonies were conducted locally according to clan affiliation. Defense and raiding were conducted at the local level through ya'a councils and involved all able-bodied men, regardless of clan. A greater degree of military unity could be achieved through the office of the djellkeba, but such was seldom the case. Even during the Ethiopian invasion in 1895, military action involved only the two northern gosa.⁵¹

Likewise, ya'a councils handled the allocation and distribution of land, the Darasa's most important resource. Although local land was held in common by a dominant clan, the ya'a council distributed plots to non-clan settlers, as determined by the amount available and the need for warriors to defend the territory. The council generally did not interfere in the apportionment of a family's inheritance unless squabbling arose; it dealt primarily with boundary disputes between neighbors. Although an equitable distribution of scarce land was a Darsaa ideal, in reality not

⁵¹Some informants noted that Ributa acceded peacefully to Ethiopian rule under the suasion of the balabat and abba gada. This situation seems to have led to a later claim by a korro in the area to be recognized as a separate balabatanet.

all had equal shares. One's status and respect within the community as well as the number of heirs determined how much one might possess, and ya'a councils distributed available land according to individual influence and need. Darasa informants steadfastly denied that tenanted or saleable land existed in traditional society.

Each generation, Darasa fathers meted out portions of inheritance to married sons. Land was set aside separately for the sons of each wife, while the father retained the family homestead and its adjoining land for himself. While the father lived, the land and its produce were shared, even though a son had already inherited his portion. At the father's death, the youngest son received the family homestead in addition to his inheritance; in return, he was expected to care for the widowed mother. Wives were permitted to hold land only for unmarried sons. Otherwise, the land (called wudessa) reverted to the husband's siblings or their progeny.

Land inheritances were generally small, decreasing with each generation's division. In a wider context, periodic redistribution did take place within each lineage as families with numerous sons took over land reverting from heirless relatives. With an expanding population, however, land was available only at the borders--uncleared, the sanctuary of wild animals, and open to sudden attack by hostile neighbors. The ya'a councils decided whether such land was needed and planned for its occupation and

measurement. While Darasa clans did not usually fight over traditional land, in the late nineteenth century, they frequently battled over new areas. Once won, the land became "ya'a inke bogan," i.e., council land (Darasa equated the term with "ye mengist maret" or government land), and the council arranged for its distribution.

A delegation of seven muras was called in to measure the area and divide it into plots. For this chore, a rope about fifty meters in length was utilized, a unit called hada (literally knife). Individual plots generally measured two by three hadas, or about 15,000 square meters. Trees were notched in order to indicate the designated boundaries and, as land was assigned to individuals, witnesses were gathered to attest to the portions allocated to each. Claims to the new land were presented to the ya'a council.

Some might argue a right to land cleared earlier and farmed seasonally. Fathers with many sons might stress a need to pass on economically viable portions. Others might recall their bravery in battle as worthy of reward. The ya'a council weighed the claims and made the final decision. Generally land in conquered areas was distributed to young men who could better bear the work and hardship necessary in opening and defending it. Although land was requisitioned on an individual basis, in reality it was allocated to the lineage, whose members acted in council to support their kinsmen. The assignment of council holdings

often caused a redistribution of land within the lineage and became subject to reallocation in future generations as circumstances dictated.

This pattern of Darasa expansion remained largely unaffected during the first twenty-five years of Ethiopian administration, the conquerors providing merely an additional cause to traditional motivations. Not until the 1920s did the Amhara qalad (a unit of measurement) replace the Darasa hada.⁵² This change in itself was probably not overly significant, yet in a more general sense it did foreshadow the subsequent conflict between two agriculturally-based societies, one communal in nature, intensive and small-scale, the other individualistic and extensive.

Yet overall, there would be no real contest. A segmented, decentralized society with little tribal unity and only infrequent military cooperation internally or with its neighbors could offer little serious opposition to a rejuvenated and unified state system with access to sophisticated military technology. Lulseged's 1895-incorporation of Darasa would end its separate historical development and bring it into contact with forces over which it had no control, first the demands of a rapacious feudal state and

⁵² A qalad was ca. sixty-seven meters in length. One unit or gasha of lem (best quality) land measured seven by eleven qalads or approximately 343,000 square meters. See Gebrewold Ingida work, "Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure and Taxation," Ethiopia Observer, V, 4 (1962), 303.

increasingly, in the 1920s, those of a world economy.

Although individual Darasa did not comprehend the nature and direction of the forces affecting them, within their own microcosm they did sense and feel the changes that were shaping their lives.

Chapter 2

THE NORTHERNERS: RECRUITMENT, MOTIVATIONS AND ORIGINS

Symbolizing the change underway at the turn of the century were two men, Dejazmachs Lulseged and Balcha. Darasa informants, keenly aware of the forces influencing their society, noted: "Lulseged was a conqueror, but Balcha was an administrator." Lulseged subjugated the area, insuring its incorporation into the Ethiopian empire. Balcha, on the other hand, consolidated these gains, further entrenching Ethiopian control. He developed a more permanent administrative structure, guaranteeing a continuous and steady flow of local resources to maintain his administration and to meet commitments to the Addis Ababa regime. Although the changes made by both men were revolutionary, immediately touching the lives of individual Darasa, many were quite subtle. While Darasa experienced an increased economic burden, their fundamental lifestyle did not change immediately. To be sure, adjustments on an individual basis were necessary, yet in the initial period, gradual accommodation was permissible. However, within a generation,

the pace of change accelerated as the social and economic configuration of the area was altered drastically.

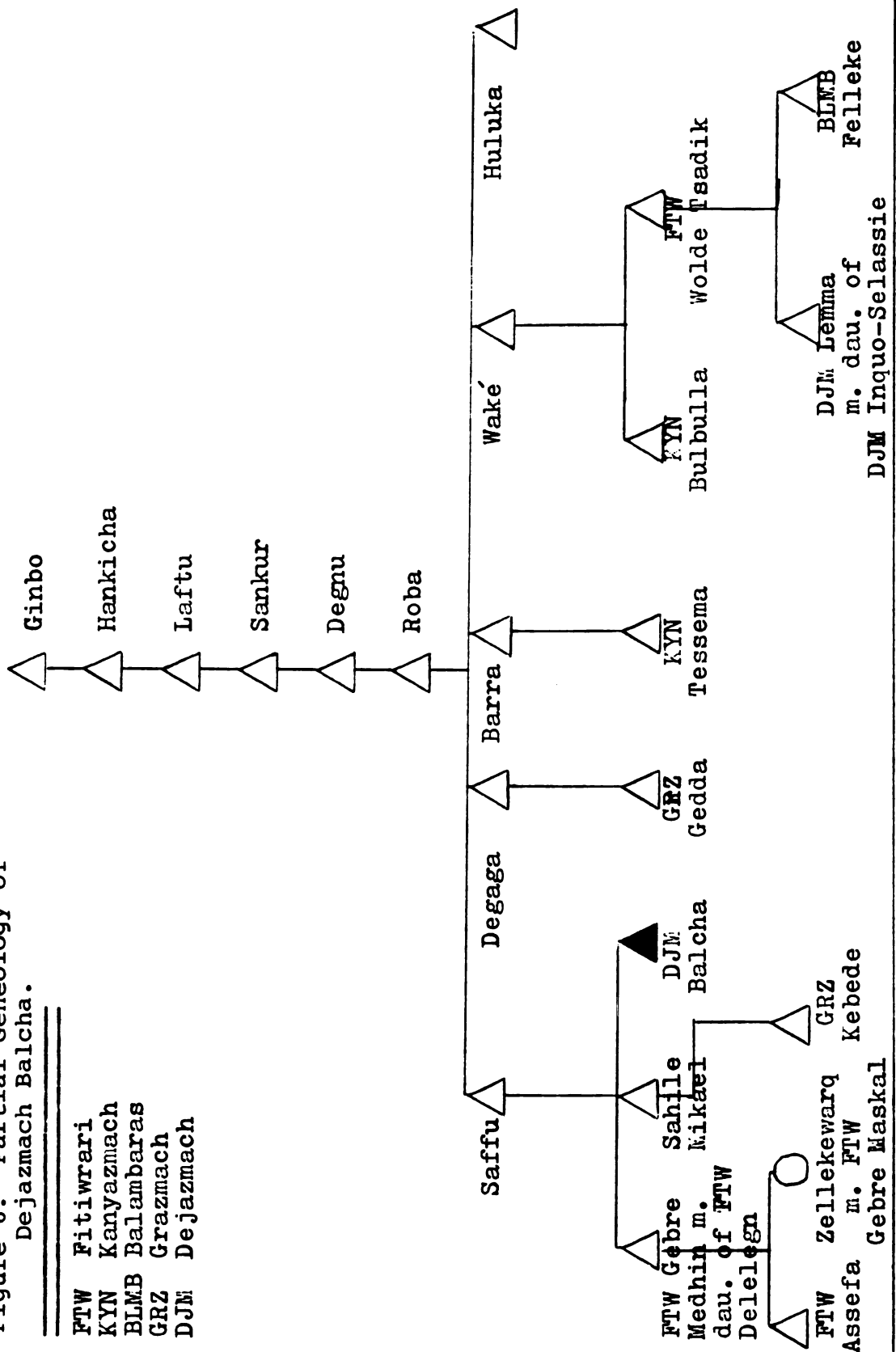
Dejazmach Balcha was to be an important character in the orchestration of these changes. As governor of Sidamo, serving three separate tours totalling nearly twenty-five years, more than any other northerner, he was to symbolize the tremendous transformation of the area. It is therefore vital that we examine his career more closely, viewing him not only as an individual, but also as a northerner, and try to relate him more specifically to his patron, Menilek II, master-mind of the southern expansion.

When Balcha arrived for the first time in Sidamo in late 1898, he was in his middle thirties. Like many of the northern migrants, he was from Shoa, the Agamja region south of Addis Ababa, and was of mixed ethnic origins, with an Oromo father and a Guragé mother.¹ Fated to play a leading role in Ethiopian administration, he was himself a product of the Shoan expansion a generation earlier. In his teens, Balcha had been wounded and captured by the forces of Ras Gobana Dachi, charged by Menilek with subjugating the Shoan Oromo and Guragé in the 1870s. The youth was emasculated and might have been sold into slavery had it not been for the intervention of Balambaras (later Ras)

¹The attached abbreviated geneology was provided by a relative of Balcha's resident in Sidamo.

Figure 6. Partial Genealogy of
Dejazmach Balcha.

FTW Fitiwrari
KYN Kanyazmach
BLMB Balambaras
GRZ Grazmach
DJM Dejazmach



Mekonnen who inexplicably noticed the boy and asked Menilek for permission to take him. Under Mekonnen's tutelage, Balcha was baptized as Tekle Mikael,² educated by priests, and subsequently became a devout Ethiopian Christian. Balcha always retained a special fondness for his godfather, who soon was to be promoted to dejazmach and installed at Harar.

Balcha worked for a short time as ashker (servant) in Mekonnen's private quarters before assignment to Menilek's ghebbi (palace). Little is known about Balcha's progress, but apparently his diligent, intelligent, and loyal manner so impressed the ruler that by 1880 Balcha had been appointed an assistant to Menilek's bajirond (treasurer). Shortly afterwards, when his immediate superior was killed in the 1882-Embabo confrontation, Balcha succeeded to the post, charged with the supervision of the king's wardrobe and personal property, particularly the armory over which Menilek demanded strict control. In this important position, Balcha became keenly aware of the necessity of firearms in Menilek's power struggle with Yohannis and in Shoa's southern expansion. The youthful soldier himself soon become such an expert in the use of firearms and artillery that in the 1896-Adwa campaign, he was able to

²My own informants used the name Tekle Mikael. Tsehai Berhaneselassie, "The Life and Career of Dejazmach Balcha Aba Näfso," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 17, uses instead Hapte Mikael.

substitute for a dead canoneer and use the weapon effectively against Italian positions. In the preliminary skirmishes, Balcha was wounded several times and consequently suffered a partial hearing loss.

Balcha's heroics soon were honored in verse by his soldiers, and he came to the emperor's attention. Chiefly with Empress Taitou's support (for Balcha, in achieving his exploits, had disobeyed certain of Menilek's orders), Balcha was granted the title of dejazmach and made governor of part of Sidamo, succeeding Lulseged.³ The latter had supposedly fallen into disfavor for failing to appear for the Adwa campaigns;⁴ in addition Menilek had a general policy of removing military conquerors from areas of their victories in order to prevent excessive exploitation of the indigènes and, at the same time, to discourage their building a strong local political base.⁵ Balcha apparently

³ Mezemer Hailu (Kanyazmach), Ye Kibbur Dejzmach Balcha (Addis Ababa, 1957 E.C.), pp. 7-15; Tsehai, 173-80; Arnold W. Hodson, Seven Years in Southern Abyssinia (London, 1927), p. 120; Robert du Bourg de Bozas, De la Mer Rouge à l'Atlantique à Travers L'Afrique Tropicale (Paris, 1906), pp. 248-49.

⁴ A number of informants confirmed this version. Yet Lulseged did have a reasonable excuse for not going north since his troops had been so recently on campaign. Moreover, for his supposed disloyalty, Lulseged was not really punished; he retained his rank and was moved to Balé.

⁵ One must be careful not to over-generalize this point. Certainly Menilek appointed the generally unknown Balambaras Mekonnen to Harar after its conquest despite the fact that Dejzmach Wolde Gabriel had tried hard to subjugate the area. On the other hand, Ras Wolde Giorgis was

administered only the portion of Sidamo south of the Jigessa River, while Lulseged, for a time, retained control to the north. Finally around 1900, Balcha acceded to the whole region, a change probably reflected in the movement of his capital from Bulé to Aberra.⁶

As Lulseged's replacement, Balcha brought with him only a limited knowledge of the area and its peoples, although he had earlier campaigned in Wollamo and conversed with his brother, a soldier in Lulseged's conquering army.⁷ Despite his lack of experience, Balcha possessed several qualifications vital to his post. His loyalty to the emperor was proven and unquestioned. He had observed the

left in charge of his conquests in Kaffa despite the fact that Menilek would have preferred to let Gaki rule the area. Considering the ras's political power, his removal was not immediately possible. See Harold G. Marcus, The Life and Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975), pp. 91-3, 185-86.

⁶Getachew Kelemu, "Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970), p. 21; Carlo Freiherr von Erlanger, "Meine Reise durch Süd-Schoa, Galla und die Somal-Länder," Verhandlungen der Abteilung Berlin-Charlottenburg der Deutschen Kolonial Gesellschaft, VI, 3 (1901-02), 67-71. Lulseged's gradual removal from Sidamo may have been the result of rivalry with his successor. In fact, only imperial intervention seems to have prevented actual conflict between the two armies. An informant at Shabadino told Du Bourg de Bozas, pp. 240-43: "When you see Balcha . . . do not speak well to him of Lulseged. The two chiefs are on bad terms. Lulseged previously conquered Sidamo, but it is today Balcha who rules these fertile territories."

⁷Guébrè Selassié, Chronique du Règne de Ménélik II, Roi des Rois d'Éthiopie (Paris, 1930), I, p. 362; Mezemer, p. 15; Tsehai, 177-80.

firm, but enlightened policies of both Menilek and Mekonnen and was conditioned to rule similarly. Balcha well realized the requirements and potentialities of the assimilationist process of which he himself was a prime example. His participation in the Adwa campaign further revealed to him the value of firearms; as governor, Balcha perceived even more keenly his responsibility to provide Menilek with the requisite resources to purchase sufficient armaments.

Balcha's devotion to Orthodox Christianity and his military experience with the Italians reinforced his patriotism. He possessed a general dislike of Europeans, most of whom he identified as Italian and Catholic. Yet he employed several Europeans at his palace, and his xenophobia in no way discouraged acceptance of European technology, especially firearms.⁸ With such attitudes, Balcha made a perfect candidate to administer a remote province where European imperialist encroachment was a potential threat.

Outside the capital, away from direct supervision by the emperor, Balcha had a chance to prove his mettle. Predictably, the young governor was ambitious, and already a popular verse concerning him was circulating:

⁸Pierre Méraab, Impressions d'Éthiopie (Paris, 1921), I, pp. 174-75; Du Bourg de Bozas, pp. 248-49; R. R. Azaïs and R. Chambard, Cinq Années de Recherches Archéologiques en Éthiopie (Paris, 1931), p. 221; James E. Baum, Unknown Ethiopia (New York, 1935), p. 220.

የለጃዝማቸ፡ ገፅቻ፡ ጠጋር፡አበዎቀኑ፡ ምን፡ያምር፡ዓጂማ፡
 ሊኣደግ፡ ለያጉኑን፡ እንዴት፡ያከ፡ራስ፡ይሆን፡፡

Balcha's hair grows so wonderfully [he is young and ambitious] and when it becomes bushy, what a lovely head it will be [he will become ras].⁹

Menilek, of course, watched for any error his appointee might make. The emperor had his own network of secret agents throughout the empire to keep a watchful eye on his administrators, as well as a special contingent of troops, loyal to himself, that accompanied every provincial governor. This contingent acted as a counterforce to the governor's own military and, at the same time, kept the emperor apprised of an administrator's actions.¹⁰

Thus in Sidamo, as in most other areas, there were two types of soldiers: the Barud Bet and the Bet Lijj. The latter included a commander's own troops, loyal to and recruited by him during his career. Balcha had built up his own force while bajirond. The Barud Bet consisted of the emperor's personal troops, highly disciplined and well supplied with the latest arms, in sharp contrast to the more ordinary weapons used by the governor's soldiers.¹¹ As bajirond, Balcha apparently played an important part in the formation of this special unit. Many of the troops comprising the force were drawn from the army of Ras Gobana,

⁹Mezemer, p. 17.

¹⁰Tsehai, 80-84.

¹¹This basic distinction probably decreased with time as the supply of arms became more plentiful.

disbanded after his death in 1888/9. Balcha was asked to organize the new unit, not surprising, considering his control of the emperor's arsenal. Each military unit assigned to the capital was charged with a specific function related to the ghebbi, and the Barud Bet, as its name implies, was responsible for the production of gunpower. Lulseged took some Barud Bet with him when he moved south in the early 1890s; when he was recalled from Sidamo in 1900, his Barud Bet soldiers remained behind to hold the garrisons and guarantee peace until the administrative transition was complete. Balcha as well was undoubtedly accompanied by a force of Barud Bet soldiers in addition to his regular Bet Lijj.¹²

In Sidamo, Balcha's first task was the deployment of troops and the reorganization of those already there. To accomplish his objectives, Balcha began the construction of a number of strategically located garrison towns, each situated so as to supervise a wide area. At least two such ketemas existed already at Shisha and Bulé, the latter of which Balcha chose as his initial headquarters. Barud Bet soldiers were assigned to eight other garrisons: Guguma, Garbitcho, Aleta, Arbegona, Wujigra, Luku, Avela, and

¹²R. H. Kofi Darkwah, Shewa, Menilek and the Ethiopian Empire, 1813-1889 (London, 1975), pp. 182, 185; Mezemer, intro.; Tsehail, 180, notes subdivisions within the Barud Bet.

Illalcha.¹³ All were in the Sidama ethnic area except for Bulé and Illalcha which straddled the Darasa-Guji boundary. Each garrison was commanded by a shambal who, in principle, controlled 300 soldiers. Since the Barud Bet were imperial troops utilized by Balcha, but not directly under his command, they had their own top-ranking officer called the turkbasha,¹⁴ chosen by the ten shambals from among themselves. A small group of Barud Bet soldiers from Sidamo travelled to Addis Ababa monthly to guard the imperial ghebbi, a convenient, periodic way for Menilek to elicit information about the province. Each garrison was centered in an administrative district called a shambal gezat, generally an ethnically diverse, contiguous area. The garrison administered justice in these regions, and balabats thus dealt with any shambal or soldier affecting their people. The Darasa balabat, for example, worked with the heads of the Bulé, Illalcha and Garbitcho Barud Bets,¹⁵ all of whom

¹³Tsehai, 181; Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (1939), 194. My own informants included Shisha among the Barud Bet garrisons, while admitting that it was later transferred to the Bet Lijj.

¹⁴On the early evolution of this post, see Darkwah, p. 186.

¹⁵Apparently all garrisons were not established at the same time. Illalcha was evidently created by a division of the Bulé garrison. Garbitcho was reportedly the last of the garrisons created, resulting in a non-contiguous shambal gezat; it had territory located in six different areas in Sidama, Darasa and Guji: Dega Garbitcho, Tach

had administrative control over parts of Darasa territory. Conversely, shambals dealt with several balabats since their administrative control generally extended over several ethnic or clan locations.

While dispersing the Barud Bet, Balcha also organized his own Bet Lijj. After completing the new capital at Aberra around 1900, the young governor moved his troops there. Since he preferred to keep a considerable portion of his main force around him, his fourteen shambals resided in the town,¹⁶ and, reflecting Menilek's palace organization, they were assigned various tasks concerned with the provisioning or defense of the capital.¹⁷ To all areas not assigned to Barud Bet jurisdiction, Balcha sent civilian administrators called enderassies accompanied by small contingents of troops. There were at least ten such sites and probably more: Amarro, Agere Mariam, Uruga, Haroresa,

Garbitcho, Nafarsa, Getolo-Waché-Illalcha, Cherso, Gediya Guguma.

¹⁶Haile Sellassie I (Emperor), Autobiography, translated by Edward Ullendorff (London, 1976), p. 38, seems to point to a similar organization in Hararghé before his 1912-3 reforms.

¹⁷Bet Lijj shambals were charged with the war ministry, elfign zezenya (bedchamber guard), right and left side (of the camp) guards, madbet (kitchen), feres baldaras (chief of the horses), gasha jugerie (advance guard or scouts), elfign askalkay (bedchamber attendant), antafi, zezenya aleka (head of the guards), tor azaj (protector of the gate), gimjabet (storage chamber).

Shabadino, Kavenna, Wonago, Wattadara (Kavado), Degie (near Kebre Mengist), and Shisha.¹⁸

The authority of the two military units was kept strictly separate, and there was a degree of hostility and resentment between the two forces. Barud Bet soldiers tended to view Balcha and his clients as interlopers, intent on depriving them, as conquerors of the area, of their just rewards. They felt economically stifled within the confines of shambal gezat boundaries and by Balcha's control of big game hunting. In general, they distrusted the dejazmach and perceived his every action as an attempt to limit their power and discredit them. Balcha did possess the right to designate Barud Bet shambals, and many grumbled about his appointments, feeling he favored his own men. At the same time, the ever-suspicious Balcha developed his own spy network and placed agents in Barud Bet ranks.¹⁹

Balcha kept abreast of events from his new capital at Aberra. Better sited than Bulé, it commanded Darasa, Sidama and Guji areas. A year after construction, by corvée labor, the ketema reportedly contained 300-400

¹⁸Cf. Giaccardi, 194. I am unable to locate all his references. Two other Bet Lijj sites are likely: Wollo Sabola in Sidama and Burgi.

¹⁹Tsehai, 180-84, also discusses their discontent.

houses, sheltering some 2,000 soldiers.²⁰ Boyes described the rather dreary town:

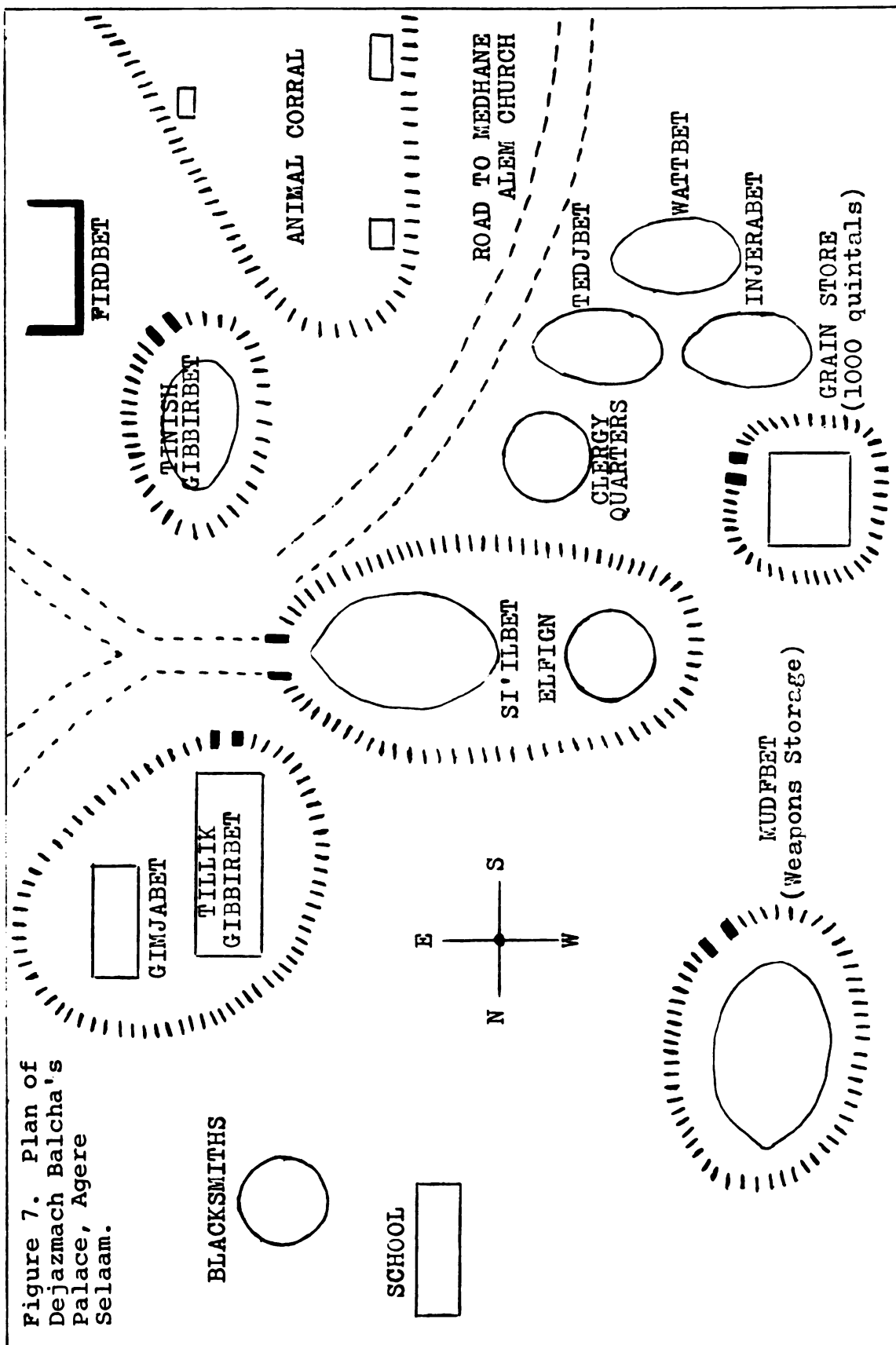
All the houses were enclosed by high bamboo fences. . . . The streets were all paved with wood, or corduroyed; they would otherwise have been impassable owing to the damp atmosphere.²¹

Seventeen years later, however, at the start of Balcha's third tour of service in Sidamo, the capital was moved a short distance from Aberra to a new site, Agere Selaam.²² The shift insured easier access to the capital by traders and travellers and reflected an increased security in the area, as the new site was less defensible. Symbolizing Balcha's own devout religiosity, four churches--Kidané Meheret, Giorgis, Medhané Alem and Selassie--were constructed within the new town at the four points of the

²⁰ Du Bourg de Bozas, p. 252; Carlo Freiherr von Erlanger, "Über die Reise von Carlo Frhr. v. Erlanger in den Galla-Ländern," Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde, XXVIII (Berlin, 1901), 244; Henri Deherain, "Les Katamas dans les Provinces Méridionales de l'Abyssinie pendant le Règne de l'Empereur Ménélik," Bulletin, Ministère de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts, XXIX (1914), 230.

²¹ John Boyes, My Abyssinian Journey (Nairobi, n.d.), pp. 34-35.

²² The original Orominya name for the area was Hula meaning "door" or "entrance," and seems to highlight the Ethiopian tradition of establishing ketemas in inter-ethnic zones. As well the Amharic name, translated "country of peace," emphasizes an important contribution northerners saw themselves providing for feuding local peoples.



Christian cross. Paved roads intersected the town connecting the churches.²³

Dominating the site and occupying its highest point was Balcha's ghebbi. Constructed of bamboo, it was reminiscent of Menilek's palace, with the elfign (private chambers) and si'ilbet (public meeting chamber) at the center. Housed within the ghebbi also were a few favorite priests who ministered to Balcha's personal religious needs. In various offices, dozens of kumtsahafis (scribes) copied religious texts for distribution to churches all over the empire or transcribed government decrees, orders, correspondence, etc. A priest school taught children of both Amarro slaves and Amhara soldiers. Also within the ghebbi, firdbet (court) judges, often in Balcha's presence, heard appellate cases. Nearby were the traditional tedj-- (a honey wine), watt-- (a spicy sauce), and injerra-bets (a pancake-like bread) as well as a grain store with a maximum capacity of a thousand quintals. Lastly, there was the closely guarded mudfbet where the weapons were stored.²⁴

Balcha was available frequently in his aderash (reception room) treating with the problems of his subjects

²³Hubert Latham, "Au Sidamo et chez les Gallas Aroussi," *La Géographie*, XXVI, 1 (1912), 4-5; Azaïs and Chambard, p. 222; informants often referred to Agere Selaam as "Addis" probably reflecting a comparison with Menilek's own new capital.

²⁴A government school stands today on the site of Balcha's ghebbi, but remnants of the old compound remain. I am indebted to an aged priest for his description of the site and for pointing out the salient features.

and meeting foreign visitors. Ushered into the ghebbi by Balcha's agafari (chamberlain), two travellers on separate occasions reported:

. . . the number and attitude of the officers, the silence that reigned throughout the guebi, the order and the ceremonial which presided over every detail of the reception, indicated a chief listened to and obeyed.²⁵

. . . I found him [Balcha] seated cross-legged on a throne to the right of the entrance. He had his face covered with a cloth, only one eye being visible, so that I was unable to distinguish his features. A seat was placed near him, and this I was invited to occupy. The apartment was large and handsomely appointed, the floor covered with Turkish carpets and the ceiling composed of reed work of various colors of design. Above the throne was a canopy, lined with red and draped with red curtains. The general kept his court with something like royal state. Round the room were ranged about 50 men, beneath whose shammas I occasionally caught a glimpse of rifles. A number of personal attendants were grouped around the throne, and every movement of the dusky potentate was followed with servile attention.²⁶

All of Balcha's subjects had access to the ghebbi and many came, seeking employment, favors or redress of grievances. They brought the traditional meteyaya (offering)--a mule, horse, sheep, a bundle of wood, or biranna (parchment made from goat or sheepskin). The dejazmach particularly esteemed the latter, reserving them for the transcription of religious books. Visitors also came to enjoy Balcha's still remembered lavish hospitality.

Vital to Balcha's administrative function was his role as patron. Thus, to entertain and feed his troops

²⁵Du Bourg de Bozas, p. 249.

²⁶Boyes, p. 35.

while in attendance at his capital, Balcha maintained on the ghebbi grounds two gibbirbets (banquet halls), a small one for hosting his shambals on weekdays, and a larger one for feasting his soldiers and the residents of Agere Selaam on Sundays and holidays. For the bigger feasts, one hundred metads (large clay griddles) were required to bake the injerra and five hundred large ganoch (clay pots) to hold the tedj.²⁷ Upwards of sixty oxen were slaughtered monthly, but on special religious holidays, the same number might be killed within a day. Residents were not the only ones to benefit from Balcha's generosity. A British visitor marvelled:

No sooner had I seated myself than a Native appeared, driving before him a big black bullock. Behind came thirty women, each bearing a present from the general [Balcha], everything they carried being draped in red. Besides the bullock, the presents included ten baskets of Native bread, ten gombos of tej, some firewood, and barley for my animals . . .²⁸

And the above account was by no means an isolated example.²⁹

One could not participate in the feasts or government functions if he fell out of favor with Balcha. The

²⁷Mezemer, pp. 20-21.

²⁸Boyes, p. 34.

²⁹See, e.g., Oscar Neumann, "From the Somali Coast Through Southern Ethiopia to the Sudan," Journal of the Tyneside Geographical Society, XI, 1 (1903), 16; Du Bourg de Bozas, p. 250; H. Henin, "Ethiopie," Recueil Consulaire Belge, CXXXVIII (1907), 192; L. Fuertes and W. Osgood, Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia (Garden City, 1936), p. 79.

governor was particularly sensitive to slurs on his ethnic origins, and could be quite stern:

. . . When he is riding a mule he cannot suffer to have another rider in his path; when he is seated on a carpet he places at his right a loaded revolver and to his left an unsheathed sword. His people know his severity and obey him at the smallest wink of an eye. As all people of a certain valor, he does not lack enemies, above all at court. He is totally loved by his friends and feels to excess rancor and vindictiveness towards his enemies.³⁰

Among Balcha's foes was Dejazmach Teferi (later Emperor Haile Selassie I), the son of Balcha's godfather, Ras Mekonnen. Teferi particularly resented Balcha's April 1908-appointment to the governorship of Harar, following the death of Teferi's half-brother, Dejazmach Yilma. Teferi doubtlessly was considered too young then for such an important post and instead was shunted off to govern part of Sidamo.³¹

Balcha's two-year sojourn in Harar proved significant in terms of his subsequent administration of Sidamo, but his authoritarian personality did not permit him the flexibility necessary to succeed in governing a province through which so much of Ethiopia's trade and foreign contacts passed. Even so, his rigidity did not bring about his downfall. That he survived even two years is

³⁰Mérab, I, pp. 174-75.

³¹"Fait Divers," Le Semeur d'Ethiopie, IV (April 1908), 386; Mérab, II, p. 77; Haile Selassie I, pp. 23-31. Teferi had earlier been disappointed when Yilma had gotten the post.

remarkable, considering the array of forces aligned against him; already in January 1909 his imminent dismissal was rumored. Teferi, no doubt, continued to play his part behind the scenes to discredit his competitor,³² and in Harar itself, the new governor faced the hurculean task of winning favor with Mekonnen's remnant forces, men who revered their deceased patron.

Balcha seems to have alienated them by revamping the previous land allocation scheme, taking holdings away from the more important clients and distributing them more equitably among his own soldiers and settlers. As well, he won the enmity of Harar's commercial community, many of whom were Indian merchants under British protection. The British commercial attaché, John Gerilimato, was a particularly vehement critic, encouraging the British legation to press for the governor's immediate dismissal. Gerilimato accused Balcha of maladministration, yet the consul, who had been on extended leave, was probably over-reacting.³³

³² Sir H. Hervey to Sir Edward Grey, Addis Ababa, January 2, 1909, Enc. in No. 10, Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910, FO 401/12; "Fait Divers," Le Semeur d'Ethiopie, V (January, 1909), 529; despite Teferi's "time of perfect joy" in Sidamo, he was resident less than a year. Purportedly concerned for Menilek's deteriorating health, he was back in the capital in April 1909, where he sought to gain the favor of both emperor and empress; see Haile Selassie I, pp. 28, 30.

³³ Hoffman Philips to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, January 17, 1910, No. 72 Diplomatic, Records Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1910-29, 884 [hereafter USDS 884]; Lord H. Hervey to Sir Edward Grey, Addis Ababa, February 13, 1909, No. 50,

Certainly, American reports were much less critical.

Hoffman Philips noted that:

I can only say that the Governor of Harrar impressed me as one of the strongest and most capable of all the Abyssinian noteables I have met in this country, and I am strongly of the opinion that it is principally on account of his unamenableness to foreign political, and other, influences that continued opposition has been brought to bear against him.³⁴

Thus, a combination of factors seems to have contributed to Balcha's difficulties, many of which were not of his own making. Gubernatorial transitions were inevitably periods of great hardship for the local population which had to supply the outgoing army for its journey to a new post while provisioning the incoming force as well. The tremendous utilization of local resources exhausted reserves, and thus, the markets were virtually empty, customs receipts falling off over 80 percent. Foreign merchants were undoubtedly hurt economically and, failing to comprehend local circumstances, blamed Balcha for the trade depression. Adding to local woes was the failure of the 1909 harvest which produced no marketable surplus. Despite these circumstances, Balcha insisted on the reimposition of an old Egyptian tax on each individual coffee

FO 401/12; Lt. Sandford to Director of Military Operations, Harar, September 16, 1909, Enc. in No. 51, FO 401/13; F. Bernardin, "Province de Harar, le Dedjaz Baltcha," Le Semeur d'Ethiopie [hereafter LSE], V (June 1909), 607-08; "Fait Divers," LSE, IV (December, 1908), 513-14.

³⁴Hoffman Philips to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, January 17, 1910, No. 72 Diplomatic, USDS 884.

tree regardless of production, and the payment of tax in cash instead of kind.³⁵

Merchants were disillusioned as well by other circumstances. Like many of his more conservative countrymen, Balcha was not enthused about the railway's coming, providing further evidence to commercial interests of Balcha's inaptitude for such an important post. As well, the governor failed to establish his headquarters in Harar itself, choosing instead a more strategic site at Gourawa to the southwest. Traders feared that a separation of the administration from the commercial center would inhibit the population from visiting the city on government business, weakening prosperity and security within the town.³⁶

The activities of the seyyid, Muhammad Abdille Hassan,³⁷ had indeed intensified security problems. Besides creating instability in the Ogaden, the Somali leader sent agents into Harar to encourage his co-religionists to join

³⁵Lord H. Hervey to Sir Edward Grey, Addis Ababa, February 13, 1909, No. 50, FO 401/12; "Fait Divers," LSE, the following issues: IV (December 1908), 513; V (October-November, 1909), 368; and VI (December 1909-January 1910), 702-03.

³⁶"Fait Divers," LSE, the following issues: IV (August, 1908), 447-48; V (March 1909), 561.

³⁷For the most recent descriptions of this individual, see Robert L. Hess, "The 'Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia," Journal of African History, V, 3 (1964), 415-33; E. R. Turton, "The Impact of Mohammad Abdille Hassan in the East African Protectorate," Journal of African History, X, 4 (1969), 641-57.

his rebellion. Despite Balcha's assignment of 1,200 soldiers to the desert region and tripling the guard on Harar's gates, fears still persisted. Circumstances were not helped by Balcha's four month absence (October 1908-February 1909) to deliver Menilek's tribute, a trip which delayed establishment of a loyal and permanent administration. Balcha may have even added to the Ogaden discontent by insisting on the use of Ethiopian judges and law in the region, in sharp contrast to Mekonnen's lenient procedure of allowing local balabats to handle matters according to indigenous custom.³⁸

Balcha's difficulties and the pressures applied by Europeans provided Teferi a ready-made situation to exploit. Resident in the capital, the young dejazmach was "biding [his] time . . . and thinking that [he] could not fail to obtain the governorship whenever it might be God's will to show [him] favor."³⁹ Yet Balcha's ultimate removal reflected broader Ethiopian issues; it involved the struggle between Empress Taitou, to whom Balcha was closely attached, and other forces seeking to stem her power in the face of Menilek's declining health. Taitou's opponents

³⁸Gerilimato to Sir Edward Grey, Harar, August 20, 1909, No. 33, FO 401/13; Thesiger to Sir Edward Grey, Addis Ababa, January 21, 1910, No. 19, FO 401/14; F. Bernardin, "Province de Harar," LSE, V (June 1909), 608-09; "Fait Divers," LSE, the following issues: V (January 1909), 529; IV (October, 1908); 482; V (February, 1909), 545.

³⁹Haile Selassie I, p. 31.

were strong enough for Ras Tessema to advise British officials in September 1909 of Balcha's impending removal. The Harar governor was called to the capital three months later, and in March 1910 Teferi replaced him while Balcha was shortly after enjoined to return to Sidamo.⁴⁰ The transfer rankled Balcha, stimulating further distrust between the two. A number of Balcha's men preferred to remain in Harar rather than return to Sidamo; likewise some of Teferi's followers opted to stay in Sidamo. The two men, with their leadership being publicly tested, accused each other of unduly influencing these defections.⁴¹

The rancor continued. Balcha desired the title of ras when he took Mekonnen's Harar post, but even though he administered an area which included Balé as well, he was denied the rank. With Teferi's gradual rise to power after 1916, Balcha was never again promoted, and he believed that the regent was blocking his advancement. Balcha remained a strong supporter of Menilek's daughter, Zewditu, who shared power with Teferi until her death in 1930. Balcha's conservatism led him to an extreme dislike of Teferi's modernizing tendencies, and he suspected Teferi of collusion with the Europeans. Nevertheless, he remained

⁴⁰ Lt. Sandford to Director of Military Operations, Harar, September 16, 1909, Enc. in No. 51, FO 401/13; Guy R. Love to Assistant Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, March 4, 1910, No. 17 Consular, USDS 884; Guy R. Love to Assistant Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, April 26, 1910, No. 22 Consular, USDS 884.

⁴¹ Haile Selassie I, p. 37.

basically loyal, and in fact reluctantly supported Teferi's 1916-appointment as regent. In that year, Balcha headed a military force that took Harar in a fruitless attempt to capture the deposed ruler, Lijj Yasu. He then policed Addis Ababa while Shoan forces met and defeated Negus Mikael, Yasu's father, at Sagallé in October 1916, and this loyalty won his third appointment to Sidamo a year later.⁴²

For the next eleven years, Balcha observed Teferi's liberal policies and increasingly felt that the regent was encroaching upon Zewditu's imperial prerogative. Called to the capital in late 1927, to answer complaints against his administration, Balcha at first delayed; when he finally did arrive in February of the next year, he found himself out-manuevered by Teferi who arrested and imprisoned him, subsequently forcing his political retirement.⁴³

The waxing and waning of Balcha's political career not only contributed to his personal development, but affected the situation in Sidamo in terms of northern recruitment and settlement. With each administrative transition or military campaign, a new flow of soldiers and population flooded the province. A governor's departure brought the exodus of his personal retinue, including

⁴²Marcus, pp. 278-81.

⁴³Haile Selassie I, pp. 152-53; Tsehai, 185-87; Bairu Tafla, "Four Ethiopian Biographies," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, VII, 2 (1969), 14-20; Mérab, III, p. 180; see also the rather sensationalized account of Leonard Mosley, Haile Selassie, The Conquering Lion (London, 1964), p. 147.

slaves, and his top military officers along with their own followings. Inevitably though, a portion chose to remain behind to await the new governor who brought his own large retinue and new recruits. Commanders invariably passed through Addis Ababa on their way to and from a post, and thus the national capital was a major staging and recruiting point. Around Menilek's ghebbi, young opportunists could pick up the latest news (or rumors) concerning the emperor's recent appointees. As well, one could observe first-hand the arrival of commercial or tribute caravans from the south, providing a vivid impression of a region and commander's potential wealth. Consequently, the flow of settlers to Sidamo never ceased. An obviously awe-struck Consul Hodson, viewing a contingent of Balcha's followers returning to Sidamo, probably after the 1916-Sagallé campaign, exulted:

There were thousands upon thousands of them, and for miles the road was so blocked that progress was difficult. It was a picturesque sight, with the slaves carrying the taj pots covered with red cloth, bread baskets, bamboo tent-poles, and other impedimenta, the ladies of rank with their faces covered and riding beautifully comparisoned mules, and the soldiers with their pack-mules and slaves.⁴⁴

It is difficult to know how many of these people were new arrivals, but prospects are that many were, since Balcha had been out of power for three years at this time, and his following consequently diminished.

⁴⁴Hodson, p. 120.

The dejazmach always kept an eye open for recruits. During his visits in the north, he was deluged with applicants, and a constant trickle of people arrived in Sidamo to seek his assistance in starting a new life. Balcha personally screened as many as he could, esteeming those most valuable to his army or administration--marksmen, the church-educated, and youth with apparent potential. After ferreting out the crass opportunists, acceptable recruits were channeled to Balcha's shambals for a trial period during which they were supported by the government dole. After proving their ability and loyalty, they might be given a more permanent status by being granted a stipend in either land or labor.

Yet Balcha did not control all recruitment. He could not possibly have supervised the total population influx. Lower ranking administrators also recruited personnel; kin and marriage ties, traditionally important, remained a significant factor in settlement. The news of a successful relative or affine in the south often stimulated northern kin to emulate the example. Inevitably too, there were the fugitives from justice, criminals fleeing the north, who banded together in shifta (outlaw) units or became big-game hunters. Balcha undertook strenuous efforts to control the last groups, employing a scorched earth policy to drive them from their hideouts, killing

many, capturing others, and incorporating a few into his administration with grants of titles and land.⁴⁵

Balcha's own personal magnetism also stimulated recruitment. Balcha was an example par excellence of the heights to which non-Amhara could aspire; the fact that few such individuals succeeded was no real deterrent, and he seems to have attracted to Sidamo a disproportionately high number of Agamja Guragé.⁴⁶ Although no favoritism is evident, Agamja believed that Balcha might be willing to help one of his own, and his generosity was well known. Mezemer notes that Balcha endowed the churches of northern Ethiopia with at least MT\$ 250,000 and contributed greatly to the churches in Jerusalem, where he intended to retire.⁴⁷ A Gojjami informant disclosed that he personally had witnessed the distribution of MT\$ 50,000 from Balcha to the churches of his home province, a definite factor, he admitted, in his decision to go south.

⁴⁵Azaïs and Chambard, p. 248. Balcha's attempts to buy off certain shifta leaders alienated some of his own soldiers who saw themselves as more deserving and resulted in some defections to Ras Teferi.

⁴⁶This is my impression, but was strongly affirmed by many of my informants. Tsehai, 182, notes a strong Guragé presence in Balcha's Bet Lijj. More recently, this impression seems confirmed by the Consozio Italiano di Studi Urbanistici and Ethiopian Ministry of Interior (Municipalities Section), Planning Survey for Dilla Municipality (Addis Ababa, n.d.), p. 33, which reports that over a quarter of the town's residents questioned indicated Guraginya as their mother tongue.

⁴⁷Mezemer, p. 18.

While building an image of his own munificence, Balcha, at the same time, promoted a conception of the south's abundance. There clearly were no guarantees that one would succeed in the south, yet many felt their chances were better there. Interviews with northern migrants leave one with the impression of movement spurred by discontent and hard times in the north. Priests complained about the over-staffing of the northern churches and inadequate resources; farmers decried the meagerness and poor quality of their inheritances. A Gojjami informant divulged that he had wandered to Wollo in hopes of finding better employment possibilities under Ras Mikael, but discovering only drought and famine in the region, he finally made his way to Sidamo via Addis Ababa. Others, particularly from Wollo and Tigre, where insufficient rainfall and subsequent overgrazing were endemic, came south specifically because of the late nineteenth-century drought.⁴⁸

Most were not disappointed with their moves: many came with the initial premise that they could always go back home, yet most did not. Clearly, many were so disappointed with the north that only minimal success in the south was required to satisfy them. Even those informants who were willing to admit they were not substantially any

⁴⁸For a more general description of this drought, see Richard Pankhurst, "The Great Ethiopian Famine of 1888-1892: A New Assessment," Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, XXI, 2 (1966), 95-124.

better off as a result of their migration had no real regrets about it. Most were willing to accept the fate God had ordained for them; there was always the future, and for most, the years ahead always appeared brighter in the south.

And indeed the opportunities were better. One's rise could be meteoric. One of Menilek's former palace guards described a dispute in Addis Ababa between some of Balcha's troops and those of another commander. The informant testified before the magistrate in defense of Balcha's men, and the dejazmach was so impressed with the man's oratory that he was invited to Sidamo and appointed a provincial judge with the title of kanyazmach. In addition, there were numerous opportunities in terms of staffing the new administration. Those with church education and clerical skills would almost invariably be employed for secretarial work at Balcha's ghebbi or on a more local level. Moreover, the newly appointed balabats and korros, unfamiliar with northern record-keeping systems, also had need of clerks to assist them in this task. Finally, churches had to be staffed, and Balcha searched incessantly for suitable priests. He would make irresistible offers to get those he desired, and often priests arrived with a whole covey of students to be trained as deacons.

Despite the paramountcy of economic motivations involved in southern expansion, at both the national and

individual levels, other, lesser factors, also existed. Yet even these cannot always be completely isolated from economic considerations. Big-game hunters sought fame, fortune and status. Armed with their Lebun and Doton, they roamed the countryside searching for prey. Their southern presence was necessitated, to a degree, by the reduced number of game animals in the north, depleted by years of drought, devastation, and a systematic and thorough extermination following the introduction of firearms. To a degree, one can view Ethiopian expansion as the pursuit of a retreating big-game frontier and of the tusks and skins then so vital in maintaining Ethiopia's export trade. Most hunters came south temporarily, hoping to make enough to boost their economic and social status back home. Few were disappointed, at least in the early period; the slaughter of a single elephant was sufficient to achieve their goal, particularly if they escaped taxation. To what degree returned hunters affected their northern communities remains a matter of speculation.

Among others who went south for reasons not apparently economic were soldiers, who migrated out of duty or loyalty to their commanders, and priests dedicated to restoring the Christian state's lost glory. Yet even in these circumstances, economics remained a vital component. Neither soldiers nor civilians could long endure without their just economic rewards, the chief of which were land and labor. Easy access to southern wealth along with

military predominance spawned avarice. Settlers consequently developed an inflated sense of their own self-importance, stemming partly from their new cultural milieu and nurturing the belief that they merited further reward. By virtue of their mere presence in the south, they became "important" people, members of a small, ruling elite, whereas in the north most would have remained mere peasants, one among many.

Finally, one other factor needs to be discussed: Ethiopians have always been intrepid travellers. We know of individuals who visited Europe, the Middle East and India in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, if not earlier. Ethiopian armies also penetrated near Zeila in the same period. Trade between northern Ethiopia and the peoples of the pre-conquest south was long-standing. The social ties of the Amhara-Tigre peoples of the north were closely knit, but not so tight that individuals were unwilling to strike out for a new neighborhood, leaving behind land and relatives.⁴⁹ One can speculate also that the severe drought conditions in Ethiopia during the later nineteenth century contributed to the weakening of familial and geographical attachments. Of course, the less one had to lose, the more likely he was to migrate. Consequently, southward came a large proportion of the north's young and destitute. Menilek's redistribution of Ethiopia's resources

⁴⁹Donald N. Levine, Greater Ethiopia (Chicago, 1974), pp. 113-17.

thus had two major foci: one involved the movement of resources directly to the north for reallocation there; the other, the movement of needy northerners to the south to be provisioned with non-commercial resources.

From which areas of the north did these migrants come? Considering the variables involved, answering this question is not so easy as it might seem. First, one must sometimes deal with individuals who would rather keep their true origins secret and thus create fictive identities. Serial migration is also another problem. An informant moving to Sidamo from Hararghé might have originated in Shoa. Lastly, the researcher can never be sure to what extent his data might reflect a more general trend. We know, for example, of a disproportionately higher number of Agamja in Sidamo, leading one to suspect that similar migrant clusters might occur also in other areas of the south. One should, no doubt, expect to find a higher proportion of Gojjami in Wollega, Illubabor and Kaffa than in Sidamo since the Gojjami administration during the period of Negus Tekle Haimonot was intent on its own indigenous expansion into those areas. Geographical proximity might also be a factor; residents of Tigre and Begimdir, for example, might have chosen to settle areas like Arussi and Hararghé, not so far removed from their old homes. The validity of such statements cannot be known until further research on origins is conducted in other locations.

Table 4.--Origins of Neftenyas in Northern Sidamo Province.

Category	%	from:	Shoa	Wollo	Gojjam	Begimdir	Tigre	Other	Sidamo
A. Military personnel only, collected from both neftenya and gabbar									
Barud Bet:									
Officers	72	10	14	4	0	0	0	0	0
Soldiers	62.5	18	9	3.5	0	7	0	0	0
Total	67.5	14	11.5	3.5	0	3.5	0	0	0
Bet Lijj:									
Officers	67	9.5	8	7	5.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Soldiers	56	8	10	6.5	5	8	6.5	6.5	6.5
Total	62	9	9	7	5	4	4	4	4
B. Military and civilian personnel, collected from non-Sidamo neftenya only									
	69	5	12.5	2	4	7.5	--	--	--

Meanwhile, I offer my own data as an indication of settlement patterns in one particular area.

In my pursuit of settlers' origins, I questioned both northerners in the area and indigènes with northern patrons. Among the latter group, I found only about one-third of the clients able to identify with any certainty their patron's origins. A common response from them was that the patron came from "Shoa," a generic term meaning "the north" to them. In such cases, the response is not used unless the informant could be more specific about location. Two computations were made: in category A, responses are concerned with military personnel alone, collected from both settlers and clients, while in category B both civilian and military personnel, drawn from settler responses alone, are computed. The agreement in data is remarkable. In the first category, responses are broken down further, first of all to distinguish between soldiers of the Barud Bet and Bet Lijj and then within each subgroup to distinguish between common soldiers and officers. The data prove fascinating.

Indications are that around 65 percent of the settlers in northern Sidamo came from Shoa, distantly followed by representatives from Wollo and Gojjam. The dominance of Shoan settlers is certainly not surprising, considering that the province's kings directed Ethiopian expansionism from an early period. Defining Shoans ethnically, though, is an almost impossible task in light of

intermarriage, but the variety of Shoan place names provided by informants--Manz, Marabetie, Bulga, Meccha, Abbicho, Sallalé, Muher, Agamja, Morokko--indicates clearly that all Shoan ethnic groups were represented in the migration.

At the same time, recruitment seems to reflect to a high degree the political and social climate in northern Ethiopia. In distinguishing between Barud Bet and Bet Lijj soldiery, one notes a higher concentration of Shoans, Wollos and Gojjamis in the former group; the Bet Lijj, apparently a more representative body, included at least a token number of people from Begimdir, Tigre and the newly incorporated southern areas (the category marked "Other" in Table 4), as well as from Sidamo itself. Although the recruitment differences between military units were not great, they may reflect, to a degree, the Barud Bet's more elitist nature, its more stationary character as well as its earlier historical origins. As a unit, the Barud Bet attracted fewer évolués, and in either case, these seem to have been concentrated in the lower military levels, reflecting the slow, but on-going process of assimilation.

Overall, the figures reflect as well the history of Menilek's emerging political power in the north. Thus, prior to 1889, the king exerted influence only regionally. Outside Shoa, the monarch had considerable prestige in Wollo, where he established contacts during his Magdala imprisonment and where he campaigned in the 1870s,

utilizing the region as a client buffer zone against Yohannis. Likewise, Menilek's influence slowly increased in Gojjam after 1882, when he blocked Negus Tekle Haimonot's own expansionist plans and gradually came to an alliance with that region's ruler. Thus, Menilek lacked a national recruiting base until his coronation in 1889. Consequently, Menilek channeled people from the northern regions to the south as his own political base in the north expanded.

Another interesting aspect of the tabulations is the low level of Tigre recruitment. One would expect this deficiency at least until Menilek's coronation, yet one of the emperor's chroniclers indicated a steady flow of manpower from Yohannis to Menilek even earlier. Suffering hardships in the north, Yohannis's men were gladdened by the arrival of Shoa's tribute, a shipment that had a subtly subversive effect, so much so, that Yohannis's men began to desert, maintaining:

"If the Shoan food, after a month's travelling on the road, is sufficient to satisfy us, what would it be like if we went and spent all our time there?" Then Yohannis's camp became lean like a cat seized with coughing, while Menilek's expanded and became overcrowded, and increasingly magnificent. Atse Yohannis, frightened by these desertions, ordered all passes guarded so that people would not flee. But why do it? Who could hold them? For since Tigreans in need are like wild beasts smelling the odor of gunpowder, springing like bukhar [a type of gazelle], they fled saying: "Let us not hesitate to enter Shoa."⁵⁰

⁵⁰Luigi Fusella, "Il Dagmawi Menilek di Afawarq Gabra Iyasus," Rassegna di Studi Etiopici, XVII (1961), 31.

Probably the chronicler exaggerates the extent of the defections, yet we do know that Empress Taitou, a lady of the north,⁵¹ tended to draw some countrymen to Menilek's court. Why then are they not reflected to a greater degree in the southern migrations? No clear answer can be given. Perhaps, many Tigreans were reluctant to cooperate with a Shoan regime they viewed as having usurped the throne. It is possible that higher concentrations of Tigrean settlement might be found in areas other than northern Sidamo. Whatever the case, the matter deserves further study.

Most individuals who went south, apart from some of the higher administrative officials, came to stay. They were, for the most part, young and poor and adapted relatively easily to the southern milieu. While certain comforts of northern life were not available, most found they could get along without them or find substitutes. In fact, for many, life in the south was much better than they could have expected in the north. In most cases, a degree of communication with northern relatives was maintained, aided by the visits of relatives or periodic returns to the north for military campaigns, trade or family occasions.⁵² By the second generation, roots in the south were more firmly

⁵¹"Itteguie Taitou," LSE, III (July 1907), 225-26.

⁵²For a similar study of migrations, albeit in a different area and at a later period, see Hector Blackhurst, "A Community of Shoa Galla Settlers in Southern Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester, 1974).

established. With time, claims to land in the homeland became less justifiable, and ties to relatives there diminished.

Administrative policy also reflected the changing position of northern settlement in the south. During the first generation, while settlement remained limited and occupation insecure, Ethiopian policy was to distribute economic rewards to the settlers in the form of labor or produce, but not land. Serious land alienation began to take form only in the second generation as the settler population grew and became permanent, and as the threat of European imperialism subsided. Dejazmach Balcha, in both background and attitudes, reflected the hopes and aspirations of his fellow northerners, ruling in the area long enough to supervise the organizational reforms of both generations. While the changes occurring during the first generation of northern settlement profoundly affected individual Darasa, it was really those of the second generation that drastically altered lifestyles for both Darasa and northern settlers. These changes are the topic of the next two chapters.

Chapter 3

ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES: THE ALLOCATION OF LAND AND LABOR

Describing the most immediate change wrought by Ethiopian administration of his people, one Burji informant told Mude:

What changed our way of life and made us miserable was Dejazmach Baacha [Balcha] who came a few years after Lus Gadi [Lulseged]. He took a census of the whole tribe and parcelled them [sic] up among his soldiers. The Burji were thus suddenly reduced to the status of GABARRI [original emphasis] or serfs.

Before the time of BAACHA people paid taxes to the ABBA GADA who passed them on to higher authorities, but with his coming the whole tribe was reduced to serfdom.¹

Thus, in the first years of the twentieth century, the Ethiopians in Sidamo moved from a system of communal to a more individualized tribute collection. Balabats and korros still retained prime responsibility for insuring the tribute's delivery, but instead of transporting produce to the garrison for redistribution, individual Darasa provided

¹Kenneth A. Mude, "A History of the Amaro Burji" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, University College, Nairobi, 1968), mimeo, appendix.

prescribed amounts directly to assigned northern patrons. Both the military and indigenous administrations were thus free to concentrate on more pressing matters.

While the shift in policy reflected a "settling in" of the northern conquerors, it was not intended to disrupt traditional Darasa life. Even though the conquest, in theory, had resulted in the government's expropriation of all land, in reality Darasa were little affected. Fearing that alteration of traditional land arrangements might disturb productivity, the Ethiopian administration did not disinherit individual Darasa landholders. Thus, in prime agricultural areas, given a choice of available resources, the northerners chose to alienate labor, not land.

Pastoral and uncleared areas were treated differently. As agriculturalists, the northerners viewed all uncultivated land as unutilized and thus wasted. In the south, vast tracts of good grazing land and unpopulated forest existed. Also, there was potentially valuable agricultural land that had been abandoned by distraught residents during the conquest. The Ethiopians sought to develop these lands; since local pastoralists were thought to utilize their lands inefficiently, the administration appropriated these areas, distributing them in measured plots, as needed, to enterprising northerners who hopefully would make them productive.

Thus, in southern areas, the Ethiopian allocation of available agricultural resources involved the distribution

of either land or labor. Given the absence of a modern money economy, soldiers generally were granted the use, not the ownership, of a specified quantity of one or the other depending on the individual's rank and length of service. This arrangement, referred to as *maderia*, thus permitted soldiers a share of the local resources in lieu of monthly stipends from the government. If the *maderia* grant were in labor, a certain number of indigenous clients (*gabbar*s) was assigned to a particular northern patron (*neftenya*, usually a soldier, but sometimes a civilian) who received from each quantities of produce and labor, representing part of the tax (*ghibbr*) that the peasant would ordinarily have paid to the government. A *maderia* grant in land or *qalad* (a unit of land measure) involved the allocation of a quantity of measured land which the beneficiary could work himself or parcel out to tenants. A clear distinction between the two systems was not always apparent. In both instances payments and labor services provided were similar; in some cases, a *maderia* of *qalad* involved land already occupied by cultivators.

Yet in either case, the northern patron did not own the resource. He could be deprived of its use at the government's whim or be assigned similar rights in another region. Thus, under both the *neftenya-gabbar* and the landlord-tenant schemes, the patron was basically a gult holder. In rare instances, the government might designate *rist* (hereditary land use) rights to high-ranking or

meritorious individuals and to purchasers of undeveloped, measured land. In a rist situation, the role of the indigenous client was little altered. His position remained precarious and the patron could always find a way to drive him from the land.

Depending then on exactly what rights the government alienated to individuals, a variety of resource allocation schemes existed. Here we are primarily interested in neftenya-gabbar and its successor, the landlord-tenant. With a necessarily mobile military force to be provisioned, the government, in both cases, more extensively employed maderia than rist. While meant to be complementary, the two systems were largely competitive since neftenya-gabbar tended to monopolize local labor leaving little available for the development of virgin land. Neftenya-gabbar seems to have been fully operative in the early period of Ethiopian administration. It was imposed rather easily with only minor disruption to an already functioning agricultural system. As well, as long as the settler population remained limited, the neftenya-gabbar scheme adequately supplied all requisite needs. Neftenya-gabbar's paramountcy was also influenced by the fact that northern settlers preferred it to the landlord-tenant arrangement which, under the circumstances, only provided headaches in trying to locate labor for development. Neither system was particularly well adapted to pastoral

areas, which, as a rule, were left initially undisturbed, inhabitants continuing to pay tribute collectively.

But within a generation after the advent of Ethiopian rule, the competition between the two systems reached a critical point. As the settler population increased, the supply of available gabbars rapidly depleted. While great amounts of uncultivated land were available, much was unattractive. With coffee becoming an important export commodity, the administration was forced to re-examine its economic priorities. As unoccupied forest, much of the potential coffee land had been originally expropriated by the government and was therefore available for measurement and distribution. Yet, both population and economic pressures early had stimulated the illegal clearing and cultivation of these areas, thus extending the neftenya-gabbar system, and again depriving new settlers of potential economic rewards.

Government finally had to act to restrict neftenya-gabbar's expansion, a process which culminated in the 1940s with its total abolition;² simultaneously, maderia rights were replaced with rist, thereby establishing a thoroughgoing tenancy system. The following two chapters will be devoted to an analysis of the two allocation schemes, their

²Land Reform Proclamation No. 70 of 1 November 1944. Ethiopian Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, Report on the Land Tenure Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 4.

rationales, imperatives and consequences. The present chapter focuses on the neftenya-gabbar system, a modification of the original tribute collection arrangement.

Travelling in Sidamo at the turn of the century, John Boyes observed with some curiosity:

This country was . . . governed by the Abyssinians, who seemed to have a very good time, apparently having nothing to do but drink tej, while the Natives did all the work--building houses, cultivating the crops, herding the cattle or anything else their masters required. In fact, the Natives were practically in a state of slavery, and I was told that, in addition to providing their lords with food and drink, they were taxed five dollars per head per annum.³

The Englishman had, in fact, viewed the initial operations of the neftenya-gabbar system, and described them quite correctly. Many observers, particularly imperialist-minded Europeans, have agreed with Boyes' comparisons to slavery. Giovanni Ciravegna, for one, noting gabbar degradation, remarked that for their hard work, clients "receive in compensation [only] that amount of food necessary for not dying of hunger."⁴ Vitriolic attacks by gabbars upon the system tempt one to believe that they preferred even slavery to clientage. Du Bourg de Bozas, querrying a subordinate of Wollamo's King Tona, obtained the following response:

³John Boyes, My Abyssinian Journey (Nairobi, n.d.), p. 33.

⁴Giovanni Ciravegna, Nell'Impero del Negus Neghest (Turin, 1933), p. 138; see also Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Popolazioni del Borana e del Sidama," Rivista delle Colonie, XVI (1937), 1563.

. . . our slaves are happier than the Galla subjects are with the Abyssinians. The later have submitted to the rude tasks of their dominators; they pay a crushing tax; they must carry out physical labor with the slightest calling; the soil they cultivate as a concession of their conquerors does not allow them to retire when they want. Add the raids of the Abyssinian soldiers and determine if our slaves whom we spare because they are our property, are not happier.⁵

While the researcher can appreciate the victim's distaste for oppression, he must make clear that many gabbars actually preferred this system to the succeeding landlord-tenant structure. Even so, neftenya and gabbar alike willingly admitted its exploitative nature. The neftenya-gabbar system had its rules, which in practice were not always strictly followed. The structure was quite adaptable, with patron and client alike attempting advantageous manipulation, although the system's flexibility ultimately acted against the gabbar. While certain rules were meant to safeguard client rights, the structure's decentralized character mitigated against enforcement. Additionally, the neftenya's power advantage likely precluded a gabbar's appeal to higher authority.

Although not developed specifically to fit the circumstances of southern expansion, neftenya-gabbar did in fact suit colonization quite well. In the north, either by voluntary or forced requisition, Abyssinian armies long had lived off the countryside. During his reign, Emperor

⁵Robert du Bourg de Bozas, De la Mer Rouge à l'Atlantique à Travers l'Afrique Tropicale (Paris, 1906), p. 258.

Tewodros seems to have instituted a "quasi" neftenya-gabbar system,⁶ garrisoning local districts and having the residents provide for the soldiers. But the system went awry quickly as the military men began to exploit their advantage, a factor that lost Tewodros peasant support and contributed to political instability. It seems probable that Menilek's forebears also used a similar scheme in their initial Shoan expansion.⁷ Whether the king himself inherited the structure from Tewodros or his Shoan ancestors is not clear, but the system was well established and successfully tested by the time of its introduction into Sidamo.

Thus, while neftenya-gabbar had not organically developed from the southern experience, the system suited the basic military character of Ethiopian expansion. First, it provided for all the basic needs of individual soldiers, allowing them to concentrate on military duties, and it permitted maximum and efficient use of a small military force, focusing prime attention on areas of insecurity or potential imperial competition. Maderia grants, by denying long-term property rights to soldiers, kept their positions fluid; thus they could be transferred quickly whenever

⁶Luigi Fusella, "Il Dagmawi Menilek di Afawarq Gabra Iyasus," Rassegna di Studi Etiopici, XVII (1961), 16-17; Harold G. Marcus, The Life and Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975), p. 20.

⁷R. H. Kofi Darkwah, Shewa, Menilek and the Ethiopian Empire, 1813-1889 (London, 1975), pp. 12, 192-96.

and wherever needed. Moreover, a patron's transfer ideally did not disrupt the client's livelihood. Even though the neftenya might change suddenly, the flow of resources was not halted.

Second, the self-sufficient nature of the neftenya-gabbar structure actually aided southern expansion. After centuries of political turmoil, foreign threats and periodic drought and famine, Ethiopia probably could not have undertaken expansion had the system not been able to pay its own way. Gabbars financed the local administration while simultaneously providing a surplus used to purchase firearms to strengthen the northern regime and promote further expansionism. To facilitate the flow of resources into his treasury, Menilek preferred the peaceful incorporation of an area, for devastation took generations to repair.⁸

As well, neftenya-gabbar allowed fairly efficient local distribution of accumulated resources. Considering Ethiopia's lack of communication, this system was the only logical possibility. Government taxation was thus passed directly from the gabbar to the neftenya without having to

⁸Cf. Guébrè Selassié, Chronique du Règne de Ménélik II, Roi des Rois de l'Éthiopie (Paris, 1930), I, pp. 361-62. Some local rulers learned this lesson tardily. Wollamo's obstinate King Tona reported to his captor, Menilek: "It is the wickedness of my heart which made me resist such an enemy. . . . All of my dead compatriots who have fallen before you are guilty only of having listened to my boldness. I should have submitted to you before permitting the devastation of my country and the massacre of my subjects." See J. G. Vanderheym, Une Expédition avec le Négous Ménélik (Paris, 1896), p. 182.

pass first through an official hierarchy intent on skimming off its share. Likewise, considering the military nature of the administration, it was spared the necessity of creating a vast tax-collecting bureaucracy. Additionally, a more centralized scheme would have been impractical considering the absence of a money economy. Since taxation was collected primarily in produce and labor, these commodities could not be moved in an economic way over great distances. The decentralized system thus permitted the most efficient use of local resources under prevailing conditions.

Lastly, the neftenya-gabbar system gave the impression of a rather thorough-going military occupation. Always concerned about internal order, the administration also had to worry about foreign imperialism, though there was no really serious threat to Ethiopian growth except possibly from Italian competition to the east.⁹ The activist nature of Menilek's expansionism, in fact, put the European powers on the defensive. Yet the threat felt by the emperor and his commanders was stimulated by a kind of understandable paranoia nourished by years of countering Egyptian, Italian and Mahdist dangers in the north. Thus, the

⁹Menilek's occupation of Harar was stimulated to a degree by fears that Italy might take the city, filling a power vacuum left by the Egyptian departure. See Richard A. Caulk, "The Occupation of Harar: January 1887," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 1-19; Marcus, pp. 89-93.

rapidity of the southern expansion was spurred partly by a perceived imperialist menace.¹⁰ The neftenya-gabbar linkages, however impermanent, provided a semblance of an "effective occupation" that confounded European competitors.¹¹

While neftenya-gabbar, for a variety of reasons, was well suited to southern expansion, it could not be instituted effectively without a degree of preparation and organization. The change from collective to individualized tax collection required the cooperation of the balabats and korros who well knew the geography and people of the area. The prompt creation of an indigenous administrative structure was followed almost instantaneously, in areas where peace reigned, by the institution of the neftenya-gabbar system. In Sidamo, under Ras Lulseged's brief administration, neftenya-gabbar was introduced wherever soldiers were stationed, but Balcha was primarily responsible for its wide implementation.

¹⁰ Ethiopians consequently were highly suspicious of unauthorized persons in their garrisoned areas. L. Vannutelli and C. Citerni, L'Omo, Viaggio d'Esplorazione nell'Africa Orientale (Milan, 1899), p. 258, were confronted by two mounted Shoans who challenged them as follows: "We are [soldiers] of King Menilek. Who are you? We have fire-arms, but you also appear to have them." Neither was Menilek beyond using European agents such as the Russian Leontieff to block European encroachment. See N. de Leontieff (Comte), "Exploration des Provinces Equatoriales d' Abyssinie," La Géographie, II (1900), 105.

¹¹ Edward C. Keefer, "Great Britain and Ethiopia, 1897-1910: Competition for Empire," International Journal of African Historical Studies, VI, 3 (1973), 470-71.

After garrisoning was complete, preparations for organizing the neftenya-gabbar system were initiated. First came the creation of balabatanets and shambal gezats, neither of which was apparently delimited. All territory surrounding a ketema was placed under the jurisdiction of the garrison leader, thus forming a shambal gezat. Since the towns were situated in the buffer zones traditionally separating local ethnic groups, the population within a shambal gezat often was multi-ethnic in character. Clients within that jurisdiction were then assigned to provision individual northern settlers. If, as was frequently the case, the garrison was situated between ecological zones, soldiers were provided with a wider variety of local produce.

While the shambal gezat was basically an alien structure in the area, the balabatanet was more traditionally defined. The buffer zones separating many southern groups might be rather precisely marked in terms of a river or lake, but just as often were indicated by a large mountain or forest. Since the Darasa had only one balabat, he was concerned primarily with inter-tribal demarcations, which were traditionally unclear and remained so.¹² Yet,

¹²A relative of the Darasa balabat, Shundé Karro, described the balabatanet as extending from the Melka Latti River in the south to the Salla and Lagadara Rivers in the north, and from the Bisha Birbirsa forest bordering on Uruga to the Tibaricha forest near Illalcha and the Harro Dama area bordering Sidama and Mati Guji.

ethnic groups were often divided into several balabatanets; political expediency, more than population size, seems to have been the prevailing criteria. For example, the numerically small, but widely dispersed, Alabdu Guji were eventually given two balabats, one per moiety,¹³ while the populous Sidama were divided into eight such jurisdictions along clan lines.¹⁴ Confronted with a highly mobile,

¹³The Alabdu were organized into a single balabatanet in 1895 under Tekabo Gocho. The real power in the area was Kallu Irbaye who vigorously opposed Ethiopian administration, and was thus not considered for the post. The balabatanet was later divided in two along moiety lines. Gumé Kumbiccha, who took the Christian name Haile Mikael and was granted the title kanyazmach, became balabat of the Woysitu and established himself at Gwangwa; Nuta Uffesa (or Nuta Ababoka) became Wolde Tensay, a kanyazmach, and was recognized as balabat over the Hallo at Chikata. Why the division took place remains a mystery but may have been an attempt to reduce the influence of the kallu, who finally died in 1934. Succession to his office was uncertain: the eldest son had already died, and several others were ineligible because of physical deformities or questionable character. The Ethiopian administration apparently tried unsuccessfully to divert the post to a more maleable branch of the family. Finally, a younger son, Toté, was installed; he then contested Nuta Uffesa's position, finally being recognized as balabat, after an extended court battle in Addis Ababa. The question at issue was not clear. Informants seemed as confused by the rumors and propaganda as anyone else. See references in Eike Haberland, Galla Süd-Athiopiens (Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 302-04; Adolf E. Jensen, Im Lande des Gada (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 104; Giaccardi, 1559.

¹⁴Tsehai Berhaneselassie, "Menelik II: The Conquest and Consolidation of the Southern Provinces" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1969), p. 21; Bruno Lonfernini, I Sidamo, un Antico Popolo Cuscita (Bologna, 1971), p. 14, states twenty-five such jurisdictions.

pastoral people, the Ethiopians in Borana appointed balabats for each of the two moieties,¹⁵ making no attempt to define the geographical jurisdictions of either.

Considering the problems involved, the Ethiopian administration made little attempt anywhere to delimit these units. In fact, the indefinite nature of these boundaries seems to have been a potential political tool with which to threaten local administrations. Just as undefined boundaries were used in the north to provide a political advantage in foreign affairs and to control irascible governors,¹⁶ so they were employed likewise in the south. The government might promote the territorial claims of other provincial administrators, shambals or balabats in order to keep overly ambitious counterparts in check. Locally, informants pointed to a border dispute between Sidamo and Balé,¹⁷ to the ambitions of one Darasa korro to fashion his own balabatanet and to the competition between shambals for control over undeveloped, disputed lands.

¹⁵Arnold W. Hodson, Seven Years in Southern Abyssinia (London, 1927), pp. 44-45.

¹⁶Mordecai Abir, "Origins of the Ethiopian-Egyptian Border Problem in the Nineteenth Century," Journal of African History, VIII, 3 (1967), 458-60.

¹⁷See reference also in G. Colli de Felizzano, "Nei Paesi Galla a Sud dello Scioa," Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, XLII (1905), 14.

With the creation of a balabatanet, the circumscribed territory became subject to *siso*. The law states:

Where land survey is being made for the first time in a place settled and cultivated by a "balabat" or pioneer, he shall take one "gasha" out of three "gashas" for places north of the Awash, and one "gasha" out of four for places south of the Awash river.¹⁸

Thus, the Darasa balabat was legally entitled to retain for his personal use one-quarter of the land within his jurisdiction, the remainder to be disposed of by the government. Within his quarter, the balabat retained as *muert* his own private estates and those of his relatives, while he was given *gult* rights over the rest.¹⁹ Accordingly, peasants on *gult* land became the balabat's *gabbars*; should a balabat for any reason be dismissed, his rights to the latter reverted to the government. Whether such land was in fact measured to determine appropriate shares seems unlikely; probably there was an estimation or measurement by eye. Since Ethiopian policy was not to over-reward new officials until their loyalty was proven, the Darasa balabat probably did not even receive the quarter he was allowed. My informants indicated that Shundé Karro had no more than about

¹⁸Digest of Old Ethiopian Judgments (Law Library, Addis Ababa University, n.d.), mimeo, No. 416.

¹⁹Mahteme Selaisse Wolde Maskal (Balambaras), "The Land System of Ethiopia," Ethiopia Observer, I, 9 (1957), 284; Enrico Brotto, Il Regime delle Terre nel Governo del Harar (Addis Ababa, 1939), pp. 103-04; Martino Mario Moreno, "Il Regime Terriero nel Galla-Sidama," Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, X (1937), 1497.

thirty gabbars, a miniscule proportion of those that would have been available.

The government's siso land was then readied for assignment to the soldiers in nearby garrisons. First, an enumeration of the gabbars available for distribution was undertaken. This task seems to have been conducted by the balabat and his subordinates, the korros, with the cooperation of several military officials. The subsequent census was by no means thorough; only heads of households were enumerated, and each was evaluated in terms of his wealth. The economic criteria used in Darasa remain unclear, but Mahteme Selassie defines a gabbar generally as one who possessed five head of cattle and a sufficient amount of land.²⁰ Whatever the determinants, those who possessed the required level of wealth were designated "full" gabbars and required to pay a ghibbr (tribute) of five Maria Theresa thalers per year.

The tax itself was in fact more explicitly defined. As one informant noted, three thalers was designated as salary and two in lieu of honey. Confirming the five thaler assessment for Sidamo, Gebrewold included also three dawullas (sixty gunnas or ca. 270 kilograms) of grain.²¹

²⁰Mahteme Selassie, 287; C. H. Walker, The Abyssinian at Home (London, 1933), pp. 192-93.

²¹Gebrewold Ingida Work, "Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure and Taxation," Ethiopia Observer, V, 4 (1962), 324, passim; Walker, p. 193, places the ghibbr for a full gabbar at four thalers plus three dawulla of grain.

While my own informants did not make specific mention of grain contributions, a 1935-land sale document (see appendix) from Darasa specifies "honey and dawulla" as the ghibbr.²² Since much of Darasa was not suited to grain production, many of my informants provided ensete and maize instead. Ghibbr might also be assessed in other commodities, e.g., shammās (a cotton garment) in Burgi, where wealthy clients paid two shammās annually and poorer ones provided only a half.²³ Those peasants not meeting the minimum standard of wealth were designated "lesser" gabbars, assessed a lower tax and presumably grouped together to form full gabbar units.²⁴

Generally clients paid anywhere from one to five thalers to a neftenya annually. The tax, as we have seen, was prescribed in cash but rarely paid in that form. My own data from Darasa reveal that only about half my informants paid the full tax, others paid less, some only provided labor, and a few were levied amounts above five thalers. The last were apparently full gabbars who paid a supplement in order to avoid labor obligations. Dispensations could be either partial or total, and the amount paid

²²Moreno, 1506-07.

²³Mude, pp. 28-29.

²⁴Tsehai, p. 19, reports that poorer gabbars without cattle were assessed only one or two thalers.

was negotiable, ranging from five to ten thalers for partial exemption and from ten to fifty thalers for complete release.

The ability to make such payments would tend to indicate a substantial range of economic levels among clients. These differences were also apparent on an ethnic basis. For example, my northern informants constantly asserted that Guji gabbars were wealthier, though not necessarily preferred as clients, since, as transients, they tended to be harder to control. My calculations generally confirm this assertion, showing that 8 percent more Guji than Darasa achieved the status of full gabbar. Of these full gabbars, 10 percent of the Darasa and only 1 percent of the Guji were able to purchase labor exemptions.²⁵ If these assessments in any way reflected the true wealth of traditional society, one is led to believe that Guji society tended toward more economic equality than did the more stratified Darasa. Yet one must be cautious here, for some Guji purchased Darasa labor to fulfil their labor obligations, preferring this arrangement to the actual purchase of a dispensation, no doubt because it was cheaper. These individuals thus would not be reflected in the statistics.

²⁵My Guji sample was drawn primarily from agriculturalists who lived in close proximity to Darasa and were therefore not necessarily representative. I believe, though, that a sample of more pastoral Guji would sharpen the differences my data point to.

Another aspect of this issue merits continued study. A considerable number of gabbar informants reported increased payments to patrons over time. Seven percent of the Darasa indicated a full ghibbr assessment in a later period, with some of those able to purchase either partial or full labor exemptions; only a fractional number of Guji made a similar acknowledgment. It is unlikely that these informants were officially reclassified as full gabbars; more likely neftenyas, noticing their client's improved economic status due to coffee production, insisted on higher payments from them.

While one's possession of land and labor were probably the chief determinants of wealth in agricultural societies such as Darasa, in pastoral areas the size of one's herds was the chief criterion. The Boran, for example, were taxed on the basis of the karra (stockade of 100 cattle, camels or horses, or 300 sheep), for each of which they were assessed twenty thalers annually, four thalers for the central government and the remainder for the gabbar holder. The neftenya-gabbar system does not seem to have been extended to Borana until 1912, when a census was reportedly undertaken and the number of karras or parts thereof counted.²⁶ Hitherto, tribute had been delivered

²⁶"Notes on the Province of Borana (1935?),"
Despatches and Correspondence for the Southern Ayybssinia
(Mega) Consular District, FO 742/17; Moyale District Handing
Over Reports (August, 1931), MLE/34; Alberto Giaccardi, "Le
 Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occi-
 dentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (1939), 190,

through the two balabats to the garrisons whose members might then exchange the tribute elsewhere for other goods.²⁷

After accounting, distribution of gabbars proceeded. Soldiers and civilian personnel were assigned clients on the basis of their rank and length of government service. Balabats and korros made the assignments as prescribed by the local shambal, but those individuals who aided in the enumeration process were allowed a few additional gabbars. A general formula seems to have been used. My northern informants emphasized the following scheme: 300 gabbars for a shambal, one hundred for a meto aleka (commander of one hundred men), fifty for a hamsa aleka (commander of fifty men), and fewer for common soldiers. While this procedure may seem simplistic, my own data from Darasa comes close to confirmation.

I have calculated responses from gabbar and northern informants separately. Since many gabbars were not knowledgeable about their neftenya's military rank, I have relied instead upon titles, thus distinguishing between the upper military (those with designations as low as grazmach) and common soldiers. My statistics indicate that the latter were allowed an average of around twenty gabbars. While

places the tax at twenty-five thalers per karra. In 1912, Ras Teferi seems to have undertaken a similar extension of the neftenya-gabbar system into the Ogaden; see Haile Selassie I (Emperor), Autobiography, translated by Edward Ullendorff (London, 1976), pp. 38-39.

²⁷C. H. Stigand, To Abyssinia Through an Unknown Land (Philadelphia, 1910), pp. 230-31.

both gabbar and neftenya informants concurred on this figure, they disagreed about the number of clients assigned to titled soldiers. Gabbars placed the number at around thirty-five, while neftenyas in this category doubled the figure. Possibly, gabbar informants were not aware that a particular ranking northerner might have clients in several different locations.

Table 5.--Gabbars Allocated to Military Personnel.

Informant	Military Unit*	Rank	No. Gabbars
Gabbar	Barud Bet	Common Soldier	21
"	Bet Lijj	" "	17
"	Barud Bet	Titled Soldier	37
"	Bet Lijj	" "	30
Neftenya	Combined	Common Soldier	18
"	"	Titled Soldier	68

*All Barud Bet data have been derived from statistics based on the Bulé and Illalcha garrisons only.

My data are also broken down according to military units. Despite Barud Bet complaints of economic discrimination, I found no substantial difference between the two organizations in terms of gabbar allocation. In fact, the balance seems to have been slightly in favor of the Barud Bet, a possible indication of an initially more generous allocation scheme under Lulseged.

Since the parochial conceptions of both patron and client have tended to distort information, the neftenya-gabbar system as a whole has been the subject of much confused writing. Emphasis upon the number of clients allocated is, to a degree, irrelevant, particularly for higher-ranking officials. One finds in the literature a wide range of allocation plans ranging from the rather generous one described by Moreno to more conservative schemes.²⁸ None of these can really (or even need) be refuted; in fact, evidence seems to suggest that distribution varied from province to province. Heavily populated areas did not necessarily support larger settler concentrations. Gabbar allocation was based upon an area's collective wealth which was broken down into taxable units and then distributed to the northerners. Wealth was dependent upon the soil quality, the types of crops and livestock raised, and the availability of labor.

To acknowledge such differences, the allocation system had to remain flexible, and, to a degree, arbitrary, though there was a general tendency on the national level to standardize payment among soldiers of equal rank. For example, a common soldier allotted twenty Darasa gabbars

²⁸Moreno, 1502; Giaccardi, "Le Origini," 188; Roberto Asinari di San Marzano, Dal Giuba al Margherita (Rome, 1935), p. 77; Marcus, p. 192; Getachew Kelemu, "Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970), p. 23, is generally in agreement with my data.

each paying five thalers would have an annual income of MT\$ 100. Similarly, in Borana, where soldiers were granted from three to ten karras at sixteen thalers apiece, the income would range from fifty to 160 thalers. Soldiers in the corresponding areas would thus receive nearly equivalent salaries. Yet this analysis remains simplistic and dangerous, and clarifications must be made, among them the cost of living in a particular area and the value of labor to the neftenya. We have noted already that patrons tended to place a high cash value on such labor in permitting gabbars to purchase corvée exemptions. While cash payments make for easy comparison, one should bear in mind that dues were more frequently delivered in kind and thus open to wide manipulation.

Moreover, gabbars were not the only source of one's income; a neftenya's allotment of clients was not therefore necessarily indicative of rank or wealth. Under the ideal distribution presented above, military officers (shambals through hamsa alekas) received an average of ninety gabbars, yet my own evidence shows that same group receiving only twenty. Admittedly, my data reflect a shortage of the highest ranks, where wider numerical differences in gabbar distribution occur; yet the fact remains that many of these individuals received income from other sources as well--grants of measured land, portions of judicial or market taxes collected in their districts--and thus were allowed proportionately fewer gabbars.

Soldiers were not the only beneficiaries of gabbars. The clergy also received clients even while garnering additional income through their church's control of measured land. One informant noted, and my research seems to support the claim, that priests were allowed a maximum of thirty gabbars while lower-ranking clerics received fewer. In addition, indigenous officials also obtained gabbars, balabats possessing numbers equivalent to low-ranking military officers, and korros receiving clients in proportion to common soldiers.²⁹

The gabbar unit, assigned to various northern settlers and indigenous officials, was based primarily upon the extended family. Similar to northern practice, one member of the unit, usually the family head, was designated as the responsible ghibbr-payer. While the family's traditional communal character was retained within the full gabbar unit, the grouping together of lesser gabbars seems to have created some artificial links that have confused our understanding of the term "gabbar." The difficulty is apparent in the literature where "gabbar" is equated with the northern Amharic term "gabberé" (farmer), to which it

²⁹The initiation of neftenya-gabbar seems to have resulted in a more complicated indigenous administrative structure. Mahteme Selaisse, 287, reports that units of 100 gabbars were grouped under the jurisdiction of kittakorros (literally, "rump korros"), who in turn were subject to the earlier appointed, sangakorros ("cattle korros," who provided annual tribute of a bull). This structure prevailed in Sidamo, but clear distinctions were often impossible: kittakorros were often equated with chikashums.

is only partially akin.³⁰ Traditionally, "gabbar" lacked a derogatory connotation, but its association to culturally diverse and, in the Amhara-Tigre framework, inferior peoples in the south altered its usage over time.³¹

Further confusion has resulted with application of the term to individuals both as freeholders and chisenya (tenants). A client himself seldom clarified his status as either a lesser or full gabbar since the former tended to pay his taxes to the neftenya apart from the full unit and thus often conceived of himself as a full gabbar. Neftenyas have contributed further to this confusion by encouraging these separate payments. Since brothers remained officially within the gabbar unit even after the death of their father, the neftenya encouraged each brother to pay taxes separately, hoping that, over time, the sum of the parts would become a larger whole.

As a gabbar holder, the neftenya received for his personal benefit not only part of the government tax, but also use of the gabbar unit's labor, a potentially valuable resource itself. The Darasa extended family unit (either a full or lesser gabbar) contained an average possible labor force of 10.7 individuals (only slightly larger than my

³⁰ Berhanou Abbebe, Evolution de la Propriété Foncière au Choa (Paris, 1971), pp. 101-02.

³¹ "Gabbar" generally can refer to any client status and is used in various forms, illustrating the hierarchical structure of Amhara-Tigre society. For example, important Ethiopian dignitaries were "gabbars" of the emperor.

Guji sample). Therefore, twenty gabbars would permit access to a potential work force of approximately 214 individuals, including the very young and the very elderly.

Excessive exploitation of this seemingly large pool of labor could be potentially devastating for the gabbar. Traditional Darasa agriculture was labor-intense, with increased manpower inputs contributing, within limits, to greater production. Although many variables, such as access to land and manure, were important in maintaining the economic viability of the extended family unit, sufficient labor was also extremely important. If one correlates extended family size to ghibbr payment, one finds little variation from the mean, except in the poorest category.

Table 6.--Darasa Extended Family Size Correlated to Ghibbr Payments.

Ghibbr payment (in thalers):	0	1	2	3	4	5
Extended family size:	7.4	10.0	9.7	10.4	12.0	11.2

If a labor force of ten to eleven individuals was required to maintain efficient production, smaller, labor-deficient groups were already in a precarious position. Since the poorest clearly had little other than labor to provide a neftenya, over exploitation of this already deficient resource was extremely dangerous, contributing to pauperization. Even in families with sufficient manpower, the

balance was precarious. Excessive patron demands might alter the unit's ability to maintain subsistence. Certainly, the matter deserves further investigation, because the labor services provided by clients were onerous. Yet the amount of labor available to a particular neftenya varied greatly within gabbar units, and his utilization of labor depended to a large degree on his individual needs. It cannot be denied, though, that the patron's requisition of the agricultural surplus in addition to his control of the unit's labor caused severe strains within many Darasa family units.

Gabbars provided a wide range of services, generally prescribed by the administration, but unlimited in the sense that the neftenya usually got whatever he demanded. The most common services are summarized below,³² broken down statistically to illustrate Darasa-Guji differences.

The figures presented are largely consistent. In terms of the first four categories, less than 20 percent of the informants indicated non-performance; of these individuals, some purchased exemptions while, for others, the particular obligations may not have been required or were assigned to specific gabbars. Contributions for social events were almost universal. Payment, generally four

³²Services provided by Darasa were similar to those required all over the empire. Cf., e.g., Mahteme Selaisse, 287-88; Gebrewold, 206-07; Brotto, p. 51; Moreno, 1502-03; Berhanou, pp. 108-10.

Table 7.--Percentage of Gabbars Providing Various Labor Prestations.

Prestation	Percentages		
	Darasa	Guji	Total
Cutting firewood	84	82	83
Grinding grain	82	89	83
Construction work	81	82	81
Livestock herding	79	87	81
Qudad cultivation	75	67	73
Contributions to feasts	96	94	95
Travel with neftenya	50	42	49

mahalaks (sixteen mahalaks to a thaler), was expected on each of the four important Christian holidays of Fasika (Easter), Maskal (Finding of the True Cross), Genna (Christmas) and Timkat (Epiphany), and might be demanded on various other occasions, such as weddings or military transfers. Money collected could be presented directly to the neftenya or used instead to provide him with a slaughter animal. Those gabbars who did not contribute, a small proportion, generally had Muslim patrons, individuals unconcerned with celebrating Christian holidays.³³

Gabbars were responsible also for working qudads (hudads), private estates, of which there were two types: government farms, whose produce was used to support the

³³ There were no reports of payments for Muslim holidays. In fact, there were few Muslim settlers; most were private traders, and rarely involved in the military.

provincial ghebbi, and individual holdings whose harvests went to enrich private individuals.³⁴ Gabbars living in the vicinity of government qudads were required to give two days per week to cultivation of these estates. Local korros were responsible for insuring that the work was undertaken, while a government misilenye oversaw the whole estate and its operation. This experience provided gabbars with the opportunity to come into limited association with northern technology. On the qudad, many gabbars first learned about plough cultivation and about northern crops like teff, with which a few experimented on their own land. Some gabbars were reserved exclusively by the government for the production and processing of certain specialized crops. I encountered, for example, a few gabbars who worked on a government qudad growing ginger. Unlike others, they paid no ghibbr and were only obliged to deliver annually to the palace several gunnas of the spice, a requirement with which they were quite content.

In contrast to government farms, individual qudads were smaller and often created from pieces of gabbar land, hopefully contiguous, set aside for the exclusive benefit of the patron. A neftenya might also have his clients work the land of fugitive gabbars or land cleared from virgin forest. The practice was basically illegal, since such grants could be authorized only by the administration. A

³⁴Brotto, pp. 62-63; Berhanou, pp. 11-12; Walker, pp. 190-91, 194-95.

patron generally demanded two days work each week, unless his clients already labored on a government qudad; then he might require only one day. By devoting, in some cases, three days a week to work on various qudads, the gabbar suffered a substantial reduction in the amount of time he could dedicate to his own neglected farm. We will say more about the problems arising from the creation of private qudads in a later chapter.

Another obligation reducing the gabbar's available free time was travel. Since most patrons were soldiers, they might require several of their gabbars to accompany them on campaign. The clients guarded their neftenya's supplies and cared for their riding or transport animals. The campaigns most often recalled by Darasa were the 1916-Sagallé (Ankober) zemecha against Ras Mikael (see chapter 2), and Ras Mulugeta's 1930-campaign against the ruler of Begimdir, Ras Gugsa Wolie. Although non-combatants, Darasa played a vital role in military supply and transport. Other informants recalled various campaigns against local shifta bands either in Sidamo itself or in neighboring Borana.

Such treks need not be military in nature. Barud Bet soldiers going north for a month's tour of guard duty at the imperial ghebbi might also take several gabbars to serve them. In Addis Ababa, they might buy up easily marketable goods for resale in Sidamo, using gabbars as transport. Thus, gabbars played a vital role in commerce

as well. Neftenyas also might rely upon gabbars for shorter distance trade, sometimes leaving them on their own, holding the gabbar's family and land hostage in case the client proved unreliable. Balcha journeyed to Addis Ababa periodically to deliver the province's tribute, and gabbars were part of the normal caravan. Balcha was again in the capital in 1906 to mourn the death of his godfather, Ras Mekonnen; several Darasa informants recalled trekking to Harar with their patrons to return a photograph of the deceased governor to the capital.

One wonders how their experiences in the north affected the visiting gabbars. While many in fact spent several months in the north, the impact upon them seems to have been slight. Informants were singularly unimpressed with the capital, noting, as have many European visitors,³⁵ that it was a large conglomeration of corrugated metal roofs. Such reaction ought not be startling if one understands the total gabbar experience. First, upon arrival in the city, clients were often left to support themselves. To survive, many reported having to cut wood in the nearby Managasha forest. They were caught in an unknown and therefore mysterious environment; they could barely speak the language; and they were prone to disease, with no one there to care for them. A number of gabbar families

³⁵Max Grühl, Abyssinia at Bay (London, 1935), p. 159; Fan C. Dunckley, Eight Years in Abyssinia (London, 1935), p. 30.

reported members who supposedly died in the north or who had chosen to remain there, and others who were suspected, of having been sold into slavery. Secondly, the capital in those early days was different only in size, not style from many provincial centers. Modern urbanization began almost simultaneously in northern and southern Ethiopia;³⁶ thus, to gabbar eyes, Addis Ababa was in reality an oversized Agere Selaam, which had its own ghebbi, paved streets and numerous churches. Gabbars felt uneasy in either location.

While some gabbars travelled, those at home continued providing standard services, often undertaken by clients in turn. Each patron scheduled his own labor force, taking into consideration his own needs, the potential of his clients, and their proximity and availability. Thus, one finds a great deal of variation in terms of frequency and duration of the services provided. Gabbars might pay part of their ghibbr in additional labor if the neftenya agreed. Generally a man-load of wood per week was required as well as up to one qunna (ca. three kilograms) of ground grain. Frequently, for gabbars living at a distance, the neftenya arranged prestations to save labor. Herding was usually a week's chore, and departing home the gabbar might take the grain his wife had ground. While herding, he

³⁶Wolfgang Kuls, Beiträge zur Kulturgeographie der Südäthiopischen Seenregion (Frankfort, 1958), pp. 165-68.

might see to the collection of firewood and thatching and upon his return, carry grain to be readied for his next visit. Building duties for the neftenya were only occasional, although the local balabat or korro might frequently call out gabbars to clear roads, construct bridges or build roadside lodgings for travellers.

Certain obligations tended to derive from the gabbar's way of life. Guji, for example, were entrusted more often with herding responsibilities. One Guji informant in fact assumed sole guardianship for his patron's small herd, thus exempting himself from all other labor services. In general, though, Guji lived in areas most suitable for grazing, and thus were most likely to be assigned the task. Darasa, on the other hand, worked more often on qudads, a fact explained likewise by their residence in appropriate areas. The greater reliance upon Guji for grinding grain is, at first glance, peculiar, an anomaly probably explained by the fact that those Darasa providing kocho for their patrons were exempted from grinding grain. Although many northerners disliked kocho (a product of ensete), it became a necessary part of the diet for many, and Darasa had a local reputation for producing the best quality.³⁷

³⁷Fantaye Berek, "The Production and Consumption of Enset in Sidama" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968), p. 39.

Predictably, clients were not inclined to provide the requisite services willingly. Thus, in order to maximize use of gabbars and to insure the ghibbr's collection, a patron had to supervise his clients. Like small gult holders, neftenyas administered justice in cases involving their own gabbars, if such disputes were brought to their attention. If clients misbehaved or shirked their responsibilities, the neftenya might tie them hand to foot in the entrance of his compound and demand ransom to right the perceived wrong.³⁸

For most, this supervision was not hard to provide. In peace time, common soldiers were on active duty for only two months each year. Higher-ranking soldiers, however, had year-round administrative jobs. With numerous gabbars and many gashas of land in many different locations, they did not have sufficient time to oversee their holdings. Such individuals often chose a misilenye to supervise their interests in a particular area. The misilenye might be a soldier who had gabbars of his own there, a poorer relative, or many times a partially assimilated individual from a neighboring region. As an employee, the misilenye was provided from three to ten of the patron's gabbars for his personal use. Balabats who hired a northern settler to help with the record keeping might follow the same

³⁸Moreno, 1502.

arrangement. In this way, limited sub-letting of gabbars took place.

Useful also in supervising clients and maintaining smooth relations with the neftenya was the gabbar shum, an individual selected by the gabbars from among their own number. The patron recognized this individual, sending orders to his clients through the shum. The latter oversaw work and, for his services, was exempted from those duties himself, although he did pay the ghibbr.

The existence of positions such as those of misilenye and gabbar shum reflects, to a large degree, the social distance between the clients and their northern patrons. These intermediaries, along with the balabats and korros, played a significant role in maintaining harmony and in insuring the efficient functioning of the neftenya-gabbar system. Balabats and korros, as gabbar holders themselves, possessed difficult and easily compromised positions. Gabbar interviewees did not complain of any ill-treatment by these indigenous officials, but some found it difficult to accept subordination to those they had long considered their equals. In fact, gabbar exchanges were often requested under these circumstances.

While the neftenya-gabbar scheme did permit direct contact between patron and client, these meetings were quite limited. Although individual relationships varied, they were characterized by a proper degree of deference and an element of fear. Gabbars interviewed knew very little

about the personal lives of their patrons. Only about a quarter could identify with any certainty their neftenya's northern origins; even fewer were knowledgeable about his military rank or unit; and some did not even know his full name. Gabbars did attend gibbirs to which the patron invited them, yet contacts were always well-ordered, as befitted a patron-client relationship. Gabbars preferred to take personal disputes to their own traditional mediators (heiycha) rather than to the neftenya. Language also continued a barrier; there was no real attempt at assimilation; and patrons sought neither to Christianize nor intermarry. To do so, they admitted, would be disruptive to the character of neftenya-gabbar relations.

Neftenyas thus tended to view their gabbars primarily as economic resources. The number of clients one possessed, plus their economic contributions, added to the neftenya's social and political importance. Segregated from the northerner's cultural milieu in the south, gabbars were relatively unimportant as individuals, for they played only an indirect role in the settler's socio-political life. Had assimilation been a more decided policy in the early period, this condition might have changed; yet acculturation was a slow process, and overall tended to undermine the neftenya-gabbar relationship. Acceptance into the ruling group meant a sharing of the local resources, of which labor was a part, and a relative diminution of the rewards accruing to each patron within the system.

Despite this rather impersonal and exploitative attitude on the part of the neftenya, he took care not to be overly harsh. Maltreatment only encouraged gabbars to flee, and land generally was worthless without someone to work it. One even finds examples of neftenyas who preserved the patrimony of a young Darasa child, assisted a widowed gabbar mother with a large family, or adopted gabbar children. Yet the seamy side of the relationship was all too common. One neftenya reported rather shamedly that his mother had been a young Darasa girl delivered by her relatives to the informant's father to make up for their unpaid ghibbr. What great pain the gabbar family must have felt when it made such a decision!

The element of fear dominated much of the neftenya-gabbar relationship. Given the northerner's military and economic preponderance, he could get whatever he wanted.³⁹ The military factor had been a primary component in Darasa's incorporation into the empire in 1895, and remained a continual threat. Access to firearms was severely limited, even for northerners, and Darasa were even more restricted since most could not afford to purchase them. Certain balabats and korros did receive some firearms, but these were usually outdated and served mostly for prestige rather

³⁹Darasa fear and anger were portrayed in their work songs. See Klaus Wedekind, "Gedeo Work Songs and Their Musicological, Linguistic and Sociological Context," Working paper, mimeo.

than military advantage.⁴⁰ For this reason, Darasa began and continue to refer to the subjugators as "kauwe" (Orominya term for "firearms"), an indication of the implied threat that has loomed over them.⁴¹

More directly felt was the economic power of the northerner, an advantage he did not always recognize. Because some neftenyas were unwilling to accept certain kinds of produce as payment for the ghibbr, clients were often forced to exchange these for other products more acceptable to the patron. While such transactions might aid the gabbar, they could also impose severe hardship if the unit were labor-poor. The mere northern presence in the south also tended to exacerbate the local economic situation. The settler's penchant for creating qudads reduced the availability of pasturage and, therefore, the manure necessary for the intensive agriculture the Darasa practiced to support a dense population. Excessive use of gabbar labor also tended to leave the Darasa less time to devote to their own agriculture. Lastly, gabbars were

⁴⁰See, e.g., Edgar Maass, "Eine Reise durch des Südebessinische Seengebiet," Mitteilungen der Geographische Gesellschaft, XLVII (Hamburg, 1941), 373, 379; Asinari di San Marzano, p. 109; I was also made keenly aware of this dichotomy. During the 1974-5 disturbances in the Darasa-Guji area, I noticed thousands of Darasa spears at public meetings but only a few firearms. This inferiority of weapons caused the Darasa numerous casualties during the skirmishing.

⁴¹Jensen, p. 109; Vittorio Bottego, Il Giuba Esplorato (Rome, 1895), p. 209, recorded that the Sidama used the same term.

afraid to sue their patrons in the local courts, feeling that the odds were against them. This attitude is understandable; with their superior resources, neftenyas could tie up cases in court for extended periods and often win unfair decisions by default.

Under these circumstances, gabbars had few options. The most common was flight to a forested area, where the peasant would clear and work land. The area chosen by Darasa was downslope, the border zone to the west that divided them from the Alabdu Guji and Sidama. With time, as the zone was opened up, a second phase was begun, this time with the cooperation of the gabbar unit and neftenya. Patrons often provided tools to gabbars moving into these areas, and sought also to reimpose their control over individuals who had fled there earlier. The neftenya-gabbar structure was thus expanding on its own, apart from governmental control, stimulated by the Darasa's need for more land and the area's potential for coffee production. This sub-expansionism into zones that were previously too dangerous for settlement depended on the "pax Ethiopica," even if some initial movement predated the northern conquest.

Likewise, population movements occurred elsewhere in Sidamo, similarly stimulated by the economic burdens local populations were made to carry. Throughout the 1920s, a large number of Burgi trekked south to the British frontier town of Moyalé, where they sought employment.

While a few did settle in the area, many of these migrants eventually returned home, using their savings to help hard-pressed relatives. The British officer at Moyale commended their diligence and put many to work on road projects.⁴² Others settled in the road towns all over southern Ethiopia, employing their weaving skills to maintain themselves.

About the same time, pastoral Boran were moving with their herds into Kenya to escape Ethiopian exploitation. This trek created problems for British officials who feared rinderpest infestations, ethnic conflict, and added pressure on already deficient pasture and water supplies. Needless to say, Ethiopian officials accused the British of conspiracy. Loss of these Boran caused havoc within the neftenya-gabbar structure. Since gabbar productivity paid salaries, many soldiers were left destitute, forced either to exploit further their remaining gabbars or raid those of others. One can hardly be sympathetic, though, to the neftenya's plight, for he was ultimately responsible for many of the conditions causing flight.⁴³

⁴²Mude, pp. 28-34; Northern Frontier District Annual Reports (1922), PC/NFD1/1/2; Jensen, p. 144.

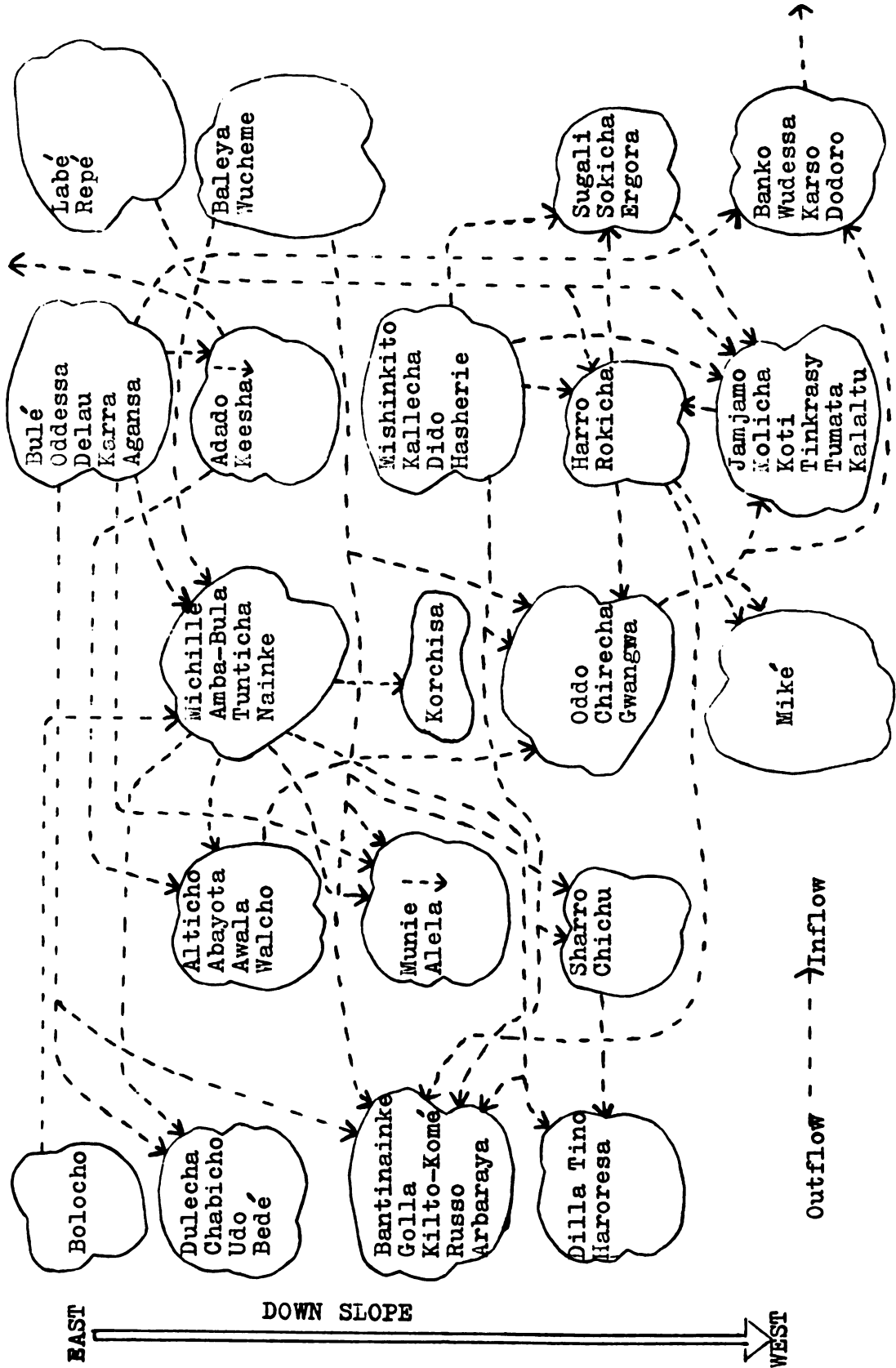
⁴³Northern Frontier District Annual Reports (1922), PC/NFD 1/1/2; Arnold Hodson to Claud Russell, Mega, January 16, 1921, No. 6, Despatches and Correspondence for the Southern Abyssinia (Mega) Consular District, FO 742/16; A. T. Miles to Colonial Secretary (Nairobi), Mega, April 27, 1925, No. 27, FO 742/17.

Although Darasa did not have the advantage of slipping over a convenient boundary, their escape to forest areas tended to disrupt the neftenya-gabbar system too.⁴⁴ Those gabbars who could be located were forced back or allowed to work their cleared land under new arrangements. Among my Darasa sample, I found only 8 percent of the informants who admitted to fleeing the neftenya's jurisdiction. Most proffered their inability to meet obligations or claimed cruel treatment by their patron. Some gabbars in fact fled repeatedly. Finally, and most significantly, 29 percent of my sample reported movement to new land undertaken with the neftenya's consent. The complaints stimulating these moves reflected the problems already discussed: desirability of possessing land suitable for coffee or maize production, overcrowding and insufficient portions of land to leave one's heirs, and the land's general infertility. The economic pinch felt by Darasa seems quite evident.

These population shifts are the subject of the appended schematic map (Figure 8). I have plotted the

⁴⁴Du Bourg de Bozas, p. 243, noted that Arsi Oromo gabbars, despite their traditional hatred for the Sidama, were fleeing to what they considered a fairer and kinder administration under Balcha. Alessandro Triulzi, "Social Protest and Rebellion in Some Gäbbar Songs from Qélläm, Wällägga," Paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (5th, Nice, 1977), mimeo, reports a similar flight of gabbars in that region. Likewise, A. P. Wood, "Migration and Settlement in the Forest Fringe, Illubabor Province, Ethiopia" (African Population Mobility Project, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, 1975), mimeo, reports migrants from southern Wollega arriving in Illubabor in the 1930s, escaping recently imposed taxes.

Figure 8. Schematic Representation of Darasa Population Movement.



moves described by my informants, and the pattern indicates a steady migration westward to lower elevations. The residency changes took place over several generations, ranging from the pre- through post-conquest periods. Other migrations to the east of Darasa and southward toward Uraga Guji also seem evident but have not been studied here. The migrations in fact have continued until the present, with Darasa tenants working land contracted to them west of the Dilla-Moyalé road, deep in Guji country, and south toward Agere Mariam.

Initial Darasa expansion seems to have been casual with young Darasa clearing adjacent lands and grazing herds in the nearby forest meadows. After the advent of Ethiopian administration, the push toward these lands continued, so that by 1925, most of the area had been transformed into a highly productive coffee area. About this time, Wilfred Osgood, visiting the Haditcho area west of Abera, noted in his journal that the region was nearly devoid of forest.⁴⁵ Areas that had traditionally been used to demarcate tribal groups were now under cultivation, bringing these people into closer contact. A mixed Guji and Darasa population occupied the newly cleared zones.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Louis Fuertes and Wilfred Hudson Osgood, Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia (Garden City, 1936), p. 85.

⁴⁶ A similar movement seems to have taken place further north in Sidama country, also against pastoral peoples. See S. Stanley, "The Political System of Sidama," Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (3rd, Addis Ababa, 1966), III, p. 219.

For the migrant Darasa, several advantages resulted: he could diversify his crops; gain more fertile land as well as increased pasturage; and ultimately increase his income to meet his patron's requirements. The neftenya could have his gabbars clear and work his qudad in these areas, and claim more in payment from the farmers as they prospered. For both, the future looked bright, even if the ultimate ownership of the land involved was in question. While Darasa viewed it as their utaba (Orominya term meaning "centerpost," equated to the Amharic "rist" or hereditary land usage rights), and neftenyas likewise claimed it through the efforts of their gabbars who had developed it, in reality it was unallocated government land. Around 1917, pressed by a growing settler population, the provincial administration encouraged the measurement and distribution of vast tracts of "undeveloped" land. As the export demand for coffee increased, areas suitable to its production became prime targets. The neftenya-gabbar system, with its monopolization of labor, was increasingly viewed as an obstacle to the province's further growth. In reality as we have seen, neftenyas were pushing development on their own, but on illegally held land, and monopolizing labor to which others had no access. The newly cleared Darasa lands thus became the focus of conflict between the government and those Darasa and their patrons who claimed it. When in the second decade of this century, the government began to measure and distribute these lands to

newcomers, resistance broke out. The government's ultimate victory checked and greatly weakened the neftenya-gabbar system, altering the lives of the affected Darasa and their northern patrons in many ways. This conflict will be the focus of the next chapter. We shall commence by investigating the nature and distribution of qalad (measured) land as opposed to the unmeasured type generally under scrutiny here. After following the land conflict to its ultimate conclusion, we shall compare the two tenure systems, attempting to evaluate their effects upon the Darasa.

Chapter 4

CHANGING PRIORITIES: THE STRUGGLE OVER RESOURCES

As noted earlier, the acquisition of qalad land in the initial period was not very popular since it most often was undeveloped and unoccupied. By contrast, the possession of gabbars yielded immediate and easily obtainable benefits. As long as sufficient gabbars remained available, the administration was not overly concerned about any imbalance between the neftenya-gabbar system and other resource allocation arrangements.

However, with Balcha's 1917-return to the province for a third tour as governor, the situation began to change. The dejazmach was accompanied by numerous northern settlers who required provisioning. Most desired gabbars, but since the supply was limited, Balcha encouraged these people to take undeveloped land instead. The flow of settlers to Sidamo was destined to continue, and the government had to guarantee all arrivals adequate support. The survey and later remeasurement of lands during the following thirty years reflected and was stimulated by an increasing

competition for the best available properties. Excluding the period of the Italian occupation, measurement continued under Balcha's successors, Ras Birru Wolde Gabriel (1928-31), Ras Desta Damtew (1932-36), and, following the war, Ras Adiferisaw Yenadu. How many settlers came to Sidamo before 1936 is unknown, yet the extent of settlement seems evident from Italian references to Sidamo as one of the most heavily colonized regions in all the south. Guidi placed the 1937-Amhara population in Darasa at around 3000-4000, roughly about one to every ten Darasa.¹ This figure is undoubtedly excessive, for the settler population even today probably does not exceed a ratio of fifteen to one.²

To mark the new phase that Sidamo was entering, Balcha constructed a new provincial capital at Agere Selaam. Its location allowed for overall expansion and was more accessible to merchants. At the same time, the move reflected the northerner's increased security in the south. The threat of foreign imperialism had receded, and northerners seemed to be in undisputed control of the area. The provincial administration therefore took on a less

¹G. Colli di Felizzano, "Nei Paesi Galla a sud dello Scioa," Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, (hereafter BSGI), XLII (1905), 107; Guido Guidi, "Nel Sidamo Orientale," BSGI, Series 7, IV (1939), 377; Arnaldo Cipolla, In Etiopia (Turin, 1933), pp. 176-77.

²Lacking adequate demographic data, one must rely on rough estimates. The Ethiopian Central Statistical Office's Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1975), p. 24, places the province's urban population at around 6 percent, suggesting a settler-indigène ratio of sixteen to one.

militaristic character, becoming more receptive to civilian needs. While the military role remained paramount, there was a greater emphasis upon development as opposed to simple exploitation. The allocation of previously unsettled and undeveloped land stimulated the construction of other towns, which, like Agere Selaam, were situated in less defensible locations and along the trade routes.

These developments were probably not unique to Sidamo, and, under similar circumstances, came to affect other regions as well. The 1912 extension of neftenya-gabbar into previously unaffected areas like Borana and the Ogaden reflected not only the Ethiopian desire to tighten effective administration over these border areas, but, as well, a growing need to satiate settler demands for gabbars. In areas like Sidamo, where settlement had been open for twenty years, pressures were even greater. Balcha's strategies after 1917, whether part of a nationally directed program or not, were certainly a rational response to local problems which had national implications. As the wildlife of the province was depleted, Balcha looked to other resources to make up his revenue losses. Coffee, with its increasing export demand, was the most attractive substitute. Balcha's two-year-stint as governor of Hararghé had convinced him of this commodity's potential, and his initial distribution of land, after his return to Sidamo, was aimed at those areas best suited for its production. Balcha's attack on the neftenya-gabbar system, if one can view it as

such (and many affected informants did), was thus probably the result of his need to develop the province. He had to overcome the unfair monopolization of land and labor by earlier settlers in order to give late-comers a fair chance. Whether the Ras-Regent Teferi played any role in promoting these developments is unclear, but certainly they were reforms that furthered his own long-term interests.

In advance of distribution, land was measured into gashas, a non-standardized unit which varied according to the quality of the land involved. While each gasha was taxed at a different rate, quality was offset by the larger size of the poorer gasha. In Sidamo, the typical unit was eleven by seven qalads (a qalad was a leather thong measuring ca. 135 cubits or 66-7 meters).³ Just as the administration endeavored to equalize payments to soldiers through the creation of gabbar units, so it sought also to equalize the distribution of land to individuals of equivalent rank by varying the size of the plots according to quality. Often, in reality, the land went unmeasured since surveying was a toilsome and thankless job; a prospective purchaser often encouraged the surveyor to make the judgment

³H. S. Mann et al., Field Study in Systems of Land Tenure and Landlord-Tenant Relationships (Tabor Woreda, Sidamo) (Addis Ababa, 1966), p. 1; see also Martino Mario Moreno, "Il Regime Terriero Abissino nel Galla-Sidama," Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, X (1937), 1496; Berhanou Abbebe, Evolution de la Propriété Foncière au Choa (Éthiopie) (Paris, 1971), pp. 100-01; Mahteme Selaisse Wolde Maskal (Balambras), "The Land System of Ethiopia," Ethiopia Observer, I, 9 (1957), 284.

by eye, hoping to gain a little extra. The administration did not oppose this expediency, particularly if it speeded the measurement process. For example, in Sidamo during Ras Desta's time, surveying in some populated areas was carried out by grouping five gabbar units together into a gasha.⁴

Like gabbars, gashas could be granted as either maderia or rist, or alternatively purchased. Soldiers ordinarily received a single gasha, but much larger areas went to favored officials. The 1968-land survey in Sidamo indicated that the government still controlled 36 percent of the measured land in Darasa awraja.⁵ At an earlier time, this percentage was no doubt larger, but has been reduced over time by the issuance of rist privileges to various maderia holders and by settler purchase of government lands. For example, around 1908, Balcha sent a small force of soldiers to put down shifta disturbances in the area called Kuku in Uraga Guji. Although some land in that region had already been distributed, the enlargement of the garrison there required further allocation. Involved in this alienation were several high-ranking officials from the Illalcha Barud Bet. The shambal purchased in excess of five hundred gashas, while various meto and hamsa alekas purchased amounts up to one hundred. The largest proportion,

⁴Moreno, 1502.

⁵Ethiopian Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, Report on the Land Tenure Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 7.

however, reverted to the government as *siso* (see chapter 3) and was distributed as single-gasha *maderia* to common soldiers.⁶ A small community thus grew up in this area, and in 1923 a church dedicated to Mariam was erected, the village coming to be called Agere Mariam (Land of Mary).

Prices for qalad land varied. Qolla (lowland) areas sold for three or four thalers per gasha while woyna dega (intermediate) land went for as much as five to ten thalers. Relatives of Balcha were able to buy up a thousand gashas of qolla land west of Dilla for a mere MT\$ 320. Osgood observed a whole valley in the Aleta Wondo area purchased for several thousand thalers by another relative of Balcha's.⁷ Since mules were an important commodity in the south for military and commercial transport, they were often used in lieu of cash for land purchases. Thus, twenty gashas of land could be acquired for a single mule. Asinari di San Marzano noted that a certain Fitiwrari Mangasha purchased a large area of land between Harru and Burgi for thirty mules.⁸ Agricultural land could be developed and

⁶Such land was in reality measured three different times over a period of years. Only on the third measurement were the holder's boundaries recorded and ghibbr assigned. This procedure no doubt was intended to check corruption among surveyors and assist in more accurate measurement as the land was gradually cleared and cultivated. See C. H. Walker, The Abyssinians at Home (London, 1938), pp. 87-88.

⁷Louis A. Fuertes and Wildred Hudson Osgood, Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia (Garden City, 1936), p. 102.

⁸Roberto Asinari di San Marzano, Dal Giuba al Margherita (Rome, 1935), p. 238.

then resold to newcomers for prices twenty times or more the original cost. Just prior to the Italian war, for example, productive coffee land in Darasa was selling for MT\$ 300 per gasha.⁹ By contrast, qolla areas were in much less demand, yet income could be derived by renting these areas to needy pastoralists at a fixed rate per head of live-stock.

While qalad land was readily available, its allocation was not always quick. Soldiers and civilians, while waiting for maderia, were frequently maintained as kitabel until their individual worth could be determined. A kitabel soldier received an annual cash stipend from the government and a monthly grain allotment from a nearby gotera (government storage facility). Such assignments in Sidamo appear roughly equivalent to those in other parts of the empire.¹⁰ Soldiers received anywhere from five to ten thalers per year depending on merit, in addition to a monthly grain allotment of half a dawulla (ten gunnas or ca. fifty kilograms).

⁹Moreno, 1506-07; my informants also confirm this figure.

¹⁰Bairu Tafla, "Some Aspects of Land-Tenure and Taxation in Sälale under Ras Darge, 1871-1900," Journal of Ethiopian Studies (hereafter JES), XIII, 2 (1974), 8, reports seven gunnas per soldier or twelve for married ones, plus five additional gunnas for each dependent, up to a maximum of twenty-two gunnas. Gebrewold Ingida Work, "Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure and Taxation," Ethiopia Observer, V, 4 (1962), 312, refers to kitabel as "guaz-tegasha," noting a relationship between one's allotment and the number of gashas he was eventually to receive; generally the payment was seven gunnas per gasha, plus five additional gunnas for each dependent.

Men with families could draw larger amounts of grain, up to a maximum of thirty gunnas according to the number of dependents. Thus, the minimum kitabel payment for a single soldier was roughly equivalent to that ordinarily provided by two gabbar units to their patron, apparently the lowest level deemed necessary for the maintenance of a newcomer.

Gotera were located around the province, usually constructed by gabbars on the land of a balabat, korro or melkenya. Gabbars filled them mostly with barley and maize collected for the tithe (asrat).¹¹ To draw his share, a soldier obtained an annual requisition form from his superior officer indicating the amount to be allocated.¹² The asrat tabaky, who supervised the goteras, indicated which store should be used, taking care to match withdrawals with availability. Secretaries at each gotera recorded amounts withdrawn.

They previously had recorded amounts of grain deposited. Under supervision of the local balabat and korros, gabbars brought their assessed asrat to the stores. The 10 percent tithe had been decreed by Menilek in 1893, and was introduced into Sidamo shortly after incorporation.

¹¹Teff was grown on government qudads and utilized at the ghebbi. A few indigènes began to experiment with the new grain, yet, for many years, little was produced and it was thus unavailable for the tithe. Teff imports from Arussi and Shoa remained vital.

¹²For a sample of these forms, see Richard Pankhurst, "Ethiopian Tax Documents of the Early Twentieth Century," JES, XI, 2 (1973), 157-66.

Developing a viable and equitable system for its collection proved difficult; Mahteme Selaisse describes the various procedures tried. Finally around 1925, a scheme was adopted whereby a committee of landowners and indigenous officials undertook inspection tours at harvest time to assess the tax individually.¹³

The asrat placed additional economic strain on already hard-pressed gabbars. In a good year, the small district of Bula, for example, according to a knowledgeable informant, might contribute around a thousand kilos of grain. This seemingly small amount would have provided support for one kitabel soldier for twenty months. When such an amount is multiplied by hundreds of districts, one can easily see the vital role that the asrat played in maintaining the military occupation of the south.

Even after a soldier was assigned maderia, in either gabbars or gashas, he might continue to receive reduced kitabel payments if the maderia was considered insufficient. The same procedure might be used to support the clergy of an unendowed and newly organized church. Even while receiving kitabel payment, a soldier might attempt to augment his income by working nearby land illicitly, an action generally ignored by the government.

While kitabel provided minimum support, it was not nearly so comfortable or prestigious as maderia, preferably

¹³Mahteme Selaisse, 294-95; Gebrewold, 306, sets its introduction as early as 1878.

in gabbars, for which settlers ultimately pressed. Yet in some cases, one's reliance upon kitabel might be more advantageous: a maderia grant of qalad, if located in the lowlands, often was unattractive without available labor to work it. Soldiers offered such land might decline, continuing their subsidy and illicitly working an unauthorized holding, hoping eventually to induce the government to offer gabbars. Such reluctance was part of the problem Balcha faced in the period after 1917.

Preference for gabbars increased pressure on those available, causing discontent among soldiers who did not get them. As more settlers flocked into the area, the number of kitabel soldiers increased, as did their length of time on this dole. This situation of course put additional pressure on government grain reserves: storage could only be increased by demanding more than 10 percent of the harvest or, alternatively, by developing new land. The deteriorating situation thus pushed Balcha to take a stronger role in promoting the distribution of qalad, while taking land away from those who had gained it illegally and thereby acquired a disproportionate share of the local resources.¹⁴

¹⁴Another indication of the problem Balcha faced in terms of provisioning his kitabel soldiers was his utilization of the market tax collection from Wollamo, estimated by one informant at around MT\$ 50,000 annually. Wollamo served as the emperor's madbet (a kind of private estate designated to provide staples for the imperial table).

The measurement of qalad land proceeded slowly, but steadily. We have noted already the distribution of qalad in the Agere Mariam region around 1908. The measurement of land in a particular locality was often dependent upon political conditions, e.g., controlling shifta activity, but more often was undertaken because of settler pressures. Although the demand for coffee land reached a peak in the 1920s, the distribution of suitable land had begun long before this time. Balcha, himself aware of coffee's revenue potential, brought with him from Harar a number of settlers with varying degrees of interest and expertise in that commodity. Guidi noted that Bitwoded Haile Giorgis had considerable success with coffee during his tour as Sidamo governor (1914-16).¹⁵ The bitwoded may have built upon a scheme already started by Balcha, or achieved his success in collection and marketing rather than in production, which requires several years to implement. Guidi generally confirms my own dating, indicating that large amounts of land were alienated in the Darasa and Guji areas during 1916-21.¹⁶ The Burgi migrations (see chapter 3), concentrated in the early 1920s, might also be tied to the beginnings of land measurement and alienation in that region.

Qalad's progress and the resulting settlement can also be traced by studying the pattern of church construction

¹⁵Guidi, 382.

¹⁶Loc. cit.

in particular areas. Ethiopian Orthodox churches came to dot the local landscape as the population in an area became large enough to merit one's erection. Thus, a church was not built until land alienation was well underway.¹⁷ The time interval between the start of land measurement and church construction varies, of course, from area to area and serves only as a relative indicator. Factors such as agricultural potential, political climate, and the urgings of the local settler population were involved. Colonists had to pressure the governor, local shambal or misilenye to endow a church. Since construction usually post-dated settlement in an area, finding available land to support the church often proved difficult. In Darasa awraja, only about a third of the churches were endowed with land; the remainder had to be content with cash contributions. The paucity of sanctuaries in the south often meant that settlers did not have convenient access to a church. For example, colonists often complained about the long distances that had to be travelled in order to "bury their dead in the churchyard."

The following table summarizes the churches erected in Darasa awraja since incorporation in 1895.¹⁸ It gives a general indication of land settlement patterns, revealing a

¹⁷My methodology here was influenced by Volker Stitz, "Distribution and Foundation of Churches in Ethiopia," Paper presented at the Historical Society of Ethiopia conference (Addis Ababa, 1973), mimeo.

¹⁸The material used here was acquired from the official register at the awraja church office in Dilla.

Table 8.--Distribution of Darasa Awraja Churches, 1895-1970.

Woreda	Pre-1920	1920s	1930s	1940-70
Bulé	2	1	1	2
Wonago	0	2	3	7
Yirga Chaffé	0	2	3	4
Fisseha Genet	1	1	1	7
Amarro	0	2	1	6

concentration of church construction in Wonago, Yirga Chaffé and Amarro woredas in the 1920s and 1930s. The earliest churches were, of course, located near garrison sites, e.g., Bulé Selassie, the oldest in the awraja (see chapter 1). In 1915 came Mendo Mikael in the Illalcha area, again near a garrison, accompanied by Gudah Mariam in Uraga, constructed the same year. During 1925-30 came a rash of churches, as summarized below.

Table 9 seems to focus attention on the awraja's coffee producing areas. One can surmise a five- to ten-year interval between the first land alienation and church construction, shorter than the fifteen-year interval required in the Agere Mariam case. Two points might be drawn from this conclusion: the shorter interval probably indicates a settler preference for land in this area as opposed to the more arid regions around Agere Mariam and probably reflects a period of more intensive settler population pressure after

Table 9.--Distribution of Darasa Awraja Churches, 1925-30.

Location	Tabot	Founding Date	Ethnic Area
Wonago	Mariam	1925/6	Darasa-Guji
Soyouma	Mariam	"	Amarro-Burgi
Chichu	Gabriel	1926/7	Darasa-Guji
Kaylay	Giorgis	"	Amarro-Burgi
Laba	Giorgis	1929/30	Darasa-Guji
Kedudo	Tekle Haimonot	"	Darasa-Guji
Derba	Mikael	"	Amarro-Burgi

1917, in contrast to the earlier, more insecure period. The church data thus seem to confirm my own chronology, placing the start of serious land alienation in Darasa in the period 1915-25.

As we have seen, Balcha's focus on the development of qalad land in the post-Sagallé period stemmed from his knowledge that certain mengist (government) holdings, now needed for individual distribution, were being developed illegally. In fact, Balcha was already feeling the pressure of new settlers and realized that the longer the unauthorized expansion went on, the more unsavory the task of reasserting government control over that land would be. The near absolute monopoly over labor possessed by gabbar-holders hindered the development of qalad land; without available tenants, holders of qalad tended to let it lie idle, earning rent from grazing but adding little to its tax base.

Balcha, therefore, intended to regain control over mengist land and break the neftenya's monopoly over labor. Gabbars and their patrons were to be limited to lands they traditionally and legally held, thus creating a kind of "reserve." The administration felt confident that resulting population and economic pressures there would force some gabbars to opt for tenancy on the newly cleared lands now granted as qalad to new settlers.

The plan, at least in the Darasa area, seems to have worked marvelously. Whether Balcha in fact conceived of destroying the neftenya-gabbar system is unknown, but certainly many neftenyas viewed his actions in that light. They suspected a personal attack, not only upon their livelihoods, but also upon their military unit, since those individuals involved in the Darasa area were largely remnants of Menilek's Barud Bet. Their feelings were heightened by the fact that the land was turned over to soldiers of the Bet Lijj and citizens of Agere Selaam.¹⁹ Clearly, Balcha was trying to limit the old soldiers' control of economic resources and to equalize the situation to give the landlord-tenant system a fair chance. Whether or not Balcha intended it, his actions did weaken the neftenya-gabbar structure and, in the long run, made easier its eventual demise.

¹⁹For example, most of the measured land in the Komé area east of Dilla was assigned to the new Kidané Meheret church in Agere Selaam.

To measure Darasa's illegally held land, the government employed two distinctly remembered, lower-ranking indigenous officials. These "loathsome" individuals were Idema Deli, a former market tax collector at Chichu, who surveyed lands to the east of that area, and Beeftu Woké, apparently an official who assisted in the assessment and collection of the asrat, who supervised measurement east from Dilla. Traditions recall that the two men encouraged Balcha to measure those areas, claiming them to be unsettled. Whether Idema and Beeftu acted alone out of personal greed, or in collusion with newly arrived settlers anxious to gain that valuable land, is uncertain. The two men were rewarded by grants of qalad land as shiock maret (i.e., "thorn" land reserved for the surveyor).²⁰ Northern informants reported that part of the property was later taken away so that the two men would not become "too proud."

Balcha made use of the opportunity provided by Idema and Beeftu. In order for land to be measured, it first had to be declared unsettled. The Ethiopian law states:

If, after a person has requested the government to give him land he alleges to be uncultivated and unsettled, he is given the land on the approval of the boundary chief (chikashum) by seal or verbally, but the owner of the "rist" land brings a suit over the land and proves that it is not uninhabited land, then

²⁰For descriptions of this type of tenure, see Enrico Brotto, Il Regime delle Terre nel Governo del Harar (Addis Ababa, 1939), p. 84; Gebrewold, 311.

the boundary chief shall take the "rist" land from the receiver and return it to the true owner.²¹

Balcha conveniently relied upon Idema and Beeftu, choosing not to consult the Darasa balabat, Chimburu Shundé, who viewed the disputed land as part of his balabatanet; when the official queried the administration about its action, he was told that the area was not really Darasa, but Guji, and that consultation with him was therefore unnecessary. Thus, the administration exploited the ill-defined nature of the balabatanet and the existence of traditional ethnic competition to pursue its own aims. The balabat rightly viewed the move as a threat to undermine his authority.

In such cases the law says:

If an argument arised [sic], when uncultivated land is being surveyed, as to whether the land is settled or not, the "balabat" shall argue. But he shall not be forced to give up his land upon losing the case by a person who has not been authorized to argue the case.²²

Chimburu did argue the case valiantly over a period of years until his death during the Italian war. Not only did he view the move as a personal threat, but also as an injustice to his people, and in the process of defending them, he became a local Darasa hero.

Chimburu had replaced his father Shundé as balabat probably around 1910. Informants noted that Shundé had become too infirm to meet the constant travel requirements

²¹Digest of Old Ethiopian Judgments (Law Library, Addis Ababa University, n.d.), mimeo, I, no. ?.

²²Ibid., I, no. 447.

of the office. Three of Chimburu's older brothers turned down the post, finding it either too burdensome or too odious. Like his father, Chimburu was not Christian, but he did speak passable Amharic and was granted the title of kanyazmach. He proved basically loyal to the Ethiopian administration, participating in the Sagallé zemecha in 1916, and going to Dolo in 1935 to resist the Italian invasion; yet on the qalad issue, Chimburu took his stand.

He was not alone. As the measurement and distribution of land to newcomers proceeded, sporadic resistance erupted. These actions involved neftenya and gabbar alike, each protecting his own interests. Although the violence does not appear to have been serious, it did reflect local attitudes to the measurement policy. As landlords arrived, gabbars were given the choice of either coming to an agreement with them or moving elsewhere. Arrangements varied, but generally tenants were expected to provide a fourth or a third of their harvests as rent to the landlord. Expropriated neftenyas were offered qalad land in the golla areas, a compensation most declined. Such patrons were thus left as gabbar holders in the highlands, often with a reduced labor force, if some of their clients opted for a tenancy arrangement with a newcomer. Interestingly enough, in quite a number of cases, neftenyas themselves were able to work out tenancy agreements with new patrons who now controlled the land on which their qudads had been situated. In some cases, the neftenya might work the land himself or

mobilize his gabbars in the highlands to help him. In circumstances where the neftenya could not work out a tenancy arrangement, he might still try to exploit his former gabbars by claiming illegal annual payments from them. In this case, the Darasa might subsequently pay both landlords and former neftenyas simultaneously.

Besides periodic violence, neftenyas and gabbars used legal means to challenge qalad. Chimburu and the neftenyas unsuccessfully opposed the policy in the local courts, which inevitably sustained Balcha's position. Disgruntled, the neftenyas took their case to Addis Ababa, where they hoped Fitiwrari Hapte Giorgis, the long-time war minister, might favor Menilek's former soldiers. The fitiwrari declined intervention, but repeated appeals finally influenced Empress Zewditu to investigate. Her agents reported no improprieties, but it was said they were bought off with promises of qalad land. Subsequent efforts in Addis Ababa came to nought, as did Chimburu's attempts to claim jurisdiction over the areas.²³

²³Haile Selassie I (Emperor), Autobiography, translated by Edward Ullendorff (London, 1976), pp. 152-53, seems to indicate that Balcha's removal as governor in February 1928, was due as much to the many complaints by both peasants and soldiers from Sidamo as to his political machinations. The discontent may have stemmed from the province's qalad issue. The regent's ability to isolate Balcha so easily by buying off his troops may have been facilitated by the fact that at least part of these were Barud Bet, who, while loyal to Zewditu, likewise had no real affection for Balcha because of the land issue. Balcha was imprisoned for one year at Holeta and Addis Alem before being allowed to retire to his estate in Agamja. Remaining loyal to Menilek's empire

Qalad remained a problem throughout the governorship of Ras Birru Wolde Gabriel, whose rise to power in many ways mirrored Balcha's. Of humble origins, he was raised in the imperial ghebbi, educated at one of Ethiopia's first modern schools, and was completely devoted to Menilek, who soon made him *liqamaqwas*. Around 1911, Birru was promoted to *dejazmach* and made governor of Wollega, where he reportedly amassed a private fortune. A conspiracy against Ras Teferi brought his dismissal and imprisonment, but he was pardoned after the regent's return from Europe in 1925; two years later, he was appointed to Sidamo,²⁴ where, according to Asinari di San Marzano, he made more money in one year than he had gained in Wollega.²⁵ He apparently impressed the many foreign travellers who encountered him. According to Harold White, Birru was "one of the best

to the end, he offered himself to its defense against the Italians finally dying in 1937 in a suicidal attack upon Addis Ababa. Although relatives tried to dissuade the aged *dejazmach* from participation in the campaign, he reportedly replied: "What am I to tell Menilek when I see him about who is sitting on his throne today?" Mezemer Hailu (*Kanyazmach*), *Ye Kibbur Dejazmach Balcha* (Addis Ababa, 1957 E. C.), p. 22; Tsehai Berhaneselassie, "The Life and Career of *Dejazmach Balcha Aba Näfso*," *JES*, IX, 2 (1971), 187-89.

²⁴Addison E. Southard to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, December 22, 1930, No. 594, General Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1930-49, 884; Pierre Mérab, *Impressions d'Ethiopie* (Paris, 1921), II, pp. 90-92; Haile Selassie I, p. 27; Mahteme Selassie Wolde Maskal (*Blattengetta*), "Ye Etiopia Bahil Tinat," *JES*, VII, 2 (1969), 233-34.

²⁵Asinari di San Marzano, pp. 216-17; 219-20.

educated and finest Abyssinians we . . . met."²⁶ Besides being intelligent, he was widely travelled, open to innovation and ambitious. Ciravegna reported further that Birru:

. . . enjoys the general sympathies for his rough energy, mixing distinction and refinement. He is truly, in this feudal country, a great medieval baron with his luxury and his omnipotence.²⁷

Like Balcha, Birru would not suffer opposition, and he and Chimburu soon wrangled.

Under Birru, two new elements were added to Sidamo's land measurement dispute. In September 1930 (Maskarem, 1923 E.C.), the new Emperor Haile Selassie I decreed a remeasurement of certain locales and the distribution of any excess (tirf) land located.²⁸ The monarch's edict was clearly in the spirit of Balcha's earlier reforms, and aimed at broadening the tax base by encouraging the development of heretofore undeveloped land. Assessing the impact of the decree is difficult. Other scholars have ignored it, and my own informants did not know much about it. Some did recall that certain areas were remeasured, and that affected tenants consequently came under the control of new landlords.

²⁶Harold A. White to Mr. Stanley Field, Sabia Plain Camp, Borana, April 7, 1929, "Correspondence of the White-Coates Abyssinian Expedition (1928-31)" (Registrar, Field Museum, Chicago).

²⁷Giovanni Ciravegna, Nell'Impero del Negus Neghest (Turin, 1933), pp. 150-54.

²⁸Shibru Tekle Giorgis (trans.), "Compilation and Translation of Ethiopian Government Land Grant Orders" (Law Library, Addis Ababa University, 1969), 1504-06; Mahteme Selaissie, "The Land System," 295-96.

How extensive the remeasurement was is not clear, but it was likely very scattered, involving areas where challenges had been mounted. The decree seems aimed at landholders with undeveloped tracts in excess of their recorded taxable lands. Proprietors and their Darasa clients were encouraged to cultivate such lands, being permitted a full or partial three-year exemption from the ghibbr. Such a law would seem particularly suited to coffee areas where even partial production takes a minimum of three years to attain.

The national administration, then, in its remeasurement efforts, was trying to make more efficient use of the resources available and to insure more equitable distribution. As part of this reform, the first series of numbered tax receipts arrived in Sidamo. Birru and Chimburu clashed also over the procedures for utilizing these receipts. A series of measurements in some areas had complicated the land patterns. Like the gabbar unit, the occupants of a fertile gasha paid their twenty-six thaler tax communally. With repeated measurement, a gasha might have several partial landlords and might be cultivated by a mixture of Darasa and northern tenants; payment was designated to a "responsible" tax-payer, usually an owner, but was routinely passed on to the occupying tenants. Since much of the Darasa land involved was under litigation, Chimburu argued that the names of all occupants of a gasha, including supposed tenants, should also be designated on the tax receipts, while Birru opted for that of only the

"responsible" individual. Chimburu recognized that a northerner might deny tenants receipts and thereby strengthen his claim to the disputed land by arguing that only he had paid the tax. Ultimately, Birru's position was upheld and enforced.²⁹

The conflict between the balabat and governor climaxed around 1929. Chimburu was escorted to Agere Selaam, where he publicly received forty lashes and then, to the horror of the Darasa, was imprisoned. The lashing, while not an unusual punishment for a low-ranking Ethiopian official, was probably unjustified in the sense that Chimburu remained loyal to the regime and was attempting to express his dislike of official policy through normal channels. On the other hand, it was not characteristic of Ethiopian officials to oppose government policy as persistently as had Chimburu. Possibly, Chimburu's recalcitrance was a reflection of his level of assimilation. He still misread, to a degree, the role that Ethiopians expected him to play and tended to identify more with the interests of his own people. Yet the incident, far from damaging Chimburu's credibility or frightening his compatriots, transformed him instead into a local Darasa hero.

²⁹ A similar problem has continued. Northern holders sharing a gasha with indigenous risholders often sought to cheat their co-sharers by denying them a tax receipt. See Asres Kokebie, "A Regional Study of Gerbicho" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968), p. 52.

Relatives appealed to the regent to obtain Chimburu's release, a task that Teferi expedited by use of the telephone.

When Birru did not return to Sidamo after the Gonder zemecha, Darasa viewed this failure as retribution for his mistreatment of Chimburu, through probably there was no real connection. In fact, Birru and his Sidamo force proved very effective supporting Ras Mulugeta's campaign against Ras Gugsa, and, consequently, Haile Selassie I decided to make Birru the war minister, an appointment that was announced in January 1931.³⁰ In replacement, the emperor sent his own son-in-law, Ras Desta Damtew, who moved the province's capital to Yirgalem and administered Borana as well.

In 1921, the aristocratic Desta had aided in the capture of the deposed ruler, Lijj Yasu, an action that, three years later, won the hand of the emperor's oldest daughter, Tenanyework. Desta came to Sidamo from Kaffa, where, as governor, he was reputed for upholding peasant interests, much to the dislike of settlers.³¹ Desta's

³⁰Addison E. Southard to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, January 26, 1931, No. 621, General Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1930-49, 884.

³¹Margery Perham, The Government of Ethiopia (Evanston, 1939), pp. 83, 320-31; Addison E. Southard to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, February 9, 1929, No. 136, Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1910-29, 884; Adrien Zervos, L'Empire d'Ethiopie (Athens, 1936), p. 390; Haile Selassie I, pp. 61-62.

appointment represented, on the provincial level, the ultimate political victory for Ras Teferi at the national center, where the regent, for a decade and a half had sought to build and consolidate his power base in the face of considerable opposition, gradually appointing men to subordinate positions who shared his own progressive goals and who were loyal to him. This gradual transition was thus reflected in Sidamo's own administrators. Balcha had received a traditional education and was completely tied to Menilek; Birru possessed a more modern education and was, to a degree, progressive, yet was still basically Menilek's man and not particularly loyal to Teferi; Desta, on the other hand, was firmly in Teferi's orbit, carefully groomed to carry out the emperor's own imperatives. In this light, Desta carried out the administrative unification of Sidamo and Borana, a move that reflected the growing national centralization that was underway.

Under Desta, conditions in Sidamo seem to have calmed, even though the measurement and remeasurement of land continued. Not unexpectedly, he focused on the coffee areas, also important in Kaffa where he had previously been assigned. Although sympathetic to peasant concerns, Desta alienated considerable coffee land to his family including his brother-in-law, Leul Ras Mekonnen Haile Selassie.³²

³²Some of the land was probably confiscated from the discredited Balcha. Some of Balcha's former clients reported that his land was included later in the endowment of the Haile Selassie I Foundation.

In addition, he worked to improve the transport system, tying together not only Sidamo and Borana, but also upgrading links to the north. Desta involved himself deeply in the coffee trade, investing in the region's first lorries, trying to monopolize the commodity's marketing.³³

Desta's programs were overtaken by the Italian war. As commander of the southern front, Desta fought valiantly, but futilely, against Graziani's attack and was eventually captured and executed. The war and the subsequent occupation had several profound effects upon the land situation in Sidamo. First, Darasa peasants were left free for a time to work their land unburdened by heavy demands or taxation. This situation resulted from the eviction and death of many settlers during the war. Moreover, Italian policy recognized traditional, i.e., pre-conquest, rights to the land. It is not surprising then that many Darasa viewed the Italians as liberators.

Yet both the occupation and Darasa autonomy were short-lived. After the war, settlers sought to restore the old order, and new colonists flocked to the region to gain those holdings left vacant by the casualties.³⁴ Yet Haile

³³Moyale District Handing Over Reports (April, 1933), MLE/25. How much time Desta actually spent in the province is unclear. He undertook an imperial mission to Washington in 1933, at which time his enderassie, Fitiwrari Ademe, handled administrative affairs. See Zervos, p. 390.

³⁴Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (1939), 194, indicates that Barud

Selassie was not about to allow the old order's complete restoration. While the emperor granted soldiers and their heirs the privilege of transforming part of their maderia into rist, he was aware as well that indigenous peasant rights ought to be protected. Suspicious of post-war British intentions in his country, the emperor took pains to minimize internal discontent; he realized that potentially disloyal subjects had to be courted not alienated. In a series of decrees between 1941-45, the emperor further encouraged the development of unproductive lands, abolished gabbar labor services, and consolidated taxation, making cash payment mandatory.³⁵ In effect, the emperor wiped out the vestiges of the neftenya-gabbar system. Balcha's reforms had been the first blow; the Italian war and its consequences provided the second.

The demise of neftenya-gabbar left Darasa in traditional areas free to work their holdings as long as they paid their annual government tax. Yet, in many areas, the issue of qalad had not been settled but only interrupted by the war. In the years just prior to the Italian arrival, as the government surveyors moved gradually upslope, toward the Darasa homeland, into peripheral areas that had been

Bet soldiers offered particularly fierce resistance to the Italian intrusion and consequently suffered heavy casualties.

³⁵ See Gebrewold, 325-32; Mahteme Selaisse, "The Land System," 269-99.

under Darasa cultivation for nearly a generation, an intervening region remained that had been measured but not yet distributed, due to local resistance and litigation. Since qalad's chief opponent, balabat Chimburu, died of natural causes during the war, the unresolved issue was inherited by his son Assefa, who became balabat with the title of balambaras. Assefa was more acculturated than his father, speaking quite good Amharic and being at least a nominal Christian,³⁶ and thus tended to be less defiant and more compromising.

Exactly how the issue of the disputed land was resolved remains unclear. Ultimately, Assefa seems to have turned his balabatanet (excluding his private lands) over to Ras Desta's wife, Princess Tenanyework Haile Selassie, who thus came to possess some five hundred gashas of Darasa-Guji land as either melkenya or balabat. She received rather large areas in the upland Darasa districts of Michillé, Dama, Tunticha, Amba and Bula.³⁷ In effect, Assefa continued as an unofficial or surrogate balabat until his death in the 1950s, reportedly drinking himself into an

³⁶The Ethiopians seemed generally unconcerned with the continued polygamy of either Assefa Chimburu or Kallu Toté.

³⁷Information obtained from a rather cursory survey of the Wonago woreda finance office records.

early grave. Certainly, Darasa do not view him very favorably.³⁸

Darasa in the disputed districts thus became clients for Princess Tenanyework, a status they found preferable to service for anyone else, even if they lost hope of retaining those lands as rist.³⁹ Nevertheless, Darasa continued to resent the loss of land they felt was rightfully theirs, and this discontent continued to crop up in later years. In 1960 and again in 1968, Darasa displayed their bitterness in small-scale disturbances.⁴⁰

This unrest stemmed from the sweeping changes experienced by the Darasa since 1917. The area's land tenure configuration had altered with the clearance and cultivation of all the good agricultural land. When the neftenya-gabbar system was restricted to traditional upland areas, clients were stranded on depleted soil, with limited access to manure to fertilize fields and few options but to deal with often repressive neftenyas. With the clearing of much of the forested areas, clients could only accept tenancy or

³⁸Tenanyework in effect carried more weight in the area, even while Balambaras Assefa lived. One informant, a former Darasa abba gada, fighting an internal challenge to his traditional authority, took his case to the princess for resolution.

³⁹Tenanyework required cash and not kind from her tenants. The amount, collected by her misilenye, was based upon the types of crops grown.

⁴⁰For a brief description of the 1968 troubles, see Peter Schwab, Decision-Making in Ethiopia (London, 1972), pp. 175-80.

migrate to the towns as day laborers. Many of those who endured such difficulties in the highlands before the Italian war were later rewarded by the government's recognition of their traditional rights. At the same time, the government sanctioned many illegal qudads established by neftenyas in that area forty years earlier.

Downslope, in the coffee producing areas, the pattern varied, and generalization is difficult. A particular situation largely reflected the attitudes of the provincial government, the time period in which the locale was first measured and the amount of opposition offered by concerned parties. The earlier measurement in advance of extensive Darasa settlement was undoubtedly the easiest. Since the imposition of qalad proceeded generally upslope from west to east, and Darasa migrations, for whatever reasons, were directed downslope, the strongest opposition was experienced in areas closest to the traditional homeland and already extensively cleared. The latter areas were those ultimately turned over to Tenanyework. Yet even this generalization is dangerous since patches of land were alienated to the princess in almost every district. The scattered nature of her holdings would seem to indicate the unorganized and rather haphazard nature of the measurement program, complicated further by the remeasurement of some areas. The arbitrary nature of the surveying also seems evident from the remarks of informants; they noted that measurement often took the road of least resistance, and

sometimes was even compassionate, permitting aged and retired soldiers to reside on the unmeasured land until their deaths and leaving neftenyas alone who were particularly influential or whose clients were overly defiant.

Without access to official government records concerning the status of present-day holdings in Darasa, it is difficult to give an accurate overview of current conditions. Certainly, Darasa until 1975 were both rist-holders and tenants, the former mostly in traditional upland areas and the latter in the more recently occupied coffee regions, yet such was not exclusively so. The government's Rural Sample Survey found that 66 percent of the holdings in Darasa awraja were of the tenant variety.⁴¹ A 1968 survey of the awraja indicated that 53 percent of the measured land was held as gabbar (a term equivalent to rist), yet it is impossible to know from these statistics how much was Darasa-held. By contrast, all the unmeasured land, most likely in Darasa hands, was listed as gabbar. What seems evident from these statistics was the tendency for measured areas to be rated, for tax purposes, as more fertile than the unmeasured areas occupied by Darasa peasants. Table 10 outlines the differences, demonstrating, I believe, that the better land was generally in the hands of settlers.

⁴¹As cited in Teketel Haile Mariam, "The Production, Marketing and Economic Impact of Coffee in Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1973), p. 47.

Table 10.--Fertility Ratings of Darasa Awraja Land.^a

	Fertile 1		Semi Fertile 2		Poor 3	
Measured Land*	42.3%		7.7%		50.1%	
Unmeasured Land*	0%	31%	7.2%	4.8%	0%	57.1%
	Special Fertile	I	II	III	IV	V

^aEthiopian Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, Report on the Land Tenure Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), mimeo, pp. 7, 9, 12-13.

*Measured land was classified into three categories; unmeasured into six.

Yet, inevitably, anomalies in any area existed. One found occasionally unmeasured land in an area otherwise surveyed and held by northern landlords, generally, as informants put it, because: "The land was so poor that no one else wanted it."

The figures concerning the measured land seem misleading, at least for the Darasa ethnic area. Since the present-day awraja includes much of the Guji-inhabited, qolla area extending toward Lake Abaya, the government statistics do not accurately reflect the quality of the measured land in the Darasa area. My own calculations, based upon examination of several thousand tax receipts from 1945, indicate rather clearly the misleading nature of the government data. I have compared the fertility ratings of various gashas situated within three particular bala-batanets of the awraja.

Table 11.--Fertility Ratings of Measured Land in Selected Balabatanets in Darasa Awraja.

Balabat	No. Gashas in Sample	% Rated			Area Description
		1	2	3	
Assefa Chimburu, Balambaras	386.08	95	2	3	Mixed dega and woyna dega
Gumé Kumbiccha, Kanyazmach	546.75	47	22	31	Mostly woyna dega
Wolde Tensay, Kanyazmach	402.00	30	11	59	Mixed woyna dega and qolla

Table 11 indicates that 95 percent of the sample gashas within the Darasa balabatanet of Assefa Chimburu were rated as fertile and assessed the highest tax valuation,⁴² while land in two adjacent Guji jurisdictions was much less valuable. Government statistics hide these disparities by lumping together and averaging the data.

The fertility of the Darasa soil, its potential for coffee production, and its suitability for northern settlement thus made land in the area highly prized and closely held. The 1968-government survey indicated that a very high 80 percent of the landlords in the awraja lived on their land, while in the province as a whole, the figure was set

⁴²By comparison, Mann, et al., p. 8, found in a Sidama woreda, ecologically similar to Darasa, 93 percent of the measured land rated in the fertile category.

at 75 percent, and in neighboring Jamjam awraja at only 44 percent.⁴³ The relatively infrequent occurrence of absentee landlordism thus seems to indicate a desire on the part of holders to supervise their valuable estates and protect them from other claimants.

Yet the relative lack of absentee landlordism in Darasa was not necessarily positive, at least as informants viewed it. On the contrary, the presence of the landlords tended to complicate the daily lives of the tenants who had previously been autonomous gabbars. To a large degree, the landlord dictated to his tenants what they should grow, the main emphasis being placed on coffee and not on traditional Darasa staples. Darasa preferred the more indirect contacts of the old system and may have even favored absentee landlordism; it was Princess Tenanyework's absence from the areas, for example, and her indirect supervision that made her system of clientage preferable to the ordinary arrangement.

The focus upon coffee damaged production of the main staple, ensete, whose cultivation became less efficient. Darasa were less concerned with the proper care and fertilization of their plants and even preferred buying transplants

⁴³ Ethiopian Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, Report on the Land Tenure Survey, pp. 20-21. The conception of an absentee landlord is confusing. Some landlords maintained two residences but spent only the harvest season in Sidamo. Others, mostly retirees, lived most of their years in the province, but opted to reside in Addis Ababa in old age.

to preparing their own.⁴⁴ Clearly, working land in both the traditional and the tenanted regions would have given the Darasa the advantage of both coffee and ensete production, but only about 20 percent of my Darasa informants achieved this ideal. Landlords usually required clients to reside on their tenanted land and discouraged them from working plots elsewhere. Since landlords received a percentage of the harvest, they supervised tenants closely to ensure maximum effort, yet gave no clear encouragement to increased production. On the contrary, landlords were notoriously dishonest in estimating harvest size and expropriated increases, so that tenants remained without any real economic incentive.

In fact, neither system, the neftenya-gabbar nor the landlord-tenant, stimulated production. While annual payments were prescribed under the former system, in reality the neftenya took whatever he could. It is significant that my informants made no distinction between the two systems in terms of levels of exploitation. Under both, clients continued to perform a wide variety of labor services. Exactions, both in labor and produce, were heavy. While the degree of exploitation in both systems depended on the individual patron-client relationship, Darasa, when forced

⁴⁴ Helmar Smeds, "The Ensete Planting Culture of Eastern Sidamo, Ethiopia," *Acta Geographica*, XIII, 4 (1955), 19-22; Fantaye Berek, "The Production and Consumption of Enset in Sidama" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968), p. 19.

into a choice between the two, inevitably leaned to neftenya-gabbar; they preferred its indirect nature and pointed out that if galad had not been imposed in many areas, Darasa would have come to hold those regions as rist, as in the highlands, when neftenya-gabbar was finally abolished. Certainly, under neftenya-gabbar one had a few more options. If a gabbar left the land, it was by his own choice and not that of a particular landlord.

Neither did my informants make any real distinction between systems based on the patron's rank. Some observers have felt that higher-ranking patrons tended to be less exploitative.⁴⁵ My statistics do not permit any such conclusion, even if some informants did make distinctions. Certainly, those gabbars attached to the provincial ghebbi found their status acceptable, while those tenants assigned to Princess Tenanyework preferred their lot to regular tenancy. Yet one should not extrapolate from these differences. We have already noted that arrangements depended greatly on the personality and needs of the individual patron involved; also, higher-ranking officials tended to leave supervision to agents who could be harsh and arbitrary.

Even for those Darasa who eventually gained rist rights, exploitation did not cease. One had to guard constantly against covetous individuals: landholders who

⁴⁵See, e.g., Michael Ståhl, Ethiopia, Political Contradictions in Agricultural Development (Uppsala, 1974), p. 46; Frank de Halpert as cited in Perham, pp. 319-20.

fell into tax arrears might find northerners paying the tax and claiming the land. Tax on each gasha of fertile land in the pre-Italian period was set at twenty-six thalers; other gashas were taxed at fifteen, ten or five depending on quality. In 1944 the rate on fertile land was raised sharply to forty-five thalers.⁴⁶ This change put pressure on the indigenous landholder, forcing him into a cash economy for which he was less suited than his coffee-producing brethren and making it harder for him to pay his taxes. We did find cases of Darasa landholders who had to sell their farms piece by piece in order to retain the remainder. The proletarianization of the Darasa peasant thus has been underway since the conquest. It reached a peak in the 1920s, but has continued as Darasa freeholders found themselves in a disadvantageous position in terms of retaining their traditional homesteads. A similar trend has emerged among northern settlers in the south as the wealthiest used the traditional Ethiopian courts to contest the lands of their less fortunate compatriots.

Under such constant pressure, the Darasa also have made increasing use of the Ethiopian legal structure, although most profess no great faith in that system. Around 20 percent of my informants reported using the firdbet at

⁴⁶Achille Saitta, "Il Sistema Tributario del Vecchio Impero Abissino," Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, XXVII (1939), 284; Mahteme Selaïsse, "The Land System," 299; Gebrewold, 331.

least once. Although the number is small, it is surprisingly larger than one might expect. Nearly 90 percent of the cases concerned land or associated payments or services, and about a third involved opposition to qalad. In half these instances, the cases pitted Darasa against their patrons, either a neftenya or landlord, and another third (those involving qalad) against the government. In two-thirds of these cases Darasa were prosecutors, although the percentage here is inflated heavily (50 percent), by the qalad cases.

Despite cynicism, Darasa did use the legal system, albeit modestly, and were successful in a surprising number of cases. Interestingly, Darasa took to Ethiopian courts those cases that could not be handled by traditional heiycha. Darasa also had the example of their own valiant balabat and of many local neftenyas who defended their land in court, although not too successfully. A number of northern settlers, many tenants themselves, proffered Darasa legal advice and representation, as did other ethnic settlers, like the Wollamo, who, as former slaves, had sustained closer contacts with northerners and were more knowledgeable about the workings of the system. And clearly, also, some of these individuals victimized the inexperienced Darasa. Some informants in the Kallecha area, for example, reported that an Addis Ababa lawyer argued their case in court so long that he eventually took over the land himself as payment for his legal fees.

The same exploitation became a part of life for many northern settlers as well. The growth of the landlord-tenant relationship blurred the ethnic lines in the south. The social and economic separation generally maintained by the neftenya-gabbar structure gave way as Darasa peasants came into closer contact with their patrons and were forced to enter the money economy. The imposition of qalad in some Darasa areas, while turning gabbars into tenants, also succeeded in transforming certain settlers into clients. These northerners preferred to be tenants on valuable land rather than patrons on undeveloped gashas. Thus, in coffee producing regions, Darasa and northern tenants came to live side by side, the latter acting as cultural intermediaries, some even marrying Darasa wives and assuming semi-Darasa lifestyles. The northerners also had to protect themselves against patron exploitation, and in this way, came to feel greater identity with the Darasa, although they clearly never gave up their cultural associations. The effort undertaken by gabbars and neftenyas alike to defend themselves against the imposition of qalad no doubt contributed to mutuality. Under the landlord-tenant scheme, there was much more likelihood of northerners serving as tenants for certain balabats and korros; this role-reversal contributed as well to the blurring of lines between Darasa and northerner.

Southern societies were thus being transformed in the early twentieth century to suit the needs and priorities

of the northern administration. Yet these changes were part and parcel of a national struggle between a dominant feudal mode of production and an emerging capitalist system. The gradual shift from neftenya-gabbar to a full-fledged tenancy system reflected an attempt by a basically feudal state to provision a greater settler population in its conquered areas while, at the same time, adjusting its productive capacity to exploit more fully its internal potential and meet external world demand. There was also a need to increase domestic tax revenues to meet the costs of the government's modernization programs at the core. The shift from ivory and slaves to coffee necessitated a reorganization of the south's division of labor. The land needed for coffee production was thus safely placed in the hands of northern supervisors, while both economic and demographic pressures acted to ensure the new system's viability. Since most northern proprietors did not own the land they utilized, the tenancy system prior to 1936 was not fully capitalistic, yet its direction already seemed assured. Many Darasa were already proletarianized and could be evicted from the land at the patron's wish. They were already, in a sense, day laborers who received a portion of the crop they produced as wages. These coffee areas thus became the bridgeheads of a developing money economy in the south which in turn exerted pressures on its own peripheral areas. Thus, for example, Darasa coffee areas became the import focus of livestock from pastoral areas as well as processed

ensete and plantlings from upland Darasa localities. These economic changes stimulated, as we have noted, an alteration in settler-indigène and intra-Darasa relations. We shall investigate these changes further in chapters 5 and 6, emphasizing commercial and marketing arrangements and social interaction in light of the economic patterns already described.

Chapter 5

COMMERICAL MANIPULATION: CHANGING PATTERNS IN REGIONAL AND LOCAL TRADE

Ethiopia's late nineteenth-century expansion incorporated vast new territories and an array of different peoples; it also brought the government control of a commercial network that for centuries past had moved goods from the interior to the coast for export to Asian and European markets. Expansionism had been spurred largely by northern Ethiopia's desire to control not only the flow of trade but also its sources. This domination proved decisive in determining the north's political balance; with the wealth he obtained, Menilek purchased firearms which safeguarded him against political contenders and foreign aggressors.

Ethiopians exploited the commercial network as a resource similar to land or labor. As with agriculture, the pre-existing commercial sector was left intact, but a process of eventual incorporation began. The administration sought to regulate and tax the system, using the proceeds to expand and improve the administrative infrastructure that, over time, helped to bring about the area's economic

integration. Thus a system of improved roads, bridges and market centers gradually evolved, a structure helping the administration more fully and efficiently to exploit the area, and offering stimulus to northern settlement, thereby making land more valuable. For colonists, life became more bearable as northern imports became available and as church construction gave access to sacraments and education.

In the post-conquest period, the government restructured the south's commercial organization to meet its own specific needs, ensuring, over time, that northerners controlled the area's most vital resources. Initially dependent on each balabatane's tribute, the Ethiopian administration immediately appropriated ivory, wild animal skins and slaves, the most accessible and efficiently exploitable resources. As the tribute system evolved gradually into the *neftenya-gabbar*, some individual patrons found themselves with an excess of agricultural commodities. They began to seek markets in which to sell these and thereby entered commercial competition.

Some patrons, however, forced gabbars to offer substitutes and thus encouraged clients to evaluate their economic options more carefully. Some *indigènes* consequently sought to expand their commercial activities, while others tried production or utilization of new products. The initial period of Ethiopian economic domination thus set precedents that would promote integration over the next few generations. The local population was excluded from the

development of certain resources, while agricultural surpluses were taxed to support a settler population and to insure the development of further infrastructure.

The 1920s brought even more change. The declining supply of ivory and slaves led to economic diversification to cover the subsequent decline in revenues. At the same time, rising prices, improvements in transport, and continued economic pressure on the indigenous population contributed to making coffee an increasingly important commodity. Unlike ivory, coffee required labor organization, and thus the Darasa became primary producers of a commodity essential to the economic vitality of the state, linked to Addis Ababa in the same way Ethiopia was connected to and associated with the world capitalist economy.

This chapter will attempt to trace the course of Darasa's economic incorporation. While the primary focus will be upon the Darasa, I will try as well to insinuate them into the broader context of Sidamo province and of the empire itself. After a brief overview of the pre-conquest commercial structure, we shall proceed to a general investigation of northern attempts at regulation and control and then examine the Darasa case more specifically. We will include an analysis of the commodities involved, with particular emphasis on ivory, ensete and coffee, and of economic interaction between Darasa and northern settlers. Finally we will attempt to assess the overall impact of economic change.

It is difficult to characterize the pre-conquest trading patterns of Sidamo since too little is known. Commercial contacts were extensive, with the Boran and possibly the Guji serving as intermediaries. The widely dispersed Boran traded with the Konso, Burgi, Gofa and Darasa and accumulated surpluses which they exchanged with Somali traders who moved throughout Boran country until their wares were exhausted.¹ Marketing tended to be episodic and impromptu; the news of a caravan's arrival spread quickly, and local people soon arrived ready to exchange their wares. Interior marketing tended to complement the seasonal character of the coastal trade fairs. Bottego's expedition sparked one of these extemporaneous markets, impressing the travellers with the wide variety of commodities available--warqie (ensete), wheat, barley, coffee, tobacco, honey--many of which originated hundreds of miles away.²

Indeed, these commodities were transported to Borana over a vast trade network connecting neighboring peoples. If the system's operation was a bit inefficient, it worked quite effectively over long distances, particularly for

¹M. Abir, "Southern Ethiopia," in R. Gray and D. Birmingham's Precolonial African Trade (London, 1970), pp. 132-35. Boran attempted to control coastal traders, preventing them from penetration beyond Oromo country. Their attack on the Ruspoli expedition was probably the result of the Europeans' insistence that they be allowed to travel wherever they pleased; see Luigi Lucca, "La Spedizione Ruspoli," L'Esplorazione Commerciale, X (1895), 41-42.

²Vittorio Bottego, Il Giuba Esplorato (Rome, 1895), pp. 163-64.

non-perishable items. Thus, for example, ivory acquired by the Burgi from people further west was traded to the Boran, who in turn sold it to coastal Somali traders.³ Perishable items travelled the same network, but for shorter distances. Thus Lucca, with the Ruspoli expedition, met a Boran caravan returning from Jamjam where it had exchanged salt for sorghum and, later, a contingent of 400 Jamjam on its way to Burgi with sheep and barley.⁴

Inter-ethnic exchange generally reflected the nature of political relations between neighbors. If relations between peoples were hostile, exchanges took place at boundary locations, as between the Darasa and Sidama. Such sites, in the forested no-man zones, utilized well-watered clearings, not necessarily fixed but often used repeatedly. Whereas the women traded, they were accompanied by men armed for action.

Darasa contacts with the friendlier Guji were easier. Therefore, while intermediate sites were sometimes utilized, Guji had freedom to hawk their commodities unhindered throughout Darasa territory.⁵ Likewise, Darasa travelled freely in

³J. T. Jackson, "Periodic Markets in Southern Ethiopia," Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, LIII, 2 (1971), 37, also has dealt with this problem.

⁴Lucca, 71, 101-02.

⁵John Hinnant, Guji of Ethiopia (New Haven, 1972), I, pp. 198, 201, 205.

Guji and even went south to a site called Magado near Finchoa to trade directly with the Boran.

Not all local commodities moved ultimately to Borana; a variety of routes existed. Darasa contacts with the Gemu across Lake Abaya and with the Wollamo made it likely that at least some of Sidamo's preconquest trade passed through Jimma and Gonder to Massawa and Khartoum. Another portion probably headed due south, attracted by Swahili caravans from the Kenya coast. But the two most important routes seem to have been those closest the sea, northeastward to the city of Harar and southeastward to the Benadir coast via the city of Lugh. The extent of Sidamo trade through each city is unknown, but it seems evident that, as Ethiopian armies began their southward expansion in the late 1880s, the road to Harar became increasingly hazardous, shifting trade to alternate routes.⁶ Thus, prior to Ethiopian control over these arteries, Lugh probably enjoyed a temporary boom. Already wealthy, the Sultan of Lugh accrued considerable revenue taxing goods in transit.⁷

Although Ethiopian expansion temporarily disrupted trade, commerce soon recovered. Within a year after the arrival of northern forces, Cavendish reported Boran traders transporting considerable quantities of rubber, fibre, rope, honey, gum and ivory to the coast. Each caravan was

⁶Bottego, pp. 85, 439.

⁷Ibid., pp. 392, 452.

heavily taxed of upwards of 50 percent of its merchandise,⁸ due to new regulations imposed upon the traditional commercial structure. While not seeking to disturb the indigenous system, the Ethiopians did attempt through taxation to draw off its profits and to redirect the trade northward. Little attention was given to the welfare of the indigenous population; the prime concern was exploitation of people and resources for profits.

As a vital part of the infrastructure developed to assist exploitation, the northerners erected fortified towns, or ketemas, a contribution of which they were justly proud. One Ethiopian confided to Du Bourg de Bozas:

After the Abyssinian conquest, all the country was deserted and poor. It is we who have built Abarra [Sidamo's capital] which you will come to know and the markets also that you have seen. Apparently the populations of the country do not know how to build towns.⁹

While the ketemas served to maintain local peace, they also acted as centers for resource accumulation, points to which balabats brought agricultural tribute and individual gabbars delivered their goods and services.

Often sited near traditional markets, ketemas sustained trade and made commercial supervision relatively

⁸H. S. H. Cavendish, "Through Somaliland and Around and South of Lake Rudolf," Geographical Journal, XI, 4 (1898), 376.

⁹Robert du Bourg de Bozas, De la Mer Rouge à l'Atlantique à Travers l'Afrique Tropicale (Paris, 1906), p. 246.

easy. Because of their inaccessible locations, most early garrison towns were oriented to local rather than long-distance trade. The imposition of communal and later individualized tribute meant that northerners rarely utilized nearby indigenous markets since clients provided most of their agricultural requirements. Each ketema also had its small market where settlers might exchange the surpluses acquired from gabbars or purchase northern imports. While the juxtaposition of settler and indigène markets did not engender their total separation nor exclude any user, basic differences remained. Indigenous markets were most often characterized by low cash-producing commodities and the utilization of customary currencies; urban markets used official money to buy and sell imported consumer goods and local products oriented to the export market. As conditions became more secure, indigenous and settler markets coalesced, with the urban market gradually incorporating the traditional exchange site. For example, Dela, jointly used by the Sidama and Darasa, gradually disappeared as urban markets, first in Chichu and later Dilla, reduced its viability. Other traditional sites became fixed and periodic, thereby assuming a more modern character.¹⁰

¹⁰Roberto Asinari di San Marzano, Dal Giuba al Margherita (Rome, 1935), p. 162, describes the segmented nature of the Gardulla market. Dilla market remains divided even today. Informants claimed the division was simply a matter of space, but the market curiously breaks down along ethnic lines with Darasa-Guji items sold in the

In charge of each important market was an official called a negadras. Depending on the market's nature, he might be either an indigène or a northern settler, and was responsible for supervising and collecting taxes also from nearby smaller markets. Sidamo eventually came to have at least thirty of these officials, each with his subordinates, the number dependent on the quantity and importance of his markets. Usually the negadras had a tsehafi (clerk) to record the taxes collected, and a number of qwarach, usually indigenous individuals, who wandered the market bringing transactors to the negadras for assessment.¹¹

Most taxes were collected in kind, a handful of each commodity sold being appropriated for the administration. Sometimes measurement was undertaken with a small wooden or horn cup called a qubaye. For commodities such as livestock, cash was the only practical alternative. Assessment might vary, but two to four mahalaks was a common charge per sheep, with a half to a full thaler for a cow. Accumulated produce was sold periodically, and the proceeds remitted to the provincial office, where a chief negadras dispatched a percentage to Addis Ababa. Certain of the funds might be used to pay the negadras's staff, but most northerners, like military personnel, were paid in either gabbars or galad.

market at Dilla Tino on the southern edge of the town while the market in the city's center is more traditionally northern.

¹¹R. R. Azaïs and R. Chambard, Cinq Années de Recherches Archéologiques en Éthiopie (Paris, 1931), p. 244.

Goods were often moved between local markets, particularly those in different ecological zones, which were linked together by a remarkable system of roads and bridges, allowing relatively rapid movement of both military units and commercial caravans. Roads tended to follow traditional routes, but were widened and kept clear of brush by *corvée*.¹² Links developed so quickly that as early as 1900, the German visitor Erlanger travelled "the great caravan route which connects Shoa with JamJam," while a few years later, a compatriot likewise traversed the "great commercial and military road from Sidamo Irba [Moda], Alaba and Marokko to Addis Ababa."¹³

The main Shoa-Sidamo road branched, as it does today, near Aleta Dandi, one route pressing southeast past Aberra, not itself an important commercial center, while the other penetrated south into Darasa. Fortunate ketemas like Dandi and Gardulla, situated at crossroads, soon evolved into important commercial centers.¹⁴ Almost simultaneously, a system of feeder roads emerged, allowing

¹²M. S. Wellby (Captain), Twixt Sirdar and Menelik (New York, 1901), pp. 157, 164.

¹³Carlo Freiherr von Erlanger, Über die Reise von Carlo Frhr. v. Erlanger in den Galla-Ländern, "Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde, XXVIII (Berlin, 1901), 243; J. R. Luchsinger, "Von Schoa zum Stefanieesee und zu den Borangalla," Jahresbericht der Geograph-Ethnographischen Gesellschaft (Zurich, 1906-07), 98.

¹⁴Azaïs and Chambard, p. 258; Asinari di San Marzano, p. 163.

transport from secondary to primary markets. An impressed Latham observed that "the roads, so frequently intersected, indicate a frequent and prolonged usage."¹⁵ Thus, from the beginning, the Ethiopians facilitated administration not only through the siting of ketemas but also by the positioning of roads.

While indigènes financed an evolving economic infrastructure and supported individual northern settlers, they continued as well to provide an annual tribute to the imperial government. Although collected officially from the balabats and korros, the tribute derived from the population and, initially, was paid in kind. For most areas, the tribute was prescribed in cattle and honey, although other items were often added or substituted. In addition to cattle and honey, Sidamo sent quantities of sheep, butter and locally made rope. The quantity of oxen and equivalent gundos (ca. nineteen kilograms) of honey contributed by each official was determined by the number of gabbars or gashas he supervised.¹⁶

¹⁵Hubert Latham, "Au Sidamo et chez les Gallas Aroussi," La Géographie, XXVI, 1 (1912), 4-5.

¹⁶Gebrewold Ingida Work, "Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure and Taxation," Ethiopia Observer, V, 4 (1962), 304, reports one ox and one gundo of honey for twenty gashas or more, one ox for ten to twenty gashas, and a goat or ram for under ten. Mahteme Selaisse Wolde Maskal (Balamabaras), "The Land System of Ethiopia," Ethiopia Observer, I, 9 (1957), 284, indicates a goat or steer for every ten gashas south of the Awash.

Sidamo's Bet Lijj and Barud Bet apparently handled their tributes separately, the Bet Lijj through the warra genu at Agere Selaam and the Barud Bet through its leader, the turkbasha. The exact amount of tribute is uncertain, but informants reported that the Bet Lijj annually sent around 100 head of prime cattle, while the Barud Bet delivered an equivalent if not larger amount. Since all garrisons were not necessarily the same size, assessment varied from fifteen to forty-five cows per unit.¹⁷

After collection, the governor or some other ranking official escorted the taxes to Addis Ababa. Following a journey of several weeks, the caravan arrived at an open plain called Furi, a day's march from the capital, where the tribute was received, inspected and recorded by imperial officials. The livestock, carrying the brand of the provincial governor, was allowed to graze there until needed. Considering the worth of the cattle alone, Marcus's figure of 800 thalers as Sidamo's annual tribute seems exceedingly low.¹⁸ Adding to the tribute, but handled separately

¹⁷Some ethnic groups, unaffected by the neftenya-gabbar system, continued to pay tribute as a unit directly to the emperor. For example, the Gurre in Borana provided 100 cows per year. Notes on the Province of Borana (1935?), Despatches and Correspondence of the Southern Abyssinia (Mega) Consular District, FO 742/17.

¹⁸Harold G. Marcus, "Some Reflections on the Development of Government and Taxation in Southern Ethiopia around the Turn of the Century," Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (4th, Rome, 1972), pp. 633-40.

through the gimjabet, were large quantities of ivory of which I shall speak later.¹⁹

The economic exploitation of Sidamo thus was oriented in four directions: collecting tribute, provisioning a settler population, taxing commerce and financing a developing infrastructure. Care had to be taken to ensure that southern Ethiopia's valuable commerce was not drained off to British East Africa or Italian Somaliland; moreover, trade had to be encouraged northward to the Ethiopian depôts at Addis Ababa and Harar. In these endeavors, Ethiopians succeeded: the estimated percentage of the country's total export trade to each of the two colonies averaged no more than a few percent throughout the early twentieth century.²⁰ Statistics for the British depôt at Moyale (Table 12) confirm the miniscule nature of the southward trade; even if the figures represent only "official" transactions, the total commerce would still have been minor. Addis Ababa's success can also be judged from the reaction of European officials; Count Colli di Felizzano, for one, touring the southern regions in 1902-03, complained

¹⁹Special levies might also be imposed if a garrison were on campaign or transferred. E.g., Friedrich Freiherrn von Kulmer, Im Reiche Kaiser Meneliks (Leipzig, 1910), p. 188, noted discontent in Sidamo in February 1908 because of a special livestock tax. Miles to Colonial Secretary (Nairobi), Mega, April 27, 1925, No. 27, FO 742/17, reports levies of 600 cows on the Boran prior to the Sagallé campaign in 1917, and another 1000 in 1923.

²⁰M. Boucoiran, "La Situation Economique de l'Ethiopie," Renseignements Coloniaux et Documents (1918), 188; Adrien Zervos, L'Empire d'Ethiopie (Athens, 1936), p. 151.

Table 12.--Ethiopian Exports Through Moyale Customs Post, 1913-1928.

Year	Cattle	Horses	Mules	Camels	Donkeys	Sheep & Goats	Coffee (farasullas)	Magada (Salt) (farasullas)	Ivory (lbs.)	Sheep skins (farasullas)	Hides & skins (farasullas)	Tobacco (farasullas)	Goat skins	Abys. Flour (farasullas)	Mealie (farasullas)	Ghee (lbs.)	Skins	Hides (farasullas)	Maize (farasullas)	Incense (farasullas)
1913-14 (6 mos.)	7000	150	400			1000														
1914-15	1537	324	905			1000		61		99										
1915-16	3622	203	788			715		22		240										
1916-17	3035	175	584			553		16		535										
1917-18	4362	151	205		23	557														
1918-19	7796	157	280	441	76					60	75									
1919-20	5500	279	911		37	200	130	95	179		294	20								
1920-21	3764	1083	856		154		183	51	59											
1921	4947	544	795		151		84	130												
1922	1325	373	282	80	99	1200	342	248				10		21						10
1923						NOT	A	V	A	I	B									
1924	78	825	498	160	553	3280	224	121					880	584	1166	164		183	110	120
1925		492	356		398	2915	551	153			2870		1641	236						
1926		379	187		233	3357	411	575			1612		2435	189						
1927	671	248	92	109	89	1500	1009	998						365	1346	4280	2953	1343		
1928	176	83	37	354	42	1295	801	382				1860		8	14		700	5448		

References: Kenya, National Archives,
Moyale District Annual Reports,
PC/NFD 1/6/1 (1918-9, 1919-20,
1920-1, 1922, 1926, 1927.
PC/NFD 1/6/2 (1928).

Moyale District Intelligence Reports,
PC/NFD 3/3/1 (1924, 1925).

bitterly about Ethiopia's diversion of trade from its natural outlet at Lugh.²¹ This commercial enmity was to play an important part in Ethio-Italian relations over the next generation.

Sidamo's geographical position made it a commercial "watershed," situated so that its trade radiated naturally in several directions, yet adaptable to changing circumstances. For example, Wonago, in the Darasa-Guji area, was twenty caravan days from Addis Ababa; Agere Mariam, twenty-four, beyond which the advantage began to fall to the Italians. Bardera on the lower Juba River was twelve days from Moyalé and about twenty-one from Agere Mariam. In this competition, the East African Protectorate always came in a weak third since Nairobi was twenty-nine days from Moyalé across extremely desolate country.²²

With the rich trade of northern Sidamo potentially within the Italian grasp, the Ethiopian administration had to offer certain advantages in order to attract trade to its northern depôts. It did so partly in terms of infrastructure; fixed, periodic markets and improved roads, oriented northward, provided stimulation for the movement

²¹G. Colli di Felizzano, "Nei Paesi Galla a sud dello Scioa," Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, XLII (1905), 108-09, 115.

²²Mahteme Selaisse Wolde Maskal (Balambaras), Zikir Neger (Addis Ababa, 1942 E.C.), p. 429; Report for the Year 1910 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 5465-152) and Report for the Years 1911-12 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 665-121), British Parliamentary Papers.

of goods in that direction. At the same time, the administration had to provide security along those routes. In Balcha's territory, the administration waged relentless and relatively successful campaigns against shiftas. The governor sought to buy off brigands with promises of land and titles, but failing that method, he pursued a ruthless, scorched earth policy to drive them from their hideouts.²³ Once "official" routes had been secured, merchants could use them with little worry.

To facilitate the use of these routes, the administration erected, again using gabbar labor, a series of stations called menehariya or messaferiya, spaced about twenty kilometers apart, the distance a caravan travelled daily. These caravanserais provided housing as well as enclosures for livestock and pack animals. Local leaders were responsible for security and were liable for compensation for any losses caravans incurred while traversing their territories.²⁴

Yet effective infrastructure and security could not resolve the economic struggle. Since transport costs remained extremely high everywhere in southern Ethiopia,

²³Hodson to Dodds, Mega, October 21, 1920 and Hodson to Hawkins, Mega, May 10, 1920, Despatches and Correspondence for the Southern Abyssinia (Mega) Consular District, FO 742/16; L. Fuertes and W. Osgood, Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia (Garden City, 1936), p. 102; Azaïs and Chambard, p. 218.

²⁴Mahteme Selaisse, Zikir Neger, p. 429; Azaïs and Chambard, pp. 218, 229; see also C. H. Walker, The Abyssinian at Home (London, 1933), pp. 153-56.

northerners introduced the mule into the region, adding a degree of efficiency and speed to southern transport. Yet the susceptibility of these animals to lowland disease kept the supply scarce and transport costs expensive.

Even though mules were encouraged as payment for galad land (see chapter 3), the administration always strained to provide its own transport. One informant revealed that he charged Balcha the standard rental of twelve thalers a piece for mules to carry Sidamo's tribute to Addis Ababa.²⁵ Given such expenses, it was natural, at first, to focus upon such highly profitable commodities as ivory and wild animal skins. Although some coffee was exported in the early period, transport costs rendered it uneconomic. Valued at between MT\$ 2-2.50 per mule-load in Darasa in 1900, coffee fetched MT\$ 13.50-15.00 in Addis Ababa, hardly worth trading, considering the transport costs involved. More profit could be made by proceeding directly to Harar, where coffee brought MT\$ 18-24 per load.²⁶ To

²⁵A. Spaletta, "Il Caffé nell'Abissinia," L'Agri-coltura Coloniale, XI (1917), 204, places the price at seven to eight thalers per mule load; similarly a British representative puts the cost of a mule load from Addis Ababa to Moyale at twenty-five thalers, see Hohler to Grey, Addis Ababa, December 12, 1907, No. 14, Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910, FO 401/11; Addison E. Southard, "The Story of Abyssinia's Coffees," Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, XXXIV (1918), 215, records eight to sixteen thalers.

²⁶Harar was about forty-five days from Sidamo via Addis Ababa; Spaletta, 210.

spur such movement, Menilek that same year decreed a temporary abrogation of the coffee tax.²⁷

High transport costs no doubt stimulated the emperor to undertake construction of the Djibouti railway that finally reached the capital in 1916, three years after his death. The line quickly attracted most of the freight from the interior, since goods moved to the coast more quickly in comparison to mule transport, and in most cases, at half the traditional cost, a definite advantage to highly capitalized entrepreneurs.²⁸ While it is difficult to prove conclusively that Sidamo's northern exports benefited from the railway, it is interesting to note that the railway's completion coincided rather closely with Balcha's program to allocate galad land and stimulate production of Sidamo coffee.

Few such attractive inducements existed for the southern exists. Trade along the routes to Kenya or Somaliland passed through Borana. Until the 1930s, this province remained under-garrisoned and one of the least developed parts of the empire. While initially incorporated as a political buffer zone against colonial competition, it

²⁷ Report for the Year 1899-1900 on the Trade of Adis Abeba and Harar (Cd. 852-27), British Parliamentary Papers. Tax relief was similarly provided for civet.

²⁸ Spaletta, 206-07; my calculations are based upon the rate of U.S. 9.3¢ per ton-mile, see United States Department of Commerce [hereafter USDC], Abyssinia: Present Commercial Status of the Country . . ., Special Consular Reports, No. 81 (Washington, 1918), p. 32.

served also as an economic barrier. Given the region's semi-arid nature, there was little settler interest and few successful agricultural endeavors. The neftenya-gabbar system, apparently extended to the Boran after 1912, did not function effectively; soldiers were often left destitute when their gabbars fled across the British border. In the pre-Italian period, only a thousand troops garrisoned the vast area, and only four churches were erected, another indication of limited settler interest.²⁹

Borana possessed a large transient population. Northerners came mostly for hunting and then departed. While there, most lived off the land, robbing the local population, just as soldiers often plundered their own gabbars or raided those of others, adding further to the area's instability. Borana thus became the home of numerous shifta bands that raided into both Kenya and Sidamo; they consisted of much riff-raff, in many cases recruits rejected by Balcha. Colonial merchants who traversed Borana and were interested in competing for the important trade of northern Sidamo, were always open to possible attack.

The province suffered as well from a lack of effective administration. Although Fitiwrari Hapte Giorgis, the governor, was one of Menilek's staunchest and most loyal commanders, he was also Ethiopia's war minister and spent

²⁹Notes on the Province of Borana (1935?), FO 742/17; Moyale District Handing Over Report (August, 1931), MLE/34.

most of his time in Addis Ababa, leaving his province to surrogates. The area thus came to be dominated by:

special types of [un]mitigated brigands who have at their pay a group of assorted soldiers brought down from every part of Ethiopia. They are not people of a bloody temperment, but they know how to carry out their little operations rapidly, with simple methods of forceful requisition.³⁰

In 1918, shiftas were strong enough to capture the administrative center at Arero, and the small Ethiopian garrison was forced to make a concerted effort to regain it.³¹ Hapte Giorgis seems to have made only half-hearted efforts to resolve the problems. To prop up his own sagging prestige, he increased the number of gabbars allocated each soldier in Borana, a step which did little to remedy gabbar exploitation.³² Earlier in 1914, a prohibition was placed on the export of cattle, mules and horses, a measure probably aimed, in part, at denying shiftas the use of Moyale as a convenient market for rustled livestock. Without sufficient enforcement, the prohibition apparently failed (see Table 12).³³

³⁰Giovanni Ciravegna, Nell'Impero del Negus Neghest (Turin, 1933), p. 184.

³¹Northern Frontier District Annual Reports [hereafter NFDAR] (1918-19) and (1919-20), PC/NFD1/1/2.

³²Hodson to Dodds, Mega, July 27, 1920, FO 742/16.

³³NFDAR (1914-15), Supplement, and (1918-19), PC/NFD1/1/2; Miles to Colonial Secretary (Nairobi), Mega, April 27, 1925, No. 27, FO 742/17.

The province's basic infrastructure was minimal: inadequate policing implied unsafe roads and limited trade. Lack of customs agents at southern exits delayed caravans for days until goods could be taxed,³⁴ thus giving an edge to north-bound traffic where tax agents were more plentiful. British administrators therefore concluded that Borana's officials:

. . . are opposed to all progress and their one aim, connived at by their master [Hapte Giorgis], is to keep this province, one of the richest in Abyssinia, a sealed book. In a way they cannot be blamed as they live on the fat of the land, getting everything they want from their Boran tenants. They have therefore nothing to gain by a change of policy but everything to lose.³⁵

Hapte Giorgis's ascribed insularity undoubtedly reflected Menilek's general objectives. Although Ras Teferi might have wished to bring about reform and open up Borana, there was little he could do as long as the fitiwrari remained powerful. Teferi did what he could without alienating him, but the situation in Borana peaked in 1919, when the regent agreed to a joint Ethio-British campaign against shiftas in the province. The British had pressured Addis

³⁴Moyale District Intelligence Reports [hereafter MDIR] (July, 1929), PC/NFD3/3/2; Memorandum, n.d., Enc. in No. 62, Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910, FO 401/10; Addis Ababa's disinclination to establish frontier customs posts is indicated as well by her wish to have Britain collect Ethiopian customs at Mandera, similar to the arrangement at Gambela, an offer London declined. See Moyale District Handing Over Reports (January, 1933), MLE/34; see also Colli di Felizzano, 113.

³⁵Hodson to Dodds, Mega, April 23, 1920, FO 742/16.

Ababa to police the area, since the understaffed and tight-fisted Europeans could not prevent border encroachments. In 1913 a British captain had been killed by a band of shiftas, and London had forced Ethiopia's acceptance of a British consulate at Mega, to gather intelligence and to forestall marauders. The outpost was as unsuccessful as the 1919 campaign, and conditions in Borana remained insecure.³⁶

The Ethiopian government did not again make any concerted effort to control the province until Hapte Giorgis's death in 1926. A year later, as Ethiopian troops began to rid that area of shiftas, Neghelli was established and it soon grew into an important commercial center. Further reforms came after 1932, when Borana was combined with Sidamo under the administration of Haile Selassie I's son-in-law, Ras Desta, who tightened customs collection and began to improve transport facilities.³⁷

³⁶For a general description of these problems, see Arnold W. Hodson, Seven Years in Southern Abyssinia (London, 1927), pp. 22-23, 178 ff.; Captain Aylmer, the Englishman killed in 1913, was buried on Ethiopian soil, leading dejected British subordinates to claim Borana. As one informant told me, Menilek cleverly rejected this farcical demand, reminding the officials that Emperor Tewodros's son, Alemayehu, was buried in London; thus if Britain would cede London, she could have Borana.

³⁷MDIR (March, 1933), MLE/3; Adolf E. Jensen, Im Lande des Gada (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 97; Neghelli grew from a village of several hundred soldiers in 1928, to the residence of a thousand people five years later, see Notes on the Province of Borana (1928?), and Reece to British Legation (Addis Ababa), Mega, April 30, 1933, No. G.R. 5 both in FO 742/17.

Despite the difficulties of trade in southern Ethiopia, the Italians and the British wanted a share. In the early 1920s, the Ethiopians granted the Italians a trading station at Magalo in Balé, and other posts in Sidamo and Borana were proposed but never provided.³⁸ Meanwhile, Mogadishu and Nairobi improved their own infrastructures. The British, however, after completing a road from Mandera to Moyalé, were dismayed to find large numbers of Somaliland merchants using the road to transit their goods into Ethiopia duty-free. The Italians built excellent roads to the Ethiopian border and in some cases beyond; in fact, an Italian merchant, in collaboration with a local Ethiopian official, was suspected of financing the road from the border to Filtu.³⁹

Even with the improved transportation, the European colonies could not really win the commercial battle. The difficulties often stemmed from their own policies rather than Ethiopian inaction or intransigence. For example, Italian customs were notoriously high on goods exported to or imported from points other than Italy, thus discouraging a competitive trade. The British, for their part, required strict quarantine of imported Ethiopian livestock in order

³⁸Asinari di San Marzano, p. 220.

³⁹MDIR (October, 1933), MLE/3; the first motorized shipment along this route to Neghelli occurred in December 1933, while the first lorry trip from Sidamo to Moyalé came a month later, see MDIR (December, 1933) and (January, 1934), MLE/3.

to control the spread of rinderpest; at the same time, they forbade the import of either female or kiling (young male) ivory into their colonies, a policy that sent most of Ethiopia's ivory out via the Djibouti railway.⁴⁰

Even with a secure and upgraded transport system to the north, more easily accessible tax collectors, free roadside lodging, and uncompetitive European colonial policies, the Ethiopian trader still faced immense difficulties. Transport costs remained high and profit margins slim. There were animal diseases and shifta attacks, and government taxation that, one can safely say, drained off much profit. Like other northerners, merchants attempted in various ways to maximize returns while minimizing risks.

Internal customs were gathered at qelas, tax collection points, nine of which existed in Sidamo, situated along all the "official" routes, i.e., those maintained and protected by the government and provided with rest houses. A caravan was expected to stop at the first qela in each province to pay an assessment on its merchandise;⁴¹ from Sidamo to either Addis Ababa or Harar, caravans could be taxed three times. Although the rates might vary, according to the determinations of particular customs agents, my informants agreed on the following representative exactions:

⁴⁰Cd. 5465-152.

⁴¹Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (Rome, 1939), 191.

Table 13.--Internal Customs Taxes.^a

Commodity	Tax
Ivory	MT \$ 5/ farasulla
Hides (cattle)	3/ mule load
Coffee	2/ mule load
Butter	2/ mule load
Honey	2/ mule load
Beeswax	3/ mule load
Boolookos and shammas	1/ mule load or 1 mahalak apiece

^aMy material diverges only slightly from that of Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (Rome, 1939), 191, and Achille Saitta, "Il Sistema Tributario del Vecchio Impero Abissino," Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, XXVII (1939), 286-87.

Since government taxation could add another six thalers to the price of a mule load of coffee, the customs tax, in combination with high transport costs, left little profit and merchants turned to illegal means. Even along official routes, traders might try to bypass certain gela or send part of their caravan through, while the rest skirted around; or one might seek a customs official known to be open to gubbo (bribes). Other merchants chose unofficial routes and thereby risked potential disaster in hopes of higher profits. Informants quite openly admitted to attempts at deceiving government agents; smuggling was the lifeblood of many a merchant, allowing the margin of survival.

Traders also turned to fraud. Coffee merchants commonly increased weight by wetting beans prior to arrival in Addis Ababa, or added extraneous material to unprocessed coffee to increase its weight 8 to 10 percent.⁴² Merchants had to know the tricks of the trade to promote as well as to protect their own economic interests.

Predictably, commodity prices reflected the high costs. My informants indicated a mark up of 50 to 100 percent on items moved on the short haul, e.g., from Jamjam to Wollamo, and also on commodities transported from a secondary to a primary market. Long distance hauls necessitated even higher increments. While it is difficult to know how representative the examples drawn from the written sources are, exposition of a few proves my general point. On the long haul, price increases were substantial, and in some cases fantastic. Bouçoiran indicated that a 1915-shipment of 4000 cows from Borana to Nairobi sustained a price increment of 65 percent; Colli di Felizzano noted a 500 percent margin for ivory along the route from Borana to Mogadishu, with an 800 percent price rise for coffee.⁴³ Taking my informants' quoted price of five to seven mahalaks for a farasulla of coffee in Darasa in the late-nineteenth century, and comparing it with Bottego's price for that

⁴²Spaletta, 130, 204.

⁴³Bouçoiran, 191; Colli di Felizzano, 114-15.

commodity in Lugh, one finds a rise of over a 1000 per-cent.⁴⁴ While potential profits kept the trade attractive, most proceeds were drawn off in the form of government taxation, and many traders were unable to accumulate the capital necessary for improvements and expansion.

High costs and low profits were not the only difficulties faced by long-distance traders. The lack of a widely accepted national currency dictated that merchants had to be informed about local market conditions and the many types of "unofficial" currency used. A complicated system of weights and measures added to the problems, discouraging some foreigners from direct involvement in internal Ethiopian trade.

Although Menilek issued a national currency, the coins bearing his image were never very popular. While in the capital the Menilek coin was generally equivalent to the older and preferred Maria Theresa thaler, outside Addis Ababa, Menilek's currency suffered a 25 percent devaluation.⁴⁵ The strength of the Maria Theresa thaler derived largely from its widespread use as a standard unit of weight measure and its intrinsic value, which varied with the price of silver in the international market. Yet, in a country with an underdeveloped transport system, both the

⁴⁴ Bottego, pp. 443, 449.

⁴⁵ Report for the Year 1905-6 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 3283-8), British Parliamentary Papers.

thaler and its Menilekian counterpart were bulky, a factor that added to their costs. Thus the Maria Theresa thaler was worth 20 percent more in Addis Ababa than in Harar. Furthermore, the hoarding of the thaler always remained a problem, greatly limiting liquidity and hindering commercial transactions. American officials estimated that the Ethiopian government annually imported six to seven million thalers, an amount roughly equivalent to that withdrawn from circulation.⁴⁶

Yet even the popular Maria Theresa thaler was not widely employed in the south, since economic factors restricted its use mostly to northern settlers and traders. In the southern provinces, the new coinage at first tended to confuse the indigenous population, providing northerners with great amusement, and sometimes, profit.⁴⁷ Ultimately a variety of goods served as money. While almost any commodity would work, less perishable items were preferred: all types of livestock, salt, cloth, beads and metals. From the bead to the bull, these commodities reflected a wide

⁴⁶Report on the Trade of Adis Abbaba (Cd. 8648), British Parliamentary Papers, pp. 4-5; USDC, Abyssinia, pp. 34-35; see also USDC, Ethiopia: Commercial and Economic Survey, Trade and Information Bulletin, No. 476 (Washington, 1927), pp. 10-11.

⁴⁷Jensen, p. 112; a local custom probably exemplifies the confusion many local people felt. Darasa, and many other people in the south, count currency in terms of the number of coins rather than in their value; thus fifteen cents is referred to a "sost santim" (in Darasinya, "sholé mahlek"), i.e., three coins.

range of monetary values that gave the southern peoples a remarkably flexible, if somewhat impractical, system of exchange. Although many types of cloth were used, the American type, called *american* or *aboujedi*, was most often employed as "unofficial" currency. It was conveniently subdivided into units by the folds resulting from packaging, and if small change was needed, beads could be used.⁴⁸

The most important currency, however, comprised metals: iron ingots or bars, and rifle cartridges. In widespread use were iron bars, about half a meter long, bent at one end and weighing about two kilos. Names varied, but Darasa referred to two types: *wolanticha* or *dawucha*, and *mesano*. The latter contained a high quality ore traded to local blacksmiths for fashioning agricultural implements, whereas *wolanticha* was smelted from inferior raw materials and used to make less important items. Although unsure of its origins, Darasa reported that this "iron money" came across the lake from Gemu or from Kuloodo market in Sidama. Darasa valued these bars at two to eight *mahalaks* apiece, or six to eight to a *thaler*, depending on variety.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Bottego, p. 441; the distance between two folds was referred to as a *ward* (ca. three and a half forearms). Four *wards* equalled a *top*.

⁴⁹ Wollamo may have been the place of origin. Arnaldo Cipolla, *In Ethiopia* (Turin, 1933), p. 189, mentions iron deposits in this region. Getachew Kelemu, "Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970), pp. 14-15, also refers to two types of iron ingots in the Sidama area. A wide, but rather non-descriptive literature on this currency

Cartridges (qalah in Amharic) soon became popular as currency also, their worth dependent on condition. The most valuable had undamaged heads and proper packing; indeed, one had to beware shells filled with charcoal in place of real gunpowder.⁵⁰ While empty shells had lesser value, they could be used for refills or be melted down into jewelry and ornaments. In Darasa expended shells were worth about a half mahalak.

The government, with its own problems of importing arms and ammunition, frowned upon the use of cartridges as currency. In January 1909, Menilek warned his subjects:

Previously all of you, merchants, soldiers and countrymen alike, were found in the market places, on the highways and everywhere bartering with ammunition, but now I have made coins available to you. . . . Buy and sell with these, and I say that bartering with ammunition will cease forthwith.⁵¹

Despite the heavy fine of one thaler per cartridge imposed on both buyer and seller, the decree seems to have had little effect, and ammunition continued to be an item of currency in the south. Aleta Dandi in Sidama emerged as an

exists: James J. Harrison, "A Journey from Zeila to Lake Rudolf," Geographical Journal, XVIII (1901), 267; C. H. Stigand, To Abyssinia Through an Unknown Land (Philadelphia, 1910), pp. 141-42; Jules Borelli, Ethiopie Méridionale (Paris, 1890), p. 332; Georg Escherich, Im Lande des Negus (Berlin, 1921), p. 75; H. Henin, "Ethiopie," Recueil Consulaire Belge, CXXXVIII (1907), 191; John Boyes, My Abyssinian Journey (Nairobi, n.d.), p. 28; Du Bourg de Bozas, pp. 260-61; Wellby, pp. 141-42.

⁵⁰Cd. 3283-8 and Cd. 8648, p. 5.

⁵¹Mahteme Selaisse, Zikir Neger, pp. 198-99; "Fait Divers," Le Semeur d'Ethiopie, V (Harar, January, 1909), 528.

important smuggling center, where illicit firearms and ammunition were delivered from northern sources to soldiers and shiftas alike in exchange for ivory or other commodities. To keep purchasers in Borana supplied, merchants hid ammunition inside bundles of coffee or flour. Generally the supply of cartridges was always insufficient, and prices for them remained high in the region.⁵²

In addition to currency problems, traders also were faced with a deficient communications network. It was difficult, if not impossible, in many areas for merchants to keep informed about market conditions and rates of exchange in the capital. A trader in the field might find that demand for his commodity had dropped during his absence. A system of telephone and telegraph lines was extended gradually in the first quarter of the twentieth century, with a branch line being built to the Sidamo capital, Aberra. Even so, the link was not always reliable and often more frustrating than utilitarian. Despite the difficulties, traders did find it an improvement; merchants in Agere Selaam, for example, were allowed Sunday mornings to transact business with other points.⁵³

⁵²Hodson to Campbell, Mega, May 5, 1919, FO 742/16; Notes on the Province of Borana (1935?), FO 742/17; Coates to Carma, March 6, 1929, "Correspondence of the White-Coates Abyssinian Expedition (1928-31)" (Registrar, Field Museum, Chicago); Asinari di San Marzano, p. 109.

⁵³Bouçoiran, 209; Asinari di San Marzano, p. 152.

To alleviate the myriad of problems faced by traders and tighten the government's economic reigns, Haile Selassie set up within the Ministry of Commerce, a Bureau of Commercial Information to which traders could address complaints of mistreatment. Further, he decreed in July 1933 that the ministry should telegraph daily to the provinces the current rates in the capital.⁵⁴ These actions promoted economic integration and insured that southern trade would flow northward. Transport and communications links directly with commercial headquarters in Addis Ababa gave Ethiopian traders an advantage which their Somali and Kenyan competitors did not have.

Thus far, we have reviewed the general trade patterns in the south, focusing upon the difficulties involved and the inducements offered by the national administration to orient trade northward. Now we must look more closely at the Sidamo situation, emphasizing the economic interaction between northern settlers and the indigenous population. While I would argue that the traditional and settler economies were never totally segregated, I would point to certain dissimilarities and argue that, over time, the two economies began to merge, with the rise of coffee providing the chief link. In addition to the contrast between official and customary money which differentiated the two marketing systems, the kinds of commodities found

⁵⁴ Zervos, 151.

in each were rather distinct. The settler economy was characterized by high profit items that could be transported easily over long distances and thus benefit the national economy. The indigenous structure was defined mostly by low-value agricultural commodities, which were consumed and exchanged locally.

Initially, there was little interaction between the two economic systems. The Ethiopian administration appropriated its annual tribute in livestock and honey, and gabbars supplied settlers with agricultural products and services. Little economic exchange was involved, and the Darasa received little in return. They paid for the "pax Ethiopica" and for the developing infrastructure, but few could afford the imported items aimed at the settler market. Meanwhile, settlers encroached steadily upon those areas of the traditional indigenous economy that were of most immediate value, resulting ultimately in a more unified economy.

Southern peoples had traditionally supplied northern markets with ivory, wild animal skins and slaves, items soon co-opted by northern settlers. Firearms allowed northerners to accumulate these resources more efficiently than had the southern peoples. Additionally, the exploitation necessitated only settler self-reliance and did not impinge directly on the neftenya-gabbar structure. Five years after Sidamo's incorporation, British trade statistics first record the entrance of the province's ivory into the

national export scene,⁵⁵ and as quickly report its decline. Within one generation, the thorough extermination of the elephant and other wild game forced hunters further south into Borana and Gemu Gofa, with Maji emerging as Ethiopia's last important ivory center.

Informants clearly indicated the rapid extinction of the Sidamo elephant. One recalled a hunt in which Dejazmach Balcha and his men surrounded and slaughtered a herd of 150 elephants, stimulating the governor's men to sing on the way to camp that evening.

ማፃፃፅ፡ ኣደርጉ፡ ምቃ፡ ዝሆን፡ በዛመቻ፡
 የንጉሠ፡ ወተረር፡ ኣገነብሉ፡ ገፅቻ፡፡

Whoever had encountered so many elephants on a
 zemecha

As the king's soldier, Aba Nebso Balcha.

Another informant remarked that Balcha once sent Menilek 700 tusks. The administrator at Gardulla in Gemu reportedly employed a special elephant-hunting force of 1500 men that in just two months of 1901 had dispatched to Addis Ababa a tusk representing each man.⁵⁶ Given such exploitation, by the time that galad became prevalent in the 1920s, wild game in northern Sidamo was practically extinct, following the national pattern.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Cf. Cd. 852-27 and Cd. 3283-8.

⁵⁶Harrison, 269.

⁵⁷Considering the decline in revenues, it is not surprising that Balcha should discourage trigger-happy Europeans from visiting areas where remnant elephant herds

Ivory's depletion is revealed quite profoundly in Ethiopia's trade statistics:

Table 14.--Ivory Exported Via Djibouti, 1909-34.^a

Period	Kilograms	%age Change from Previous Period
1901-06	304,705	
1909-13	327,980	+ 8%
1918-22	97,093	-70%
1923-28	58,880	-39%
1929-34	16,617	-72%

^aMy own calculations, based upon the following: Report for the Year 1910 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 5465-152), British Parliamentary Papers; Adrien Zervos, L'Empire d'Ethiopie (Athens, 1936), pp. 163-64; H. Henin, "Ethiopie," Recueil Consulaire Belge, CXXXVIII (1907), 142.

While these figures do not include the whole of Ethiopia's ivory exports during this period, they do represent the bulk of it.⁵⁸ British restrictions discouraged the export

remained, or compete with neighboring administrators for riverain territory where game took refuge. Oscar Neumann, "From the Somali Coast through Southern Ethiopia to the Sudan," Journal of the Tyneside Geographical Society, XI, 1 (1903), 17; Colli di Felizzano, 14.

⁵⁸The exports for the period 1909-13 would require the extermination roughly of 6000 elephants, with tusks averaging sixty pounds apiece. The actual number killed during the period was probably higher since female and young male ivory would weigh less. My own informants confirmed sixty pounds as the average weight of a tusk; an analysis of the limited written sources seems generally to confirm this figure: Cavendish, 374, killed ten elephants with tusks averaging sixty pounds; Samuel Teleki, "East African Diaries, 1888," Part IV (Manuscript, Michigan State University Library), hunting larger male elephants in the vicinity of Lake Rudolf, averaged eighty-nine pounds per

of ivory through its territory. The only other important export center was Lugh which, according to estimates, received about 1500 tusks in 1905 and 500 in 1910.⁵⁹ If these figures are anywhere near correct, then Lugh ivory exports averaged only about 20 percent those of Djibouti.

Prices for ivory remained high throughout the period, rising as supply declined. Value, of course, depended on quality, younger ivory yielding more and undamaged tusks preferred to broken ones. In Addis Ababa in 1899, ivory brought MT\$ 120 per farasulla, rising to MT\$ 180-240 thirteen years later; that same year, in the provinces, ivory brought MT\$ 80-100 per farasulla, climbing to MT\$ 125-30 by 1912.⁶⁰ In Sidamo, Aleta Dandi and Agere Selaam remained the two most important ivory trading centers; informants confirmed what the above data indicate, a price increase for ivory of nearly 100 percent enroute to Addis Ababa.

High profits attracted many to the commodity: shifta bands and off-duty soldiers from northern Sidamo regularly went south to hunt elephant. Following migration patterns, they frequently crossed into Kenya to pursue the protected

tusk; the British representative Zaphiro confiscated 145 illegal tusks, mostly female and young, averaging eighteen pounds per tusk, see Memorandum, Enc. in No. 62; FO 401/10.

⁵⁹Statement of Imports and Exports of Ivory and Other Articles . . . , Enc. 2 in No. 62, FO 401/11.

⁶⁰Cd. 852-27 and Cd. 665-121.

herds there. One participant recalled that he and his colleagues had slaughtered eighty elephants before being detected by the British. When pursued, groups often buried their ivory, hoping to retrieve it later.⁶¹

Since ivory was an imperial monopoly, hunters tried to avoid giving half their tusks to the emperor, by travelling unofficial roads through Balé and Arussi. Special agents in the towns assisted hunters and traders to sell these illegal items, taking for their services a commission for each transaction.

To be sure, the government strove to control the illicit trade, but not always effectively. Against great odds, government did its best to gain its share. One of Balcha's officials, Blatta Dibiku, was described by informants as "understanding" of the hunter's difficulties, and thus lenient towards them; Kanyazmach Berihun, on the other hand, was remembered for his ceaseless pursuit of deceptive traders, a stance reflected in the popular verse:

በበሪሁን፡በሪህ፡ኣርዎ፡ይሁን፡

በደበቀ፡ደጋጋን፡ደበቀ፡ኣከዎከን፡ኣዘከቀ፡፡

In the time of Berihun never go to the desert
(for hunting);

In Dibiku's time, hide the "degaga" (the larger
of a tusk pair) and hand over the "ilmole"
(the smaller of the two).

Although ivory was the important export, other items were also traded, particularly leopard, serval and lion

⁶¹Zaphiro to Harrington, Gaddeduma, March 15, 1906, Enc. in No. 62, FO 401/10; Escherich, p. 78; MDIR (August, 1924), PC/NFD3/3/1.

skins. Moyalé officials reported the active movement of these commodities, and in the period 1925-34, Zervos showed an export via Djibouti of some 48,000 leopard and 1800 serval skins.⁶² The thoroughness of the campaign against these animals can be judged by their almost total absence from the area today. The exploitation was such that in 1929 the Agriculture and Industry Ministry was forced to impose stricter regulations on game hunting.⁶³

Also fair game, regrettably, were slaves, a commodity important in nineteenth-century trade. It is difficult to judge the effect of Ethiopian expansion upon this particular commerce. While the northern presence did control the inter-ethnic conflict previously fueling the slave trade, the new administration and particularly private individuals were not adverse to participation in the commerce. Menilek's efforts to end the trade within his empire were half-hearted, and the emperor himself remained "Ethiopia's greatest slave entrepreneur."⁶⁴

While it might be argued that the slave trade was not exactly new to the areas involved, certainly Ethiopia's conquest and subsequent domination led to northern

⁶²MDIR (October, 1933), MLE/3; Zervos, pp. 160-62.

⁶³Southard to Secretary of State, Addis Ababa, November 4, 1928, No. 287, United States Department of State, Records Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia (Abyssinia), 1910-29, 884.

⁶⁴Harold G. Marcus, The Life and Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975), p. 73.

participation. While nearly all groups were potential slave sources, northerners made distinctions. Some groups were designated chewa (well-behaved), signifying their peaceful acceptance of northern rule, among which were the Darasa. At the opposite extreme were the Wollamo, who fiercely resisted conquest and were subsequently enslaved. From this particular campaign, Menilek acquired 1800 slaves, a figure representing only a tenth of the total taken. Wollamo, as well as Amarro Burgi and Gofa, remained important slave centers.⁶⁵

Yet no group was totally exempt from such exploitation. Numerous possibilities for enslaving clients were inherent within the neftenya-gabbar system: there were personal hazards in long distance travel with the neftenya and in being imprisoned by local patrons or shiftas. Upon reassignment, military men tended to take gabbars with them, ostensibly as carriers, although often clients never returned.⁶⁶

Lacking detailed and accurate information on the slave trade, we should be careful not to exaggerate its extent. For example, the British consul at Maji reported a 90 percent reduction in the area's population due to the

⁶⁵

J. G. Vanderheym, Une Expédition avec le Négous Ménelik (Paris, 1896), pp. 185-86; Arnold Hodson, "Southern Abyssinia," Geographical Journal, LIII, 2 (1919), 70.

⁶⁶Hodson, "Southern Abyssinia," 74; Escherich, p. 114.

slave trade.⁶⁷ Certainly, depopulation was evident in some areas, for example in Burgi, where an indigenous official used his access to firearms to enslave his own kinsmen and where Bitwoded Haile Giorgis's enderassie, Finkabo, reportedly carried on a devastating trade.⁶⁸ Yet, an area's abandonment was often due to other factors. The fear of Ethiopian conquest in some areas did drive local residents to more secure locations and the effects of the neftenya-gabbar system did force some cultivators to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Although informants disliked discussing the matter, Sidamo's slave trade was apparently quite active, and most southern towns had rather large servile populations. Maji's British consul estimated that every settler had two or three personal slaves.⁶⁹ Agere Selaam was an active market and had a slave population probably equivalent to that of its northern residents.⁷⁰ Although some Sidamo slaves were used to work private agricultural estates, most seem to have been employed in domestic pursuits. Slavery would thus appear to have been related more to a patron's social status than to his economic needs.

⁶⁷Barton to Simon, Addis Ababa, May 31, 1934, Annual Report on Slavery, FO 371/288.

⁶⁸Kenneth A. Mude, "A History of Amarro Burji" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, University College, Nairobi, 1968), appendix; Hodson, Seven Years, pp. 102-03.

⁶⁹Barton to Simon, Addis Ababa, May 31, 1934, Annual Report on Slavery, FO 371/288.

⁷⁰Fuertes and Osgood, p. 82.

Slaves in the Sidamo capital were priced as follows: thirty to forty thalers for young women and about half that for young men, costs which doubled when Ras Teferi prohibited the trade. From the 1920s on, the government attempted to eliminate the trade, creating special judges called nesa danya to punish dealers, a program with some limited success. By concentrating authority in the hands of his own appointees and imposing rather harsh penalties, Teferi engendered a situation that, with British naval efforts, did assist the trade's decline.

Even without government efforts, the trade was headed for extinction, although it continued momentarily. The nesa danya were hindered by slave movements at night and by the difficulties of proving that caravan members were slaves and not gabbars. The increased hazards of the trade contributed to higher costs, and ultimately to reduced demand. The transition from neftenya-gabbar as tenancy also reflected slavery's decline. Neftenya-gabbar's agricultural surpluses helped to support a system of uneconomic slavery. With the rise of the money economy, however, and the shift to a single cash crop, slavery became too burdensome an institution to maintain, despite its social accoutrements, since patrons now had to purchase foodstuffs to support their chattel. Slavery nonetheless died slowly: many slaves were retained by patrons until their deaths; others were granted a piece of land to work during their lifetimes, some eventually doing well enough to purchase it;

some were maintained by their children who had acculturated and acquired land through either church or military service; and still others became part of an itinerant wage labor force in the urban and cash crop centers of the empire.

Those commodities examined thus far were primarily settler-dominated, and channeled mostly to northern depôts, contributing directly to the national wealth. Conversely, the items enumerated in Table 15 below remained primarily within the local indigenous economy. Although considered less important by northerners and remaining underdeveloped, these products nevertheless contributed significantly, albeit indirectly, to the empire's economy by serving as the mainstay of short distance trade and by supporting the local garrisons.

The statistics in Table 15 were obtained by asking gabbars to specify the most important commodity used to meet ghibbr payments. The Darasa-Guji breakdown reveals few surprises, each group relying upon those products consistent to its ecological setting. Honey's relatively poor showing most likely resulted from its appropriation for the annual tribute and its general attractiveness as a long distance trade item. Unfortunately, the data lack a time perspective that would illustrate more clearly the economic change taking place. One would see an increasing significance assigned to products like teff and bolé (earth salt).

Table 15.--Primary Products Used to Pay Patron.

Commodity	Percentage of	
	Darasa	Guji
Coffee	22.5	18.0
Ensete	22.5	--
Sheep	13.5	--
Cattle	7.0	26.5
Maize	6.5	20.5
Tobacco	3.5	frac.
Teff	frac.	8.0
Barley	7.0	10.0
Bolé	7.0	--
Honey	1.5	--
Totals	91.0%	83.0%

More importantly, he would note a gradual decline in the role of ensete relative to that of coffee.

Initially, ensete, the chief Darasa staple, was most commonly supplied the neftenya, but since many patrons scorned it, encouragement was given to provide other, more preferred commodities, or ideally, cash. The items in Table 15 above represent initial or primary products; these were exchanged in a series of often complicated inter-ethnic transactions that allowed the Darasa gabbar to gain live-stock, grain, beeswax, honey or "iron money," all items more acceptable to neftenyas. For example, a Darasa might

carry his ensete to Dabobesa market in the Alabdu area, exchanging it for local bolé or for Burgi cloth; these items could then be bartered at Kavado (Wattadara) for Sidama butter which might be exchanged for iron money in Darasa for presentation to the neftenya. Such time-consuming, multiple transactions necessitated sufficient labor; the gabbar's ability to participate depended as well on how intensively his labor was used.

These multiple exchanges could be beneficial to the gabbar. For example, a man-load of kocho (a product of ensete), sold locally for two mahalaks, when carried to Ghediccho market in Alabdu, doubled in value. Thus a client who owed his neftenya the equivalent of five thalers needed to sell forty man-loads locally to earn that amount, but could halve that number by trading outside the ethnic area. Even though these exchanges stimulated local trade and might provide monetary advantages to the gabbar, one must remember as well that the government, through taxation, acquired its requisite share of each transaction.

The gabbar's economic options were consequently limited, and increasingly he encountered competition in inter-ethnic trade. Neftenyas who received surplus produce sought markets in which to dispose of them. Off-duty soldiers often banded together to trade at distant markets. Erlanger sighted one such group of 400 Oromo soldiers, transporting ensete to Burgi to be exchanged for woven

cloth and boolookos.⁷¹ Such trade enhanced the value of those commodities and earned the settler added income. Northerners with access to mules, capital and credit could transport commodities more efficiently and economically than gabbars and often had the spare time necessary for such business.⁷² Northerners rapidly learned the traditional trade patterns and began to penetrate the local commercial scene.

Settlers came to play an important part along three routes previously dominated by indigenous traders. First, they participated in the woven cloth and boolooko trade from Burgi and Konso, items that yielded good profits locally or nationally. Increasingly, northerners played an important role in the movement of goods along the Sidamo-Moyalé route. Locally produced agricultural goods such as barley, mealie maize and flour found attractive markets in many of Borana's garrison towns as well as at Moyalé. In return, Boran salt came north,⁷³ and Darasa no longer had to travel to Agere Mariam or Gatelo for this commodity. Third, northerners

⁷¹Erlanger, 243.

⁷²Few Darasa even today can afford mules. The Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, Report on a Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 35, reports that only seven of every 100 households in Darasa awraja owns a mule, only four in a hundred possesses a donkey.

⁷³This salt is called megado in many areas, metine in Darasa. Cavendish, 376, notes a crater lake at Dedesotdate near El Elgar from which salt was obtained; Asinari di San Marzano, p. 92, reports another at Choevet, northwest of Mega; Hodson, "Southern Abyssinia," 71, also saw one near Mega.

became intermediaries in the still unclear Guji-Wollamo cattle exchange, which greatly benefited both groups. Guji preferred highland cattle which they believed were less disease-prone, while Wollamo likely wanted livestock reared in a harsher environment and thus suitable to their own restricted pasturage.⁷⁴ As the coffee economy in Sidamo developed, cash crop areas became prime consumers of livestock, a market of which northern entrepreneurs took advantage, but which also linked the Boran and Guji economies more firmly, albeit indirectly, to the national scene.⁷⁵

Given stiff competition in traditional trade, some Darasa attempted to diversify their economic activities. Gabbars with extra land might try certain northern products, like teff or berberi (red pepper), for which there was high demand and limited supply. Furthermore, a gabbar unit with surplus labor might allocate a portion to the wage market. Demand for such labor does not appear to have been great initially, but wealthier Guji were often able to hire Darasa to undertake service obligations for them. Concurrently, Darasa began to exploit the salt flats near Lake Abaya for an earth salt called bolé, used by the Guji for their livestock. In October each year, hundreds of eastern Guji with

⁷⁴Guji restocked after the late nineteenth-century drought by procurement of Wollamo cattle, see Hinnant, I, pp. 95, 103, 216.

⁷⁵"Summary Report on the 1961-2 Cattle Survey in Southern Ethiopia," Ethiopian Economic Review, No. 6 (April, 1963), 94, shows Darasa as one of the chief livestock-consuming areas.

their pack horses, poured down the Chichu and Lagadara River valleys to replenish their supply.⁷⁶ Many Darasa became intermediaries in this trade, selling the commodity to Guji unable to acquire it directly. Although such activity was non-traditional, Darasa seem to have had little trouble entering the market; northerners were little interested in the bolé industry, no doubt because of its labor-intensive nature and low profits. Finally, a few gabbars admitted attempts at rearing cattle, grazing them on the Darasa periphery. Traditionally, Darasa had owned cattle but farmed these out to Guji pastoralists. Some Darasa now took a direct hand, but they proved incompetent herdsmen, and their cattle sickened and died.

While northerners moved into southern commercial spheres, they also dominated the import trade. The settler population was able to afford such luxuries as foreign textiles particularly aboujedi and marduf (unbleached gray drill), firearms and ammunition, mules and teff. Of lesser importance were products like bar soap, perfumes, spices,

⁷⁶Edgar Maass, "Eine Reise durch das Südbessinische Seengebiet," Mitteilungen der Geographische Gesellschaft, XLVII (Hamburg, 1941), 371, noted this fête, as did I. The Guji literally pour from the hills, racing at break-neck speed to gain good position at the flats. For young boys, the event is a test of endurance and manhood, probably replacing the traditional fora in which a boy had to kill either a human opponent or large game animal. As the road to Abaya was churned into dust, Dilla residents turn out to watch this "strange" phenomenon, sometimes ridiculing, and practicing their mediocre Orominya.

arequi (a traditional, highly alcoholic drink), and utensils for the preparation of injerra and watt.⁷⁷

Among the imported cloth, the American-manufactured aboujedi was the most popular and dominated the market.⁷⁸ On the other hand, the inferior British-made marduf accounted for about 80 percent of the import trade from the Somaliland colony.⁷⁹ Limited demand existed for a variety of other, more expensive textiles ranging from bafta (calico) to velvet and silk. These items generally increased in price 25 to 35 percent upon arrival in Sidamo.

Imported cloth arrived in the province aboard pack animals, themselves a valuable commodity. Mules and donkeys, relatively scarce even today,⁸⁰ were procured in Shoa and Arussi by returning merchants who could use them to make relatively easy profits trading local teff and other valuable items. Donkeys, purchased in the north for seven

⁷⁷Not all such items had to be imported. Local blacksmiths soon began to adapt to settler demands. Potters enlarged the traditional Darasa clay plate for baking ensete, transforming it into the metad used to bake injerra.

⁷⁸Cd. 3283-8 and Cd. 5465-152; Ethiopian craftsmen often unravelled foreign cloth, mixing the thread with their own, thereby producing a cloth of better quality and more reasonably priced than European fabric; see also Henin, 146, on this matter.

⁷⁹Hodson to Dodds, Mega, April 16, 1920, FO 742/16; NFDAR (1916-17), PC/NFD1/1/2; other sources show an American dominance, see Statement of Imports and Exports of Ivory and Other Articles . . . , Enc. 2 in No. 14, FO 401/11.

⁸⁰Jensen, p. 125, reported this problem in the 1930s as I myself experienced it during my fieldwork.

to ten thalers, doubled in value in Sidamo, and twenty- to forty-thaler-mules retailed as well for twice their purchase price.

Although firearms and ammunition were issued to Sidamo's soldiers through the mudfbet in Agere Selaam, there always existed a private demand for weapons, which stimulated a rather profitable trade.⁸¹ The most popular rifle in the south was the Fusil Gras, called locally the Wujigra, with more modern weapons penetrating the area after the 1916-Sagallé zemecha. Also in demand were high-powered hunting rifles, which, although expensive, could be paid for with ivory. Merchants were often willing to extend credit to hunters for purchase of arms and ammunition until tusks could be procured.

The northerners' near monopoly of firearms greatly influenced the political, social and economic structures imposed in the south. Over the long run, these modern weapons insured the maintenance of peace, permitted northern exploitation of southern resources and contributed to a conception of invincibility that influenced settler-indigène relations. Changing northern requirements and local

⁸¹The French commercial vice consul in Harar was reportedly an arms agent, supplying his intermediary in Ginir, see Zaphiro to Harrington, Gaddeduma, March 15, 1906, Enc. in No. 62, FO 401/10; various Ethiopian military men also served to distribute illegal arms, while the Italian trading post at Magalo acted as a distribution point, see NFDIR (January-April, 1927), PC/NFD3/1/1; Italian-made cartridges conveniently fit the Fusil Gras rifles; see Summary of Mr. Zaphiro's Report, Waye Golbo, August 10, 1907, Enc. in No. 155, FO 401/11.

conditions nonetheless required additional economic restructuring in the 1920s. Coffee emerged as the primary agricultural product for many Darasa, while at the same time, many were transformed into tenants.

Coffee had always played a significant role in the Darasa economy; it was harvested from wild bushes in the unsettled, forested areas and traded to the local Oromo population. A limited quantity reached the coast, mostly as a luxury product, since transport costs remained extremely high. Sidamo's incorporation did not bring this commodity into immediate importance in northern markets. Some time was needed to establish the proper commercial connections. First mention of Sidamo's coffee exports was made in the 1906 British trade report on Abyssinia,⁸² twenty years after the province's incorporation. Yet within another fifteen years, coffee emerged as the area's chief resource.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, demographic and economic pressures (described in chapters 3 and 4) created difficulties for both the Darasa and the Ethiopian administration. Many people sought relief by clearing forested areas and undertaking the more assiduous cultivation of coffee; for the provincial government, pressures were alleviated by the division and distribution of the same disputed lands to northern settlers, thereby

⁸²Cf. Cd. 852-27 and Cd. 3283-8.

converting Darasa squattors into tenants. As the area's faunal resources were exhausted, the administration turned to coffee, the exploitation of which required considerable organization and the utilization of a large labor pool.

For the Darasa, the increasing emphasis on coffee did not mean abandonment of their ensete production, since the two commodities were complementary. Although landlords did pressure them to convert as much land as possible, ensete was not unsuited to the change. Its high caloric production per hectare provided subsistence on a minimum of land. Yet, ensete is not necessarily nutritious; an analysis of kocho illustrates this fact: 56.3 percent water, 41.3 percent carbohydrates, 1.2 percent protein and .2 percent fat. Supplemented with a minimum of meat and other vegetables, however, ensete can provide an adequate diet.⁸³ The development of coffee, therefore, engendered problems: the lack of pasturage meant that ensete was not properly fertilized; added demands on labor dictated that ensete was less well cared for; and the absence of additional cropland made it harder for Darasa to supplement their diets with grains.

⁸³Taye Bezuneh and Asrat Feleke, "The Production and Utilization of the Genus Ensete in Ethiopia," Economic Botany, XX, 1 (1966), 69-70; Alemayehu Mekonnen, "The Cultivation of Enset in Ethiopia" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1967), p. 42; further, Ruth Selinus, et al., "Dietary Studies in Ethiopia: III. Dietary Patterns Among the Sidama Ethnic Group," Acta Societas Medicorum Upsaliensis, LXXVI, 3-4 (1971), 172, reports that carbohydrates provide 90 percent of the adult's caloric intake, protein only 5 percent.

A minimum of land must be reserved for ensete production. An ordinary family annually consumes the yield from 100-150 plants; since the seedlings take six years to develop, plants must be maintained at various stages of maturation. An average family thus would need to cultivate 400-900 plants at any one time.⁸⁴ Darasa, as traditional exporters of this commodity, may have maintained even more. Darasa traded ensete over a wide area: to the pastoral Guji; to the Sidama whose ritual proscriptions did not allow them to produce the high-quality Darasa commodity; and to the ethnic groups west of Lake Abaya which lacked the technology necessary to preserve ensete for long periods.⁸⁵

Although ensete has remained indispensable within the Darasa economy, its overall importance has never been clearly measured.⁸⁶ Its utility not only as food, but also as fodder, building material, clothing, bedding and packaging is vital. To be sure, coffee has not destroyed its importance, yet in many areas, ensete clearly has taken a back seat. While overall ensete production may not have

⁸⁴Eshetu Yimer, "Land Use Study in Hanasho (Sidamo)" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968), pp. 60-61; Fantaye Berek, "The Production and Consumption of Enset in Sidama" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968), pp. 26-27; Asres Kokebie, "A Regional Study of Gerbicho" (B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1967), pp. 43-44; Taye and Asrat, 66.

⁸⁵Fantaye, pp. 31, 39, 48.

⁸⁶See the comments of S. Stanley, "Ensete in the Ethiopian Economy," Ethiopian Geographical Journal, IV, 1 (1966), 30-37.

declined, its growth may have been stunted. In coffee areas, Darasa generally grow only enough ensete for subsistence and many save additional space by purchasing their seedlings from Darasa at higher altitudes.⁸⁷ At the same time, the price for ensete has risen in the market, a possible indication of an increasing internal and export demand for a limited supply.

Coffee slowly but steadily displaced ensete as the key Darasa commodity and ivory as the province's chief export. In most areas, coffee had become profitable by around 1910 and came to dominate ten years later.⁸⁸ Stigand, travelling in the south in 1910, noted that "when our route joined the Goffa-Addis Ababa track, we met fifty or a hundred mules at a time conveying . . . [coffee] up to Addis Ababa."⁸⁹ Certainly, coffee prices during the whole of this period generally rose as the figures in Table 16 indicate. Since prices fluctuated widely from year to year and between seasons, these figures are meant only as general indicators of the price rise. They reveal likewise an increasingly larger portion for the producer over the period, an added stimulus to production. Using the Harar prices as a base,

⁸⁷ Ensete grown at these altitudes is considered more disease-resistant, see Asres, p. 42; Stanley, 32.

⁸⁸ Similarly in Wollega, Dejazmach Joté and Gebre Egziabher had undertaken extensive coffee planting in 1911, bushes that would be ready for harvest around 1916, see Report for the Year 1913 on the Trade of Gambela (Cd. 7620-31), British Parliamentary Papers; see also USDC, Abyssinia, p. 19.

⁸⁹ Stigand, pp. 284-85.

Table 16.--Comparative "Abyssinian" Coffee Prices Per Farasulla, 1900-1930.

Year	Darasa	Year	Addis Ababa	Year	Harar
1900	5-7 mahalaks	1899 ^a	MT\$ 2.25-2.50	1899 ^a	MT\$ 3-4
1910	13-6 mahalaks	1905 ^b	MT\$ 3	1907 ^c	MT\$ 4-7
1920	MT\$ 1.33-1.60	1913 ^d	MTS 5-6.50	1913 ^d	MT\$ 9-10
1930	MT\$ 3-6	1926 ^e	MT\$ 10	1926 ^e	MT\$ 11

^aReport for the Year 1899-1900 on the Trade of Adis Abeba and Harar (Cd. 852-27), British Parliamentary Papers.

^bH. Henin, "Éthiopie," Recueil Consulaire Belge, CXXXVIII (1907), 140.

^cA. Spaletta, "Il Caffé nell'Abissinia," L'Agricoltura Coloniale, XI (1917), 202.

^dReport for the Year 1913 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Cd. 7620-32), British Parliamentary Papers.

^eR. R. Azaïs and R. Chambard, Cinq Années de Recherches Archéologiques in Ethiopie (Paris, 1931), p. 223.

one sees in very general terms that the amount paid to the producer and various local middlemen rose from about 10 to 30 percent during the period represented, while the intermediary Sidamo-Addis Ababa merchant's share fell from over 50 percent to around 40. No doubt the arrival of the railway in Addis Ababa in 1916 allowed the intermediary to be more efficient, offering a higher price to the producer and reaping subsequently a more voluminous trade. More thorough analysis of this particular aspect, though, is yet needed.

We can see also the rising importance of coffee in the national economy by examining exports via Djibouti.

Table 17.--Coffee Exports Via Djibouti, 1910-34.^a

Period	Metric Tons		
	(1) Harari	(2) Abyssinian	Column 2 as Percentage of 1
1910-14	15,949	1,160	1
1915-19	18,803	619	3
1920-24	22,035	8,991	41
1925-29	30,186	34,337	114
1930-34	41,564	42,115	101

^aMy own calculations, based upon figures from Adrien Zervos, L'Empire d'Éthiopie (Athens, 1936), p. 157.

The export of Abyssinian coffee took a tremendous jump in the period 1922-4. The distribution of qalad land in the south, much of which involved areas suitable to coffee production, and the arrival of the railway in Addis Ababa, reducing transport costs, both occurring in the preceding ten year period, no doubt contributed significantly to this large export increase.

It is difficult, of course, to know how much of that coffee originated in Sidamo, but chances are that a good proportion of it did. Figures are scarce. Zaphiro estimated the 1906 coffee export from Sidamo at around 50,000 farasullas. Two decades later, Guidi placed Darasa's share alone at twice that amount (100,000-120,000 farasullas or ca. 1830 metric tons), whereas Zervos put the Sidamo export at about twice that of Darasa (3333 metric tons). The Greek estimated the coffee exports from the southeast to the Italian colony at about 1000-1200 metric tons.⁹⁰ If we assume that about half that export was from Sidamo,⁹¹ 2600

⁹⁰ Report by Mr. Zaphiro, Sirri (Borana), September 15, 1906, Enc. in No. 62, FO 401/10; Guido Guidi, "Nel Sidamo Orientale," Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, Series 7, IV (1939), 383; Zervos, pp. 156, 392.

⁹¹ This figure is probably conservative. From 1967-70, Sidamo coffee represented 22-34 percent of the Abyssinian variety arriving in Addis Ababa, while of other southern provinces, Gemu Gofa produced no more than 2 percent and Arussi 3 1/2 percent, see Teketel Haile Mariam, "The Production, Marketing and Economic Impact of Coffee in Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1973), p. 36. Darasa's share of the Sidamo coffee market seems to have fallen in the post-Italian period, despite overall increases in production. Thus the

metric tons remained for export via Addis Ababa or Harar, a figure that would represent about 35 percent of the Abyssinian coffee exported via that route.

The increased production of Sidamo coffee did aid the national economy, and while it also benefited individual Darasa, its importance to the local population should not be over-estimated. Certainly, in the early part of the century, coffee proceeds could do little more than supplement Darasa's total income. Since beans grew wild and produced no more than one kilogram annually per tree,⁹² a gabbar would have had to harvest 170-190 trees, an incredible number, considering the likely competition, in order to provide his patron with the full five thaler ghibbr.⁹³ In the 1920s, one was not likely to have even this many, but if we accept 200 as average, figuring an annual production in the semi-cultivated state of two kilograms per tree,⁹⁴ the peasant would have a gross earned income of about thirty-five thalers from coffee, not bad for the period. Yet if one deducts from this amount the third or quarter (in cash or produce) owed to the landlord and the tax designated for the government, the tenant was

emphasis on coffee after the war was probably centered on the Sidama and Wollamo areas.

⁹²Spaletta, 131-32; USDC, Abyssinia, p. 20.

⁹³Asres, p. 46; Teketel, p. 44.

⁹⁴USDC, Abyssinia, p. 20; even in the 1930s Jensen, p. 116, still reported a high proportion of wild and semi-cultivated trees in the area.

left with little. If he were more isolated and did not have access to a primary coffee market, he might take even less for his crop.⁹⁵

Although the prices of coffee continued to rise and the proportion given the producer rose as well, so did the taxes the Darasa had to pay. Inflated land prices caused increased pasture rentals for cattle-owning Darasa. The relative prosperity within the coffee growing regions inevitably led to higher prices for most consumer goods. While cash began to flow more freely in the area and trickle down to many Darasa, it is likely that a Darasa, as a coffee-producing tenant, was only relatively better off than as a gabbar. His tenancy was insecure while coffee, now almost his exclusive commodity, did not produce a very comfortable margin of economic security. For him ensete remained vital, always providing him with subsistence despite the threat of economic or ecological disaster.

While coffee was emerging as an important commodity in the national economy, three other items continued to be vital: hides and skins, beeswax and honey. As northerners entered the south's traditional marketing structure, they endeavored to buy up these commodities at their sources. Zervos reported an average annual Sidamo production of 20,000 farasullas (340,000 kilograms) of hides and skins,

⁹⁵Taxes of various kinds imposed on coffee-producing tenants in the Harar area were also heavy. See Southard, 328.

2000-3000 farasullas of wax, and 10,000 farasullas of honey.⁹⁶ The former figure would represent about 5 percent of the national total, while the export of wax accounted for 7 to 8 percent. Much of the honey went into the emperor's annual tribute and was thus less important as an export commodity.

The distribution of qalad land in the 1920s and the increasing importance of coffee in the local economy promoted the further development of infrastructure. The system of roads was concentrated in lower elevations where travel was less arduous and now safer.⁹⁷ This movement caused some markets to shift and relegated others to the status of secondary centers.⁹⁸ At the same time, the number of markets increased, rising in Darasa alone to some thirty centers in the Italian period.⁹⁹ Many markets became towns as the settler population around them increased, Dilla being a prime example.

The town developed around a small market established on the qalad land of the local korro, Grazmach Badecho Udo. By 1926, it had grown into an important coffee center,

⁹⁶Zervos, pp. 158, 162, 392.

⁹⁷Fuertes and Osgood, p. 71.

⁹⁸E.g., the Mangano market was moved to the road and came to be called Sugali, see Jensen, p. 97.

⁹⁹Guidi, 384.

although it still housed only 500-800 persons.¹⁰⁰ Its real growth did not come until after the Italian war, when it was designated an awraja capital. Into Dilla and the other coffee towns moved foreign firms like Seferian and Pappasinos who built large storage and processing facilities and who used motor transport.¹⁰¹ Older, poorly located and isolated ketemas like Bulé, the area's first garrison town, suffered a decline.¹⁰²

The economic transformation wrought by the Ethiopians in their newly acquired territories began immediately after the conquest. Initially, the changes were centered around the development of infrastructure to promote the administration's economic and military goals, one of which was reorientation of trade to northern depôts. Later, with the promotion of qalad land, the administration further

¹⁰⁰Guidi, 381; Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana (Milan, 1938), p. 559; Azais and Chambard, p. 234.

¹⁰¹Henin, 126-27; Jensen, p. 89; Latham, 4; Asinari di San Marzano, p. 218. The Guragé seem to have played a significant part in Sidamo's commerce; at least they represent a proportionately large part of the population of Dilla. A town planning survey indicates that 27 percent of those questioned designated Guraginya as their mother tongue as opposed to 36 percent for Amharic and 17 for Orominya, see Consozio Italiano di Studi Urbanistici and Ethiopian Ministry of Interior (Municipalities Section), Planning Survey for Dilla (Sidamo) Municipality (Addis Ababa, n.d.), p. 33; Azais and Chambard, p. 218, also point to the Guragé commercial role.

¹⁰²Trade statistics indicated that Bulé remained an important market center until the time of the Italian war, see Guidi, 384. Bulé's decline was due in large part to the number of her residents killed during the war.

strengthened its control over land and labor, while stimulating coffee production. Darasa, facing the prospect of confinement on reserve-like territory, were virtually compelled to take part in the reorganization, becoming tenants on their newly cleared lands. From the beginning, northerners entered the traditional commercial network, gradually coming to control the lion's share of the region's trade. The role to be played by Darasa was determined by the national government, a decision in which the Darasa had no real part and over which they had no practical influence.

The promotion of galad and the northern absorption of the traditional marketing network aided social contacts between settlers and Darasa; northerners now controlled the relationship even more firmly. For many Darasa, the only escape was assimilation, believed to guarantee full economic and social rights. The emergence of a money economy in which coffee played a vital part led many Darasa to believe that assimilation was achievable. Many Darasa were to receive a rude awakening since the number permitted was minimal and carefully regulated by settler social mechanisms. Assimilation was never promoted as a concerted national policy; the social incorporation of the Darasa will be investigated briefly in the final chapter.

Chapter 6

DARASA SOCIAL ADAPTATION: THE FRUSTRATIONS OF ACCULTURATION

The 1895-Ethiopian conquest of Darasa ordained a new set of social relationships requiring numerous personal adaptations. At first, the conquest caused both peoples to remain aloof and suspicious, but there was limited interaction through intermediaries. For the central administration, this arrangement stemmed from a desire to economize and leave the subject peoples relatively undisturbed; for the small settler population, from their anxieties about isolation and engulfment.

Structurally, both Darasa and northern societies were capable of assimilation, yet orientations were different. Given feelings of cultural superiority and God-given mission, the Amhara-Tigre engendered a more rigid social structure, and acculturation, therefore, involved the Ethiopianization of the local population according to rather strictly defined rules. Since assimilation required ethnic interaction and the provision of cultural models and opportunities, these were most easily attained near the ketemas,

in areas of high settler concentrations. Yet, as I have pointed out, settler presence in the south was nowhere predominant, and thus acculturation proceeded only to the extent that it did not endanger Ethiopian political or cultural hegemony. The over-extension of the central Ethiopian core, administratively and militarily, influenced both national and individual attitudes toward assimilation and probably further restricted southerner's access.

The Darasa, for their part, comprised a society generally open to change and adaptation. Like their Oromo neighbors, they were basically egalitarian with many inter-societal contacts. Darasa traded and travelled over wide areas and intermarried as well with neighbors, particularly the Oromo. There was little societal unity, and the main political focus was at the local, clan level, making the Darasa as much an outward- as inward-looking group. Darasa scoffed at their cattle-herding neighbors, yet such attitudes did not prevent interaction or even Darasa contractual ownership of livestock. It is difficult to second-guess cultural responses, yet it seems likely that, had the Amhara-Tigre acted more equitably instead of as domineering and exploitative agents, relations with the Darasa would have been easier. Such of course was not the case.¹

¹My basic analysis draws upon the comparative framework of Donald N. Levine, Greater Ethiopia (Chicago, 1974), chapters 8-10.

As an area suitable to northern settlement, Darasa was immediately under firmer control and supervision than neighboring pastoral areas. The opportunities to acculturate were subsequently better, even if extensive assimilation did not occur. Darasa-Amhara societal interaction was characterized generally by competition for the limited resources in the same ecological niche. The subsequent conflict initially was mitigated somewhat by Ethiopian confinement to the Darasa peripheral areas and by less direct control over the means of production.² As I have endeavored to demonstrate, changing economic priorities in the 1920s stimulated closer contacts, as northerners came to control directly and more fully, the area's land, labor and commercial resources. The rise of the money economy and the more open nature of the towns exerted considerable assimilative pressure on nearby Darasa. The relative prosperity which derived from cash crops lulled many into believing that acculturation was now possible, a conception that for most was soon crushed. As one informant bitterly put it: "We were fools to think that the Amhara would ever treat us as equals."

To be sure, this indignation was not new; it had characterized all the subjugated societies from the time of conquest, with the exploitative nature of Ethiopian rule

²Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, edited by the author (Boston, 1969), pp. 19-23.

being the chief source. Access to and utilization of resources was a point of contention between the core and the settler periphery. Settlers, concerned primarily with personal gain, favored intensive short-term exploitation of an area and its peoples; conversely, the national administration, for obvious reasons, supported a regulated, long-term utilization of local resources.³ Provincial governors were primarily responsible for harmonizing these interests; some did well, while others, by personal example, only assisted settler objectives. Exploitation thus was a matter of degree and varied according to time and place.

The resentment engendered by this exploitation is apparent from remarks made by a Reshiat near Lake Rudolf in the early part of this century. Noting his people's destitution, he agonized to Stigand: "We have become as donkeys and beasts of burden because of these Siddam [Ethiopians], who have taken our country . . ."⁴ Although many areas remained quiet under Ethiopian administration, a desire for liberation simmered. A hopeful Arsi Oromo leader confided to Du Bourg de Bozas:

³Michael Ståhl, Ethiopia, Political Contradictions in Agricultural Development (Uppsala, 1974), p. 50; John Markakis, Ethiopia, Anatomy of a Political Polity (Oxford, 1974), p. 117, notes that peasant abuse "has traditionally been an accepted form of official behavior." I generally agree, but there were restraints.

⁴C. H. Stigand, To Abyssinia Through an Unknown Land (Philadelphia, 1910), p. 226.

My Galla [Oromo] are devoted to me. . . . You go in all the country from the sunrise to the sunset, from the mountains of the north to the steppes of the south, and you will see my warriors of tomorrow. . . . I am a vassal of the Negus but I am free in truth and Menilek cannot treat me as a shum [underling] Sometimes though I must admit that submission seems intolerable to me. . . . The hour [for revenge] has not come but it will come; perhaps our children will see the departure of the oppressor.⁵

The absence of widespread resistance to northern rule should not, however, cause surprise. Divide and rule, in combination with superior weaponry and a general fatalism among many of the conquered peoples ensured Ethiopian control. That resistance which periodically flared up was generally local and individualized. A number of ways of demonstrating alienation existed. Darasa had many options: flight to uncleared land to avoid the neftenya; use of localized violence to resist qalad in the early 1920s, to drive out landlords during the Italian occupation, and to express discontent in 1960, 1968 and 1974; use of the Ethiopian court system to rectify perceived injustices; and the adoption of European Christianity, as much a means of acculturation as a sign of defiance.

If resistance was one reaction to Ethiopian rule, cooperation was another. The administrative organization ordained by the Ethiopians reflected, to a large degree, the extent of acceptable social interaction, and these structures changed as Ethiopian security and needs altered.

⁵Robert du Bourg de Bozas, Da la Mer Rouge à l'Atlantique à Travers l'Afrique Tropicale (Paris, 1906), p. 125.

Overall, though, aloofness remained, and the heirarchical structures were modified only slightly. Ethiopians recruited and assimilated only a few needed Darasa, initially guides and interpreters to help conquer adjacent regions. Subsequently, the system of balabats and korros was intended to provide minimal administrative links to subject societies. As I have tried to demonstrate, even assimilation of these vital indigenous leaders was slow, and care was taken not to over-reward them.

With the imposition of the neftenya-gabbar system, individual Darasa had to adapt to specific northern patrons. Yet the contacts remained minimal. Darasa were puzzled by the apparently enigmatic personalities of their patrons who often seemed irrational, hot-tempered and unpredictable. Clients were always uneasy, never sure how the patron would react or how they should respond.⁶ Thus, there arose the positions of gabbar shum and misilenye to mediate these contacts.

If some Darasa were thrust into these collaborating roles, others clearly sought the positions. We have presented the cases of Idema Deli and Beeftu Woké (chapter 4) who cooperated openly with Ethiopians in imposing qalad. Their actions stemmed in part from adaptation to changing local conditions. Informants noted that these men were "tired of being gabbars" and "wanted to be like Amhara."

⁶Ibid., p. 183.

While Ethiopians were willing to reward Idema and Beeftu for their efforts, they also sought to prevent them from becoming "too proud." Darasa, while generally scorning collaborators, expressed a great deal of sympathy for the frustrations these men undoubtedly experienced. Darasa demonstrated the same understanding about their balabats.

Settler conceptions of assimilating individuals and their parent cultures were highly ethnocentric. To varying degrees, all subject peoples were "primitive, without culture or effective government, and lazy, dirty and warlike; they were naked or dressed in skins; they were heathen who needed the word of God."⁷ The divine mission with which northerners were entrusted was thus clearly apparent. Indigenous societies were to be transformed into the image of Amhara-Tigre civilization, a goal reflected in the Amharic word "to colonize" (aqanna) which also connotes "to develop." Clearly, then, outright cultural conversion, not syncretism, was the settler objective. Yet if the process were more syncretistic than they were willing to admit, the truth was largely immaterial and a temporary aberration only. Settler attitudes were thus somewhat contradictory, and individual Amharas made no specific efforts to promote assimilation as the ultimate goal.

⁷ Harold G. Marcus, The Life and Times of Menelik II (Oxford, 1975), p. 193.

The absorption of the subject peoples was intended to take centuries, following the historical patterns of northern Ethiopia itself, where large numbers of people were still undergoing assimilation. As one of the last groups brought into the empire, Darasa were placed at the bottom of the hierarchical scale, yet not necessarily locked into that position. Certainly, the effects of the emerging money economy propelled their society more rapidly than neighboring groups toward assimilation. Yet such an assessment must remain largely subjective: only individuals, not whole societies, could make concerted efforts to acculturate and their actions in turn, over time, influenced others in a society that was otherwise not adverse to social adaptation.

If the goals of Ethiopianization were rather strictly conceived, the actual process itself was less rigid. Various pressures were applied; effectiveness depended on the nature of the society and individuals involved. One advanced to various levels of acculturation, ranging from the semi-assimilated individuals at the core to those, like the Darasa, who were only marginally assimilated. The status attributed to a particular individual was in direct proportion to his degree of acculturation.

Overall, one was expected to take up the cultural accoutrements of the conqueror. This adaptation meant learning Amharic, dressing and eating like a northerner,

and becoming a Christian. One could of course assume this cultural facade without undergoing a true conversion. In fact, the process of acculturation was often traumatic, prompting a serious identity crisis since one was expected to reject his natal ethnicity while "pretending" to be an Amhara, not an easy undertaking. Northern settlers were quick to pick up and ridicule imperfect cultural imitations, constantly reminding évolués of their inferior origins. Most converts were forced to role play, often separating their public and private lives. For example, Hodson noted that:

. . . although so many of the great Abyssinian officers are pure Gallas, and although nearly every Abyssinian knows Galla as well as Amharic, yet they do not come to speak Galla in public. This can only be ascribed to a kind of false pride, as in private they will talk it readily.⁸

Certainly, there were assimilated Ethiopian leaders like Balcha who achieved great status in society and who were quite proud of their ethnic origins. Yet scholars have been too quick to use these individuals to argue rapid Ethiopianization of the subject populations. Admittedly these conversions took place, but the numbers were miniscule in proportion to the size of the populations with which the Ethiopians were dealing, and even évolués suffered continuous ethnic disparagement.

⁸Arnold W. Hodson, Seven Years in Southern Abyssinia (London, 1927), p. 19.

While subjection often spurred assimilation, the frustrations experienced were seldom relieved. Under such conditions, some sought to escape to areas where origins were less important and where opportunities for social and economic prestige were better. Ethiopia's nineteenth-century expansion thus promoted a more rapid assimilation of core peoples. Large numbers of semi-assimilated Shoan Oromo and Guragé moved south to relieve the assimilative pressures they were experiencing, thereby identifying themselves more clearly as members of the ruling group. Overall, however, these individuals were the most likely to interact freely with the indigenous population, marrying local women and acting as cultural intermediaries. The numbers involved, though, were few, and the strictures of settler society remained generally firm. While the assimilation process for core peoples in the south was eased, it was by no means painless. "Backsliders" were treated accordingly and, on the whole, semi-assimilated individuals were as ethnocentric as their northern compatriots.

If some settlers eased acculturation by migrating south to the extremities of the Ethiopian empire, the principle of marginality applied as well for the indigenous populations. Southern ketemas, in their peripheral locations, became cultural magnets. As administrative, judicial and marketing centers, these towns had to be utilized by most Darasa at one time or another. The nature of these settlements, as I have noted, changed over time, reflecting

the economic needs and security of the settlers. By the second generation, many new ketemas had been established, much more accessible to the local population and better able, therefore, to serve assimilation.

Situated frequently in inter-ethnic zones and thus peripheral to local societies, ketemas exerted a subtle pressure on the subjugated populations. Their locations well fitted the traditional function of marginal areas, where traditional outcasts could dwell in peaceful sanctuary. The zones long had sustained inter-societal contacts whether for trade or warfare. Devastated Guji cultivated in the peripheral areas while Darasa sought better grazing areas there. Darasa councils traditionally assigned land in the periphery to its young men who became responsible for its clearance and defense. Caste groups, as well, often occupied these zones, to have sufficient land and to be able to serve an inter-ethnic constituency. By situating ketemas along ethnic frontiers, Ethiopians, therefore, provided an attraction for people who were already to a great extent open to cultural adaptation.

Yet one should be careful not to over-emphasize the extent of subsequent Darasa-Amhara contacts. The northerners had no concerted program to push assimilation, and neither did they provide extensive opportunities. Utility and control were the guiding factors. Ethiopians provided opportunities to the extent that they required indigenous administrative personnel; extensive assimilation was

recognized as dangerous to Ethiopian control, jeopardizing the settler's exploitative intentions. For the most part, Darasa who did assimilate were not permitted to remain in their ethnic area, but were rewarded with gabbars and/or land elsewhere. Such strategy alleviated potential disruption in the home area and also isolated the évolu  from his traditional culture, increasing pressure on him to acculturate fully while discouraging backsliding.⁹ Exceptions were rare and applied mostly to indigenous administrative personnel.

The chief acculturating agents, the army and church, were available in the towns, yet did not concertedly seek southern recruits. Since most Darasa évolu s were channeled to other geographic areas, they did not serve as role-models for their kinsmen. The churches, as educational and religious centers, were provided primarily for the settler population. Only 21 percent of Darasa awraja churches were erected prior to 1932, and in the whole province, even today, there is not a single gedem (monastery), the usual indicator of a thriving and firmly rooted Christianity.¹⁰

⁹Karl Eric Knutsson, "Dichotomization and Integration: Aspects of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Southern Ethiopia," in Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, edited by Fredrik Barth (Boston, 1969), pp. 95-99.

¹⁰Information derived from an examination of the Darasa awraja church records, Dilla. Getachew Kelemu, "Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970), p. 29, confirms a slow spread of Orthodox Christianity among the Sidama. Prior to 1936, twenty-two Coptic churches had

Predictably, given the limited infrastructure, assimilation proceeded slowly. Its limited capabilities could handle only a few converts, yet prime concern seems to have been focused upon the urban slave population, rather than indigènes.

Certainly the pressures on the slave to assimilate were great. As a domestic, the slave had more intimate contact with the settler family. Total separation from his homeland, plus the psychological devastation of enslavement, often made assimilation seem necessary as a means of self-preservation. Certainly it was to the owner's advantage to have a slave with whom he could easily deal. A more paternal relationship developed between most patrons and their slaves than between neftenya and gabbar, and owners sometimes used their slaves as intermediaries. Thus the role models provided Darasa were more often semi-assimilated, but non-indigenous, évolués.

Like other assimilating individuals, former slaves desperately sought to hide their true origins; many in fact have succeeded quite well in settler society. One informant, the son of Christianized Burgi slave parents, noted that his mother had worked in Balcha's madbet (kitchen)

been erected in Darasa awraja; by contrast, in Qelem awraja of Wollega, forty-three churches were built in the short period (Wollega was incorporated into Ethiopia in 1886), see Negaso Gidada with Donald Crummey, "The Introduction and Expansion of Orthodox Christianity in Qelem Awraja, Western Wallaga, from about 1886 to 1914," Journal of Ethiopian Studies, X, 1 (1972), 103-12.

while his father had beat the negarit (drum sounded to announce official proclamations). The informant himself had studied at the ghebbi priest school and, upon reaching majority, joined the army. He was eventually rewarded with a gasha of Darasa coffee land upon which he maintained ten tenants. In a number of cases, northern patrons willed loyal servants a portion of their estates, a situation, however, that I never encountered in relation to Darasa tenants.

Unlike the slave whose assimilation was mostly coerced, the Darasa gabbar was able to weigh the advantages. Despite apparent openness to cultural adaptation, few Darasa seem to have opted for assimilation. In part, this course was dictated by a lack of opportunity, but the clearly patronizing and exploitative nature of Darasa-Amhara relations made full assimilation unpopular. The Darasa approach was syncretistic. They adapted themselves to Ethiopian rule quite well, making almost daily decisions regarding imposed requirements. The specific adaptations varied according to the person, geographical area, and generation. Some changes were planned and well-conceived while others were largely unintentional, often altering traditional society in ways that served the settler purpose. While these changes were profound and numerous, I will focus upon three aspects only: the role of the balabat, traditional political organization, and European mission Christianity.

I have noted already that the Darasa balabatanate succumbed in the 1950s, with the death of Assefa Chimburu. Although the institution suffered a premature end, it had already in some ways become dysfunctional. While balabats in adjacent areas continued to play important roles until the 1974 revolution,¹¹ their positions had become much less vital. The administrative restructuring that took place nationally after the Italian war--the division of provinces into awrajas, woredas and meketil woredas--removed many of the duties that the balabat had once undertaken, even if administrators at all levels still relied on the balabat to explain and support governmental regulations and to calm tensions. Although the phasing out of balabats was slow and was incomplete by 1974, the trend was clear and was part of Haile Selassie I's centralizing programs. Before 1936, the emperor had replaced traditional provincial rulers with his own loyal, reform-minded adherents, and after the war he sought to institute more direct administration on the local level.

If this transition came a little early in Darasa, there was no great concern. Afterall, the post had taken no deep roots and had been discredited by Assefa Chimburu's failure to persevere on the land issue (see chapter 4). Certainly, the functions of the balabat could easily be distributed to the korros. As well, the area, although by

¹¹My views on the balabatanet are in general agreement with those of Markakis, p. 307.

no means totally integrated, had progressed faster than many of its neighbors and was thus better prepared for a direct system of administration.

Darasa's changing conception of the balabat added as well to its diminished status. Originally, the official was viewed as the abba gada's representative to the Ethiopian administration, thus as a graft on traditional society. Yet, as each generation of balabats assimilated and was rewarded, they were co-opted and increasingly associated by Darasa with the Ethiopian structure. Chimburu, for example, had been partially assimilated and was basically loyal to the administration, yet because of his defense of Darasa land, his kinsmen expressed great respect for him and proclaimed him a protector of their rights; Assefa, more thoroughly Ethiopianized, was viewed more clearly by Darasa as "one of theirs" instead of "one of us." The balabats had never held a clearly prescribed position within the Ethiopian administrative framework, yet they were increasingly viewed by Darasa as part of that structure. Thus, as the Ethiopians moved gradually toward a system of more direct rule, Darasa had already become aware of and generally accepted this emergent structural change.

In commissioning balabats, the Ethiopians took a very practical approach. They preferred individuals in traditional, hereditary positions such as the Guji kallu

or Sidama moti.¹² Abba gadas, because of their short tenures, were less desirable, yet in some cases, Ethiopians were able to transform these into more permanent posts.¹³ In Darasa, where the abba gada had provoked resistance and refused to cooperate, the Ethiopians accepted a candidate of no particular prestige. As I have noted (chapter 1), Darasa's system of balabats and korros mirrored its basic traditional political organization; the balabat acted as an intermediary and agent for the abba gada, while the korros worked with the various clan heads. These links between the new and traditional structures thus acted to legitimize the former.

This dual system was initially harmonious and easily accommodated the Ethiopian goal of not disrupting traditional society. Yet, soon the two structures became competitors, and the Ethiopians never recognized the traditional political organization, refusing to allocate resources to those functionaries. Instead, benefits and rewards were provided the balabat and his underlings in the form of land, labor and produce. In fact, the abba gada and his associates were designated by the administration as mere gabbars and

¹²The moti's role is described in S. Stanley, "The Political System of the Sidama," Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies (3rd, Addis, Ababa, 1966), p. 224; Getachew Kelemu, pp. 22-23.

¹³For example, as among the Burgi; see Kenneth A. Mude, "A History of the Amaro Burji" (B.A. thesis, Department of History, University College, Nairobi, 1968), appendix.

assigned, along with most other Darasa, as clients for particular northern patrons.

The now passé leaders, traditionally sustained in office by societal contributions, found these rewards reduced, drained off to northern patrons. This reallocation of resources was partly necessitated by the economic realities of Ethiopian rule, yet was associated also with a gradual reorientation of Darasa values. Slowly, indigenous leaders came to be viewed as less deserving. As a few Darasa came into closer contact with northern culture and began to assimilate, denigration of their own way of life ensued. More importantly, the most vital issues now concerning Darasa were those involving relationships to northerners, issues over which traditional leaders had no real influence. The balabat and his korros were much more effective in mitigating offenses involved in these contacts, while the abba gada was largely ineffectual.¹⁴

Certainly, the decline in gada did not necessarily signify a subsequent rise in the influence of the balabat. As I have pointed out, the office remained weak, lacking in any real legitimate authority. Gada, even in a debilitated state, continued to serve as a counterforce, and while it survived, the balabat could not assume its legitimacy.

¹⁴John T. Hinnant, "The Gada System of the Guji of Southern Ethiopia" (Ph.D. thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1977), pp. 218-19, reports a similar trend in Guji.

Yet, it is well to remember that the main force of traditional Darasa politics lay in the local clan councils. These assemblies, as well as the offices of lesser Darasa functionaries such as the heiycha, continued to operate, for there remained essential questions of everyday Darasa life to be handled. These institutions were less threatening to Ethiopian administration and, in fact, functioned usefully in local politico-legal spheres, where Ethiopians themselves preferred not to delve.¹⁵

Yet local and individual change continued to take place, often the indirect result of Ethiopian policies. The downslope migration of Darasa tended to disrupt the organization and cohesion of traditional society, and ultimately created a division between those who remained in the ensete-based highlands and those in the coffee-producing regions. One should not overemphasize these differences for the geographical distances involved were minimal, and family ties continued. Nevertheless, over fifty years, a degree of differentiation occurred.

Certainly, the economic forces at work stimulated these changes. One group of Darasa entered a cash crop economy tied to world capitalism, while the other remained largely bound to the traditional sector. Downslope

¹⁵ Norman J. Singer, "Governmental Recognition of Non-Governmental Laws and Legal Institutions in Ethiopia" (Paper in the Law Library, Addis Ababa University, n.d.), mimeo, describes the Ethiopian administration's reluctance to enforce northern law.

settlers became primarily tenants, while their kinsmen remained gabbars for a time before receiving government recognition of their rist rights. Migrations did take place largely on a traditional basis, with Darasa clansmen settling areas adjacent to their homelands, yet overall, desperation to escape northern patrons and the haphazard system of tenant recruitment tended to mix clan groups more completely in the downslope areas.¹⁶ Relative isolation from the Darasa core, where the sacred sites were located and where gada transitions were conducted, weakened ties to the traditional system. The relative prosperity of Darasa coffee producers made them less reliant upon traditional forms of social insurance; thus savings derived from the money economy tended to be directed toward non-traditional needs, e.g., to consumerism and education.

I have noted already that assimilation pressures were greater in the coffee areas, where Darasa tenants became more syncretistic. Here, foreign Christian missionaries attended their first conversions, a transformation akin to Ethiopianization, encouraging partial disassociation from one's cultural origins. Informants in the coffee areas were thus much less loyal to the gada system. Many had no knowledge of upcoming transition ceremonies and were unable to name the current abba gada. Those who maintained nominal links to the system felt no particular need to

¹⁶Hinnant, p. 217, also confirms a mixing of the Guji gosa as a consequence of Ethiopian rule.

press it upon their own sons. Kinship ties were also weaker in these areas. While many knew their clan (torbani-gosa) affiliation, others had great difficulty identifying their particular subgroupings. As tenants, they had no particular need to preserve geneology for land claims, and most had already lost or given up rights to land in the home area.

The profound developments that affected Darasa in the 1920s and 1930s were mitigated somewhat by the impact of Italian rule, which, although brief, was in its own way, instrumental in causing further changes. Certainly to many Darasa, frustrated for a generation by the issue of qalad, the Italians seemed liberators. With many of their patrons away fighting in the war, Darasa used the opportunity to drive remaining settlers from the area.¹⁷ Italians recognized pre-conquest rights to the land, and the Darasa were thus free for a few years to cultivate as they wished, unconcerned with high Ethiopian taxation. On the other hand, for coffee cultivators, the markets were poor as the war disturbed production, and transportation was difficult. For Darasa who accompanied patrons on campaign, the mysterious Ethiopian personality was partially unveiled. A degree of comraderie developed, and clients for the first time saw

¹⁷ Reports of violence directed against northern settlers during this period are widespread: e.g., Getachew, p. 38; Mude, p. 32; Report on the Province Now Known as the Geleb-Hammar-Bacco Province (July, 1939), Despatches and Correspondence for the Southern Abyssinia (Mega) Consular District, FO 742/17; Hinnant, pp. 25-27.

Ethiopians killed in number they had believed impossible. The Italian experience influenced the course of future events.

In many ways, the war served Haile Selassie's purpose. Its devastation had wreaked havoc among the remnants of Menilek's old guard, clearing the way for placing his own adherents in power and, in Sidamo, for abolishing the neftenya-gabbar system. Waves of northern settlers arrived in Sidamo to take up the lands of patriots killed in the war, and under Ras Adiferisaw, land distribution continued. Fearful of a British protectorate over his country, the emperor sought to forestall such a possibility. Remembering the extensive disloyalty of Ethiopia's subject people during the war and seeing their continued disaffection as a potential threat to the nation's future, the emperor sought to defuse discontent by recognizing Darasa rights to land in their traditional upland areas. At the same time, Haile Selassie made a more concerted effort to promote assimilation of the subject peoples by encouraging the activities of the Ethiopian church and opening up the areas to foreign mission stations. These policies were not always well received by the local settlers.

The emperor's post-war appeal for religious unity in the country struck an apparently sympathetic note among many Darasa who came forward at mass baptisms to declare their faith. The imperial reforms had convinced some that

the northerner was now ready to accept them as equals,¹⁸ but for many the experience in the post-war period proved disheartening and led to a deep cynicism which sparked the violent, periodic protests during the last two decades. While most Darasa continued to wear the mateb (cord worn around the neck) and identified themselves as Christians, few used their baptismal names or had any close attachment to the church. Many were disillusioned by a religion which preached equality and brotherhood, yet whose membership did not practice it.

Southern settlers long had been aware of the revolutionary nature of Christianity's teachings and thus limited indigenous access to them. Therefore, a negative, defensive settler response to the emperor's policies was predictable. By opening areas such as Darasa to missionary activity, the emperor probably sought to stimulate religious competition, thereby aiding in the long run his own program of national unity. As a nominal Ethiopian Christian, the balabat Assefa Chimburu, exemplified the settler reaction, which was, to a large degree, obstructionist. The balabat made the early years of foreign propagandizing quite untenable, denying land upon which the missionaries could build and bury, and exerting considerable pressure on Darasa who attended mission meetings.

¹⁸Cf. John H. Hamer, "Cultural Diversity and National Integration in Ethiopia: The Sidamo Case," Paper presented to the Symposium of the African Studies Association (October, 1966), mimeo.

Thus, the Sudan Interior Mission, established in the Kofi area south of Dilla in February 1946, grew slowly. Starting with a small school and health clinic, the mission established branch facilities in the adjacent coffee areas in the 1950s, as the number of their converts warranted. Those social services provided were largely paid for by Darasa contributions and based upon the S.I.M.'s policy of self-help,¹⁹ yet ultimately the emperor received credit for this expense-free local advance. S.I.M.'s services no doubt played an important part in attracting Darasa adherents. Reasons for conversion, of course, varied according to unique circumstances. Predictably, one family member often influenced the conversion of the remainder. Viewed in a traditional Darasa context, Christianity often appeared as just another type of available counter "magic"; one informant, for example, noted that his membership in a mission church had been influenced by his desire to neutralize a traditional curse placed by malefactors above his doorway. For many Darasa, joining the mission was, in a perverse sort of way, an act of protest.²⁰ Foreign Christianity and its attendant educational opportunities provided Darasa a means of attaining a social status that they felt the

¹⁹ I am indebted to the Albert Brandt's, who organized Dilla's S.I.M., for the information they provided me.

²⁰ Knutsson, pp. 88-94; Du Bourg de Bozas, p. 122. One might make a similar statement concerning the role of Islam.

Ethiopian system denied them. It was a way of assimilating in their own way, despite settler resistance.

It is difficult to assess Darasa loyalty to missionary Christianity, yet its positive reception among Darasa demonstrates once again, I believe, Darasa adaptability. The missions stimulated Darasa interest in education and were probably responsible for the relatively higher incidence of literacy in the area.²¹ As well, they influenced a modest rise in the status of women and, in combination with the influence of Ethiopian law, encouraged Darasa to divide property among heirs of both sexes.

Whether mission activity fulfilled the emperor's intention of stimulating a competitive Ethiopian Orthodox response is unclear. Certainly the period after the war saw a tremendous burst in Ethiopian church construction (see Table 8). This increase though may reflect only a growth in settler population during this period. Although many of the churches were built in rural areas accessible to Darasa, this fact may only point to the increasing post-war tendency for settler residence in the countryside.

While Darasa became mission Christians for a variety of utilitarian reasons, northern settlers have not always

²¹The Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, Report on a Survey of Sidamo Province (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 13, reckons 3.5 percent of the awraja's population literate with an additional .8 percent able to read only. Although Darasa holds the highest literacy rate among the awrajas in the province, one must use the figures in a very general sense only.

been quick to grant them the desired social recognition. Despite this fact, Ethiopian Christianity has not done poorly. Certainly northerners admit that a Christian of any type is better than an animist, yet they often view foreign Christianity as inferior and less rigorous than their own. Considering the harsh fasting periods prevalent in the Orthodox church, such arguments have merit. At the same time, Ethiopian Christianity has proven itself quite accommodating, much more so than the imported variety. The missions, for example, require strict adherence to monogamy, and Darasa informants frequently reported that abandonment of such practices was quite difficult for them. In contrast, Ethiopian Christian converts, including the Darasa balabat Assefa Chimburu, were permitted to retain their several wives. Also, northern settlers found amusing, but did not prevent, the Guji kallu from taking an Amhara Christian among his many wives. Overall, converts among Darasa leaders have been able to adapt both European and Ethiopian Christianities to their traditional roles. Christianized heiycha, for example, found no difficulty or contradiction in performing their judicial functions.

Certainly the Darasa of 1975 was not the same as that found by its Amhara conquerors eighty years earlier. The changes that occurred in the intervening period had been momentous. Yet many elements of traditional society remained. This dissertation has attempted to isolate and describe a few of the multiplicity of changes that resulted

from the advent of Ethiopian rule. One is led ultimately to attempt an assessment of the overall impact of Addis Ababa's control, yet drawing up a balance sheet is a difficult and dangerous preoccupation. No society remains static, and Darasa would have changed whether the Ethiopians incorporated the area or not. Given the world imperialist mentality in the late nineteenth century, it seems unlikely that Darasa would have been left free to guide its own destiny. While it accomplishes little to speculate on what might have been, it seems likely that Darasa would inevitably have been made a part of some colonial system. Her subsequent subordination to the Ethiopians was different in degree, not kind, to the other potential colonial models. The similarity in systems is striking, and I have alluded to a few examples. Certainly the Amhara-Tigre possessed imperialist attitudes akin to those of their European rivals, and their subsequent policies and organization reflected northern ethnocentrism as well as Ethiopia's own struggle with particular European rivals and with the world capitalist system in general.

Ethiopians, of course, viewed their rule as just, enlightened and beneficial, even while admitting its exploitative nature. Darasa even claimed certain advantages derived from Ethiopian administration, yet generally condemned the government that engulfed them. One's opinion inevitably derived from his position within the system. Certainly Darasa today enjoy a better standard of living

than their grandparents did. While this fact can be credited in part to Darasa's association with a modernizing political entity and with the world economy, the enterprising efforts of individual Darasa were responsible as well. While Darasa remained free, within limits, to shape their own futures, the range of their options was narrowed by the needs and priorities of the larger Ethiopian state. Darasa had little opportunity effectively to influence the policies that concerned them; they coped with and adapted to regulations as best they could. Darasa dependence thus limited individual and societal choices.

It also implied that Darasa society could be restructured to benefit the ruling group. Thus, some Darasa did derive benefits from this reorganization, even if these advantages were often secondary, i.e., not specifically designed to aid or develop indigenous society. Certainly Darasa utilized the *pax Ethiopica* to occupy new lands, yet in the long run, this subexpansionism served the conqueror. Improvements in the economic infrastructure did open new possibilities and make marketing easier, yet overall the new markets and transport facilities were paid for by the Darasa themselves, though intended primarily to strengthen Ethiopian control, allowing the rapid movement of troops to disaffected areas and the easy northward movement of commercial and tribute-bearing caravans. Many cultural introductions such as the northern plow, certain grain crops and the mule were often inapplicable to the

Darasa situation and served only the settler. Certainly the growth of coffee as a cash crop and the rise of a money economy had its beneficial effects, yet again these developments ultimately proletarianized a population that had once comprised self-sufficient peasants, while tying them to the uncertainties of the world market.

The chief point of contention between Darasa and their conquerors has been the issue of land. At the base of this problem are fundamental societal differences. In many ways, the confrontation is classic: two agriculturally based societies at odds over an equitable distribution of productive resources. The technological superiority and unity of the Ethiopians allowed them to impose their will. Thus, a hierarchically organized structure was implanted on top of a communally based society. At all levels, Ethiopians dominated: they owned the most productive land, marketed the most valuable resources, held the highest political and social status. Although many aspects of Darasa's social organization were altered, its sense of community in the form of neighborhood work associations remained. Coffee production permitted extension of Darasa's traditional type of labor-intensive agriculture which also suited particular Ethiopian needs. Darasa, thus, adapted well to their changing circumstances without losing complete contact with their past. A basic syncretism resulted that aided both Darasa and their northern rulers.

Yet, understandably, Darasa are, and have never been, content with the arrangement, considering that their contribution towards the maintenance of the empire was considerable. By 1935 Sidamo as a whole was generating over one million thalers in national and provincial revenues, still supporting a settler elite while producing a crop which had already come to dominate Ethiopia's foreign exchange.²² Thirty-five years later, in the banner year 1969-70, Darasa alone produced an estimated one million farasullas of coffee valued in the Addis Ababa wholesale market at over Eth\$ 35 million. In a good year, Darasa were producing as much as 50 percent of Sidamo's coffee exports and 18 percent of the national total.²³ And Darasa were increasingly cognizant of the important role that they played, a knowledge which only added to their frustrations.

Memories of the struggle over qalad had not faded, and many Darasa still resented having been divested of their land. Upland Darasa were struggling to adapt to the local

²²Alberto Giaccardi, "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale," Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (1939), 183-94, estimates annual receipts as follows:

Ghibbr	MT\$ 250,000
Cattle ghibbr	200,000
Asrat	40,000
External customs	6,600
Internal customs	180,000
Salt Tax	241,000

The above figures total MT\$ 917,000 but do not include market taxes and various other assessments such as judicial taxes.

²³Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1975).

expansion of the money economy for which they were not necessarily well-prepared. To a large degree, the frustrations experienced by Darasa in the 1950s stemmed from rising expectations. Coffee-producing Darasa were willing to invest in consumer goods and education, yet they found the prices extremely high and the schooling limited. As tenants, they could not really invest in improved housing or better agricultural methods. Upland Darasa as well found better prices for their commodities but were stifled economically by the limited and infertile acreage they possessed. Thus, a combination of past experiences and current frustrations contributed to the violent outbreaks that occurred in Darasa in the 1960s and 1970s. Darasa were denied a political and social status within the empire that their increasing commercial importance merited.

Under the imperial regime, the region's infrastructure improved, but not in proportion to its economic strength. Feeder roads have opened access to new locales while the Addis Ababa-Nairobi link, traversing Darasa, has recently been completed. Yet, as always, these improvements aided Darasa only secondarily. The proposed Rift Valley railway to Lake Abaya²⁴ can be seen in the same light, as serving northern interests by moving the south's

²⁴The railway project is described in Consozio Italiano di Studi Urbanistici and the Ethiopian Ministry of Interior (Municipalities Section), Planning Survey for Dilla (Sidamo) Municipality (Addis Ababa, n.d.).

important coffee crop quickly into the world market. Those projects of most interest to the Darasa themselves have been limited. Health facilities and schools are even today relatively scarce and depend primarily on the efforts of missionary organizations whose achievements have been restricted by government regulations.²⁵ Clearly, then, the Ethiopian administration has controlled and regulated the region to conform to its own particular wants and needs.

At the same time, the government has not done as much as it might to promote a feeling of national unity. Despite Amhara-Tigre claims of preserving the peace, the calm imposed has been rather superficial. As I have tried to demonstrate, an Ethiopian system based on the threat of force, imbued with a deep cultural ethnocentrism, and dedicated to the exploitation of its subject populations can only promote, not diminish, the tensions between rulers and clients. At the same time, traditional local inter-ethnic rivalries have merely been suppressed, not overcome. Thus, the clashes of 1974, while reflecting primarily Amhara-Darasa conflict, also revealed a resurgence of traditional inter-ethnic hostility.

The legacy left by the imperial regime and its associated system was thus basically negative. Whether the

²⁵ Mission stations, despite local demand, were forbidden to establish grades higher than those provided by the Ethiopian government in the area. Dilla did not obtain a 9th grade until 1974, before which only two secondary schools (Yirgalem and Wollamo-Soddo) existed in the whole province.

new military rulers will be able to maintain themselves while seeking a more equitable distribution of the resources remains the question of the moment. Overcoming the entrenched pattern of colonial exploitation and ethnic conflict and replacing it with a truly united state whose entities choose to cooperate for the common interest will not be easy. In many respects, the military regime has made a good start. Darasa, for one, give evidence of their willingness to cooperate. They were overjoyed with the 1975 return of the land they lost to qalad fifty years earlier. The use of Darasinya on the radio to announce the land reform proclamation signified to some that the new rulers were interested in respecting traditional culture, not denigrating it, and thus creating a truly multi-ethnic state. The government's policy of decentralizing decision-making and emphasizing communalism certainly fits well into traditional Darasa structures and points up Darasa's positive response to the government's actions. As I have argued, the Darasa had long been willing to share in the decisions of the state and to make their proper contributions, but only on the basis of equality, not subordination. Now that this chance seemingly has been provided, only time will tell how Ethiopia's various components respond. If the initial Darasa reaction is any indication, the future of the country may be assured.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

ABBA GADA. Literally, "father of gada"; chief Darasa ritual/religious leader whose primary authority extends through an eight to ten year period while his grade mates are in luba.

ABOUJEDI. An American-manufactured gray-sheeting, popularly called american.

ADERASH. Reception room.

AGAFARI. Chamberlain.

AREQUI. A traditional, highly alcoholic Ethiopian drink.

ASHKER. Servant or follower.

ASRAT. A 10 percent annual tithe.

AWRAJA. The largest sub-provincial administrative unit.

BAFTA. Calico.

BAJIRON. Treasurer; keeper of the patron's wardrobe and most personal possessions.

BALABAT. Literally, "one who has a father"; in the south, an indigenous official providing the chief administrative link between the Ethiopian government and the local population. His administrative unit is called a balabatanet.

BALAMBARAS. A military official; literally, "one who commands an amba or mountain stronghold."

BALI. Darasa term denoting any of the gada grades or either of the two alternating gada classes.

- BARUD BET. A special corps of well-armed and highly disciplined troops, loyal to Menilek, and employed by the emperor to assist his commanders in the conquest and garrisoning of the south; literally, "house of gunpowder."
- BERBERI. Ethiopian red pepper used to spice many traditional dishes.
- BET LIJJ. Literally, "house of children"; a military commander's personal army.
- BIRANNA. Parchment made from dried animal skins.
- BITWODED. A senior imperial adviser.
- BLATTANGETA (BLATTA). Title given to learned men.
- BOLÉ. An earth salt used to supplement the diet of livestock.
- BOOLOOKO. A heavy, hand-woven fabric made from wool or cotton and used as a cloak or blanket.
- CHEWA. A free-born person of good manners.
- CHISENYA. Tenant farmer; literally "owner of the smoke."
- DAWULLA. A unit of dry measure, approximately twenty gunnas or 100 kilograms.
- DEGA. Highlands, usually land above 2500 meters.
- DEGAGA (MAGAGA). Orominya term for the larger of an elephant tusk pair.
- DEJAZMACH (DEJACH). Military title; literally, "commander of the gate."
- DJELLKEBA. Chief military leader of a Darasa gosa.
- ELFIGN. Private chambers.
- ENDERASSIE. A deputy or representative; literally, "like my head."
- ENSETE. One of a number of false banana varieties; the chief Darasa staple.
- FARASULLA. Unit of dry measure, approximately seventeen kilograms.
- FIRDBET. Judiciary or court; literally, "house of justice."

FITIWRARI. Military title; leader of the vanguard.

FOLLÉ. Darasa term for assembly.

GABBAR. In southern Ethiopia, an indigenous client responsible for paying tax to the government and providing corvée labor; until 1975 applied to any free-hold land.

GABBAR SHUM. A client chosen by his peers to supervise the tax collection and labor obligations.

GAN. Large pot for making Ethiopian beer.

GASHA. A non-standard unit of land measure, variable according to land quality.

GEDEM. Monastery.

GHEBBI. The compound or palace of an important official.

GHIBBR. Tribute or tax.

GIBBIRBET. Banquet hall.

GIMJABET. Storehouse, treasury; literally, "house of silk."

GOMBO. Large clay pot.

GOTERA. Granary.

GRAZMACH. Military title; literally, "commander of the left."

GUBBO. Bribe.

GULT. Extensive land-use rights allocated to high Ethiopian officials responsible for administering the area.

GUNDO. In liquid measure, around nineteen kilograms.

HADA. Orominya term for "knife"; traditional Darasa unit of land measure, a length of about fifty meters.

HAMSA ALEKA. One of six military leaders subordinate to a shambal, each commanding fifty soldiers.

HEIYCHA. Traditional Darasa mediator and legal expert.

HULETIKI HEIYCHA. The chief judicial functionary within a Darasa gosa.

ILMOLE. Orominya term for the smaller of an elephant tusk pair.

INJERRABET. House for baking the traditional Ethiopian pancake-like bread called injerra.

JELLABA. In the Darasa gada system, the abba gada's assistant and his successor should the latter die or be relieved of office.

KALLU. Highest religious authority among the Oromo.

KANYAZMACH. Military title; literally, "commander of the right."

KARRA. Orominya term for "animal enclosure."

KAYYO. A Darasa harispicator.

KETEMA. Amharic term for "town," traditionally fortified and strategically located for military purposes.

KITABEL. An arrangement whereby individual soldiers drew sustenance directly from government stores rather than from local inhabitants.

KOCHO. Darasa dish prepared from processed ensete.

KUMTSAHAFI. Scribe.

LEUL RAS. Prince.

LIJJ. Literally, "child"; title reserved for high-ranking nobility.

LIQAMAQWAS. Title traditionally designating the person who doubled for the emperor in battle.

LUBA. Darasa gada grade of chief political responsibility.

MADBET. Kitchen; literally, "house of the table"; land which produced food for the imperial table.

MADERIA. Temporary land-use rights granted to government employees in lieu of salary.

MAGADA. Orominya term; salt for human consumption.

MAHALAK. Coin, generally worth one-sixteenth of a Maria Theresa thaler.

MARDUF. Unbleached Gray-drill.

- MATEB. Cord worn around one's neck to signify adherence to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity.
- MEKETIL WOREDA. The smallest administrative district; a sub-division of a woreda.
- MENEHARIYA (MESSAFERIYA). Government-owned roadside lodging used by itinerant travellers or merchants.
- MENGIST. Amharic term for "government"; also, unallocated land held by the government.
- MESANO. Darasa term for a high grade iron bar traditionally used as currency.
- METAD. Large clay griddle for baking injerra.
- METAYAYA. An offering.
- METO ALEKA. One of three military leaders subordinate to a shambal, each commanding one hundred soldiers.
- MISILENYE. A deputy or representative.
- MUDFBET. Weapons storehouse.
- MUERT. A balabat's personal estates.
- MURA. Traditional Darasa messenger.
- NEFTENYA. Literally, "one who owns a gun"; specifically, a soldier who received maderia from the government as payment for his military services.
- NEGADRAS. Literally, "head of the merchants"; a market tax or customs collector.
- NEGARIT. A large drum sounded to announce impending imperial or gubernatorial decrees.
- NEGUS. King; title reserved in the past for a select few provincial rulers of high birth; not to be confused with "negusa negest" (king of kings) or emperor.
- NESA DANYA. Special judges appointed by Haile Selassie I to treat with and punish slave traders.
- QALAD. Rope for measuring land; also refers to surveyed land itself.
- QALAH. Empty rifle cartridges.
- QELA. Customs post.

- QOLLA. Lowlands, usually below 1500 meters.
- QUBAYE. Small wooden or horn cup used as a unit of measure.
- QUDAD. A private estate worked by corvée labor for the government or an individual.
- QUNNA. In dry measure, about five liters.
- QWARACH. Market tax assessors.
- RAS. Literally, "head"; high-ranking military title; commander of an army.
- RIST. Inheritable land-use rights possessed by an extended family or kin group.
- ROGA. The chief administrative functionary within a Darasa gosa.
- SASSEROGA. Literally, "three rogas"; Darasa term for gosa.
- SEMON. Land-use rights possessed by the church.
- SHAMBAL. Commander of a garrison, ideally containing 300 soldiers.
- SHAMBAL GEZAT. The territory under a shambal's jurisdiction.
- SHAMMA. A locally manufactured, white cotton garment worn by most Ethiopians.
- SHIFTA. Outlaw; bandit.
- SHIOCK MARET. Literally, "thorn land"; territory reserved as a reward for the surveyor of an area.
- SHONGO. Darasa term for a shaded, grassy knoll used for public forums and recreation.
- SI'ILBET. Private reception room.
- SISO. Literally, "one-third"; in the south, one of every four gashas allocated as maderia to balabats or melkenyas. Informants also applied the term to the three-fourths reverting to the government.
- TABOT. Ark of the Covenant; a church's patron saint.
- TEDJBET. House for preparation of traditional Ethiopian honey-wine.
- TEFF. Indigenous Ethiopian grain used in injerra.

TIRF MARET. Land in excess of recorded taxable estates after remeasurement.

TORBANIGOSA. Literally, "seven gosa"; Darasa equivalent of clan.

TURKBASHA. Term probably deriving from the sixteenth century, when Turks first introduced firearms to Ethiopia: thus, a leader of a firearms-equipped military unit; used here to designate the leader of the Barud Bet.

UTABA. Orominya term for "centerpost"; used by the Darasa to indicate hereditary land-use rights possessed by an extended kin group; equated with the Amharic "rist."

WAGSHUM. High-ranking title reserved for the rulers of the northern region of Wag.

WARRA GENU. Land upon which government cattle were grazed; the individual responsible for supervising this estate and despatching an annual cattle tribute to Addis Ababa.

WATTBET. House for preparation of a spicy sauce (watt).

WOLANTICHA (DAWUCHA). Darasa term for a low grade iron bar traditionally used as currency.

WOREDA. An administrative district; a subdivision of an awraja.

WOYNA DEGA. Intermediate land between dega and qolla.

WUDESSA. Orominya term designating a specific tree variety; used by the Darasa to indicate individually held land, lacking male inheritors, and thus returned to the kin group for redistribution.

YA'A. Darasa term for "elder" or a "council of elders."

ZEMECHA. A military campaign or foray.

ZEMENEMESAFINT. A period from the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century in which imperial power in Ethiopia was diminished and regional lords were predominant; literally, "Era of the Judges"; compared in Hebrew history to the period of decentralized rule before the rise of Kings David and Solomon.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

LAND SALE DEED FROM DARASA

In the year of our Lord 1927 [1934], the 23rd of Megabit, in front of a tribunal of Kanyazmach Abebe and Kanyazmach Endale were present Balambaras Abebe Wuterie, Grazmach Tegegne Habsher and Lijj Alemayehu Negatu. Functioning as emmag: for the judges, Ato Shibeshi, Balambaras Liban, Kanyazmach Mangasha and Grazmach Levagu; for Balambaras Abebe, Tsegie Mebratu and Grazmach Gebre Giorgis; for Grazmach Tegegne and Lijj Alemayehu Negatu, Ato Burru and Ato Bahru.

Grazmach Tegegne and Lijj Alemayehu have declared that, together with Grazmach Beshir, they have sold to Weyzero Beliyu and Balambaras Abebe Wuterie two gashas of land belonging to Weyzero Zennebework, situated in Darasa territory at a place called Garbota Iladda, and have stated the facts relating to the sale as follows:

The first of Megabit of the year of our Lord 1927, we, Grazmach Tegegne Habsher, Grazmach Beshir, Lijj Alemayehu Negatu have sold two gashas of land situated in Darasa territory at Garbota, the one to Weyzero Beliyu, the other to Balambaras Wuterie: in total two gashas of territory at the price of 600 Maria Theresa thalers.

(Seals of Beshir and Alemayehu Negatu, signature of Tegegne Habsher)

After reading the above statement, Lijj Alemayehu Negatu and Balambaras Tegegne Habsher took an oath (fetm) saying:

Confirming the above mentioned document, we sold a gasha of territory, neighboring the same property of Weyzero Zennebework, to Balambaras Abebe Wuterie, and a gasha of territory, part of that of Fitiwrari Tessema, to Weyzero Beliyu. We specify that the tribute (ghibbr) is honey and dawulla (i.e., 1 gundo honey, 3 dawulla of cereal and 5 Maria Theresa thalers for wood) and we place the ashura to the responsibility of the purchaser. The price is 600 Maria Theresa thalers, Haile Selassie ye mut!

Their guarantor is (illegible).

Balambaras Abebe Wuterie in his turn has taken an oath saying:

As written above, I have purchased a gasha of territory in the name of Weyzero Beliyu and a gasha in my name for 600 Maria Theresa thalers, assuming to myself the burden of the ashura. Haile Selassie ye mut!

For the 600 Maria Theresa thalers, Balambaras Sebsebegn was named guarantor.

Follow the signatures and seals.

From Martino Mario Moreno, "Il Regime Terriero Abissino nel Galla-Sidama," Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, X (1937), 1506-07.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Oral Sources

The oral research upon which the major portion of this dissertation rests was conducted during sixteen months of 1974-5; the data collection was carried out under difficult and precarious conditions, which meant that the time spent in the field could not be utilized fully. Nevertheless, our considerable efforts were rewarded ultimately by the completion of over three hundred local interviews.

Based in Dilla, we travelled by car, mule and foot over much of the Darasa area, although certain locales remained inaccessible. In our pursuit of northern settlers in Sidamo, we conducted interviews in Addis Ababa and in most of the major road towns in northern Sidamo, including those outside the Darasa area (Kavado, Teferiqela, Aleta Wondo, Yirgalem, Agere Selaam, Kebre Mengist and Agere Mariam). Despite the uncertainty under which we worked, we encountered hostility rarely and only a handful of individuals who refused interviews. Fortunately, we focused our initial attention upon northern settlers, who became increasingly difficult to deal with and locate after the land reform proclamation of early 1975. In fact, some of our

interviewees later joined in the local shifta activity against former tenants and were ultimately killed in military action. Tensions between Darasa and northern settlers kept emotions high; local events often dictated where we might work and precluded conversations with informants who ordinarily might have been more useful.

I was aided in my endeavors by two research assistants, one a northern Amhara, the other a local Darasa student. Due to the area's volatility, I made use of no recording equipment or standardized questionnaires, although they would have been useful. To appear as unobtrusive as possible, I made notations of my interviews in a small, locally-recognized school notebook, which I later typed. Although some encounters were arranged in advance, most were unscheduled. We arrived in a locale hopeful of using our few initial contacts to locate other potential informants. Particularly for Darasa, we tried to arrive early in the morning to get as much interviewing done before the day's activities began.

Interviews were kept as informal as possible. Sessions with Darasa were somewhat more structured in that we did have a series of questions, for statistical purposes, which we were interested in asking. The basic approach, though, for all interviews was to let the individual talk as freely as he was willing, pressing for amplification and clarification and pursuing matters which arose. Patience was the password, and we willingly listened to almost any

well-informed individual. Interviews most frequently were held in the informant's home, although many convenient locations were used: a church compound, the market path, a nearby coffee grove, or the public Darasa shongo.

Dealing with informants on a private and personal level sometimes was not possible. The arrival of a "ferenji" in most areas raised curiosity, and many interviews were conducted with a small audience of the informant's neighbors. Such an arrangement was sometimes useful, as it tended to keep the informant honest, and on other occasions placed him more at ease. Most interviews averaged around forty-five minutes, with many others running much longer, spread out over several days. A good cross-section of the peoples involved was obtained. Few informants were yet alive who still recalled the days of the Ethiopian conquest, but quite a number were able to recall from first-hand experience the events of the early twentieth century. Darasa informants ran from a host of simple gabbars, to korros, gabbar shums, relatives of the Darasa balabats, gada officials and acculturated Darasa priests. Northern interviewees ranged from common soldiers, to merchants, smugglers, game hunters, clergy, and high administrative officials. A limited number of interviews were conducted with Guji agriculturalists as well as with a variety of other ethnics including Gemu, Burgi, Wollamo and Sidama, who, for various reasons, were located in the Darasa area.

Although it is my opinion that few informants provided information which was in any way politically sensitive, most preferred, when given the chance, to have their identities protected. This choice I believe is understandable and I therefore honor their wish. Thus, I have chosen the above format to discuss my oral research and consequently refrain from appending a list of my informants.

B. Written Sources

Official Documents and Publications

Ethiopia:

Central Statistical Office:

Report on a Survey of Sidamo Province. Addis Ababa, 1968, mimeo.

Statistical Abstract of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, 1975.

Consozio Italiano di Studi Urbanistici and the Ethiopian Ministry of Interior (Municipalities Department). Planning Survey for Dilla (Sidamo) Municipality. Addis Ababa, n.d.

Ethiopian Economic Review, I (1959); VI (1963).

Mann, H. S. et al. Field Study in Systems of Land Tenure and Landlord-Tenant Relationships, Tabor Woreda (Sidamo). Addis Ababa, 1966, mimeo.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Economic Progress of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, 1955.

Ministry of Land Reform and Administration. Report on the Land Tenure Survey of Sidamo Province. Addis Ababa, 1968, mimeo.

Great Britain: Foreign Office:

Abyssinia. Correspondence, Confidential Print, 1846-1910. FO 401/8-15.

Africa. General Correspondence after 1906. FO 371/288.

Despatches and Correspondence for the Southern Abyssinia
(Mega) Consular District. FO 742/16-17.

Parliamentary Papers. Diplomatic and Consular Reports:

Report on the Trade of Adis Abbaba (Command 8648), XCIV
(1898), p. 1.

Reports for the Year 1899-1900 on the Trade of Adis Ababa
and Harrar (Command 852-27), XCII (1900), p. 59.

Report for the Year 1905-6 on the Trade of Abyssinia
(Command 3283-8), LXXXVIII (1907), p. 1.

Report for the Year 1910 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Command
5465-152), XC (1911), p. 1.

Report for the Years 1911-2 on the Trade of Abyssinia
(Command 665-121), LXIX (1913), p. 21.

Report for the Year 1913 on the Trade of Abyssinia (Command
7620-32), LXXI (1914-6), p. 25.

Report for the Year 1913 on the Trade of Gambela (Command
7620-31), LXXI (1914-6), p. 17.

Kenya:

National Archives:

Moyale District Annual Reports, 1918-27, PC/NFD1/6/1.

Moyale District Annual Reports, 1928-33, PC/NFD1/6/2.

Moyale District Handing Over Reports, MLE 24-5, 34.

Moyale District Intelligence Reports, PC/NFD3/3/1-2; MLE/3.

Northern Frontier District Annual Reports, 1913-22,
PC/NFD1/1/2.

League of Nations:

Economic Intelligence Service. Statistical Yearbooks
(Geneva).

Pan-American Coffee Bureau:

Annual Coffee Statistics. New York.

United States:

Department of Commerce. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce:

Abyssinia: Present Commercial Status of the Country.
Special Consular Reports, No. 81. Washington, D.C., 1918.

Ethiopia: Commercial and Economic Survey. Trade Bulletin
No. 476. Washington, 1927.

National Archives. Department of State:

Records Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia
(Abyssinia) 1910-29, 884.

General Records Relating to the Internal Affairs of Ethiopia
(Abyssinia) 1930-49, 884.

Books

Alpers, Edward A. Ivory and Slaves in East Central Africa.
London, 1975.

Amin, Samir. Unequal Development. New York, 1976.

Asinari di San Marzano, Roberto. Dal Giuba al Margherita.
Rome, 1935.

Asmarom Legesse. Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society. New York, 1973.

Azaïs, R. R. and Chambard, R. Cinq Années de Recherches Archéologiques en Ethiopie. Paris, 1931.

Bartleet, E. J. In the Land of Sheba. Birmingham, 1934.

Baum, James E. Unknown Ethiopia. New York, 1935.

Berhanou Abbebe. Evolution de la Propriété Foncière au Choa (Ethiopie). Paris, 1971.

Borelli, Jules. Éthiopie Méridionale. Paris, 1890.

Bottego, Vittorio. Il Giuba Esplorato. Rome, 1895.

Boyes, John. My Abyssinian Journey. Nairobi, n.d.

Brett, E. A. Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa. New York, 1973.

- Brotto, Enrico. Il Regime delle Terre nel Governo del Harar. Addis Ababa, 1939.
- Cipolla, Arnaldo. In Etiopia. Turin, 1933.
- Ciravegna, Giovanni. Nell'Impero del Negus Neghest. Turin, 1933.
- Citerni, Carlo. Ai Confini Meridionali dell'Etiopia. Milan, 1913.
- Darkwah, R. H. Kofi. Shewa, Menilek and the Ethiopian Empire, 1813-1889. London, 1975.
- Du Bourg de Bozas, Robert. De la Mer Rouge à l'Atlantique à Travers l'Afrique Tropicale. Paris, 1906.
- Dunckley, Fan C. Eight Years in Abyssinia. London, 1935.
- Escherich, Georg. Im Lände des Negus. Berlin, 1921.
- Forbes, Rosita. From the Red Sea to Blue Nile. New York, 1925.
- Fuertes, Louis A. and Osgood, Wilfred H. Artist and Naturalist in Ethiopia. Garden City, 1936.
- Gilkes, Patrick. The Dying Lion. London, 1975.
- Grühl, Max. Abyssinia at Bay. London, 1935.
- Guébrè, Selassié. Chronique du Règne de Ménélik II, Roi des Rois d'Ethiopie. 2 vols. Paris, 1930.
- Guida dell'Africa Orientale Italiana. Milan, 1938.
- Haberland, Eike. Galla Süd-Äthiopiens. Stuttgart, 1963.
- Haile Selassie I (Emperor). Autobiography. Translated by Edward Ullendorff. London, 1976.
- Hinnant, John. The Guji of Ethiopia. 2 vols. New Haven, 1972.
- Hodson, Arnold W. Seven Years in Southern Abyssinia. London, 1927.
- Jensen, Adolf E. Im Lände des Gada. Stuttgart, 1936.
- Karsten, Detlev. The Economics of Handicrafts in Traditional Societies. Munich, 1972.

- Kulmer, Friedrich (Freiherr von). Im Reiche Kaiser Menelik. Leipzig, 1921.
- Kuls, Wolfgang. Beiträge zur Kulturgeographie der Südäthiopischen Seenregion. Frankfurt, 1958.
- Levine, Donald N. Greater Ethiopia. Chicago, 1974.
- Lonfernini, Bruno. I Sidamo, un Antico Popolo Cuscita. Bologna, 1971.
- Mahteme Selaiss Wolde Maskal (Balambaras). Zikir Neger. Addis Ababa, 1942 E.C.
- Marcus, Harold G. The Life and Times of Menelik II. Oxford, 1975.
- Markakis, John. Ethiopia, Anatomy of a Traditional Polity. Oxford, 1974.
- Mérab, Pierre. Impressions d'Éthiopie. 3 vols. Paris, 1921.
- Mezemer Hailu (Kanyazmach). Ye Kibbur Dejazmach Balcha. Addis Ababa, 1957 E.C.
- Mosley, Leonard. Haile Selassie, the Conquering Lion. London, 1964.
- Perham, Margery. The Government of Ethiopia. Evanston, 1969.
- Rubenson, Sven. King of Kings, Tewodros of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, 1966.
- _____. The Survival of Ethiopian Independence. London, 1976.
- Rweyemamu, Justinian. Underdevelopment and Industrialization in Tanzania. Nairobi, 1973.
- Schwab, Peter. Decision-Making in Ethiopia. London, 1972.
- Smith, A. Donaldson. Through Unknown African Countries. London, 1897.
- Ståhl, Michael. Ethiopia, Political Contradictions in Agricultural Development. Uppsala, 1974.
- Stigand, C. H. To Abyssinia Through an Unknown Land. Philadelphia, 1910.

- Taddesse Tamrat. Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527. Oxford, 1972.
- Vanderheyem, J. G. Un Expédition avec le Négous Ménelik. Paris, 1896.
- Vannutelli, L. and Citeri, C. L'Omo, Viaggio d'Esplorazione nell'Africa Orientale. Milan, 1899.
- Walker, C. H. The Abyssinian at Home. London, 1933.
- Wellby, M. S. (Capt.) Twixt Sirdar and Menelik. New York, 1901.
- Wolff, Richard. The Economics of Colonialism: Britain and Kenya, 1870-1930. New Haven, 1974.
- Zervos, Adrien. L'Empire d'Éthiopie. Athens, 1936.
- Zewde Gabre-Sellassie. Yohannis IV of Ethiopia. Oxford, 1975.

Articles

- Abir, Mordecai. "Origins of the Ethiopian-Egyptian Border Problem in the Nineteenth Century." Journal of African History, VIII, 3 (1967), 443-61.
- . "Southern Ethiopia." In Pre-Colonial African Trade. Edited by R. Gray and D. Birmingham. London, 1970, pp. 119-37.
- Akalou Wolde Mikael. "Urban Development in Ethiopia (1889-1925): Early Phase." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, XI, 1 (1973), 1-16.
- Bairu, Tafla. "Four Ethiopian Biographies." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, VII, 2 (1969), 1-31.
- . "Some Aspects of Land-Tenure and Taxation in Sälale under Ras Darge, 1871-1900." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, XII, 2 (1974), 1-9.
- Barth, Fredrik. "Introduction." In Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. Edited by the author. Boston, 1969, pp. 9-38.
- Bender, M. Lionel. "The Languages of Ethiopia: A New Lexicostatistic Classification and Some Problems of Diffusion." Anthropological Linguistics, XIII, 5 (1971), 165-288.

- Bernardin, F. "Province de Harar, le Dedjaz Baltcha." Le Semeur d'Ethiopie, V (June 1909), 606-12.
- Bouçoiran, M. "La Situation Économique de l'Éthiopie." Renseignements Coloniaux et Documents (1918), 177-210.
- Caulk, Richard A. "The Occupation of Harar: January 1887." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 1-19.
- Cavendish, H. S. H. "Through Somaliland and Around and South of Lake Rudolf." Geographical Journal, XI, 4 (1898), 372-96.
- Ciferri, Raffaele. "Problemi del Caffé nell'Africa Orientale Italiana." L'Agricoltura Coloniale, XXXIV (1940), 135-44.
- Colli di Felizzano, G. "Nei Paesi Galla a sud dello Scioa." Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, XLII (1905), 8-18; 100-18.
- Crummey, Donald. "The Violence of Tewodros." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 107-25.
- Deherain, Henri. "Les Katamas dan les Provinces Méridionales de l'Abyssinie pendant le Règne de l'Empereur Ménélik." Bulletin, Ministère de l'Instruction Publique et des Beaux-Arts, XXIX (1914), 225-41.
- Ellis, Gene. "The Feudal Paradigm as a Hindrance to Understanding Ethiopia." Journal of Modern African Studies, XIV, 2 (1976), 275-95.
- Erlanger, Carlo (Freiherr von). "Meine Reise durch Süd-Schoa, Galla und die Somali Länder." Verhandlungen der Abteilung Berlin-Charlottenburg der Deutschen Kolonial Gesellschaft, VI, 3 (1901-02), 54-77.
- . "Über die Reise von Carlo Frhr. v. Erlanger in den Galla Ländern." Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde, XXVIII (Berlin, 1901), 240-48.
- "Fait Divers." Le Semeur d'Ethiopie. Harar, 1907-11.
- Fusella, Luigi. "Il Dagmawi Menilek di Afawarq Gabra Iyasus." Rassegna di Studi Etiopici, XVII (1961), 11-44.
- Gebrewold Ingida Work. "Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure." Ethiopia Observer, V, 4 (1962), 302-39.

- Giaccardi, Alberto. "Le Origini delle Colonizzazione Abissina nell'Etiopia Occidentale." Annali dell'Africa Italiana, II, 1 (1939), 183-94.
- _____. "Le Popolazioni del Borana e del Sidamo." Rivista delle Colonie, XVI (1937), 1549-63.
- Guidi, Guido. "Nel Sidamo Orientale." Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, Series 7, IV (1939), 372-84.
- Hamer, John H. "Sidamo Generational Class Cycles: A Political Gerontocracy." Africa, XL, 1 (London, 1970), 50-72.
- Harrison, James J. "A Journey from Zeila to Lake Rudolf." Geographical Journal, XVIII (1901), 258-75.
- Henin, H. "Éthiopie." Recueil Consulaire Belge, CXXXVIII (1907), 71-196.
- Hess, Robert L. "The 'Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia." Journal of African History, V, 3 (1969), 415-33.
- Hoben, Allan. "Family, Land, and Class in Northwest Europe and Northern Highland Ethiopia." In Proceedings of the United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies. 1st. East Lansing, 1973, pp. 157-70.
- Hodson, Arnold W. "Southern Abyssinia." Geographical Journal, LIII, 2 (1919), 65-83.
- Hudson, Grover. "Highland East Cushitic." In The Non-Semitic Languages of Ethiopia. Edited by M. Lionel Bender. East Lansing, 1976, pp. 232-77.
- "Itteguie Taitou." Le Semeur d'Ethiopie, III (July, 1907), 225-26.
- Jackson, J. T. "Periodic Markets in Southern Ethiopia." Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, LIII, 2 (1971), 31-41.
- Keefer, Edward C. "Great Britain and Ethiopia, 1897-1910: Competition for Empire." International Journal of African Historical Studies, VI, 3 (1973), 468-74.
- Knutsson, Karl Eric. "Dichotomization and Integration: Aspects of Inter-Ethnic Relations in Southern Ethiopia." In Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. Edited by Fredrik Barth. Boston, 1969, pp. 86-100.

- Latham, Hubert. "Au Sidamo et chez les Gallas Aroussi." La Géographie, XXVI, 1 (1912), 1-6.
- Leontieff, N. (Comte de). "Explorations des Provinces Équatoriales d'Abyssinie." La Géographie, II (1900), 105-18.
- Lucca, Luigi. "La Spedizione Ruspoli." L'Esplorazione Commerciale, X (1895), 37-43, 65-72, 101-04, 131-37, 164-68, 228-30, 262-68.
- Luchsinger, J. R. "Von Schoa zum Stefaniesee und zu den Borangalla." Jahresbericht der Geograph-Ethnographischen Gesellschaft (Zürich, 1906-7), 75-101.
- Maass, Edgar. "Eine Reise durch das Südebessinische Seengebiet." Mitteilungen der Geographische Gesellschaft, XLVII (Hamburg, 1941), 367-91.
- Mahteme Selaisse Wolde Maskal (Balambaras). "The Land System of Ethiopia." Ethiopia Observer, I, 9 (1957), 283-301.
- _____. "Ye Etiopia Bahil Tinat." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, VII, 2 (1969), 199-303.
- "Man of the Year." Time, XXVII (January 6, 1936), 13-17.
- Marcus, Harold G. "The Infrastructure of the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis: Haile Sellassie, the Solomonic Empire, and the World Economy, 1916-1936." Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies. 5th. Chicago, 1978, forthcoming.
- _____. "A Preliminary History of the Tripartite Treaty of December 13, 1906." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, II, 2 (1964), 21-40.
- _____. "Some Reflections on the Development of Government and Taxation in Southern Ethiopia Around the Turn of the Century." Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies. 4th. Rome, 1972, pp. 633-40.
- Moreno, Martino Mario. "Il Regime Terriero Abissino nell Galla-Sidama." Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, X (1937), 1496-1508.
- Negaso Gidada with Donald Crummey. "The Introduction and Expansion of Orthodox Christianity in Qelem Awraja, Western Wallaga, from about 1886-1914." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, X, 1 (1972), 103-12.

- Neumann, Oscar. "From the Somali Coast through Southern Ethiopia to the Sudan." Journal of the Tyneside Geographical Society, XI, 1 (1903), 7-29.
- Pankhurst, Richard. "Ethiopian Tax Documents of the Early Twentieth Century." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, XI, 2 (1973), 157-66.
- _____. "The Great Ethiopian Famine of 1888-1892: A New Assessment." Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, XXI, 2 (1966), 95-124.
- _____. "Indian Trade with Ethiopia, the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, XIV, 3 (1974), 453-97.
- _____. "Misoneism and Innovation in Ethiopian History." Ethiopia Observer, VII (1964).
- Saitta, Achille. "Il Sistema Tributario del Vecchio Impero Abissino." Rassegna Economica dell'Africa Italiana, XXVII (1939), 282-89.
- Selinus, Ruth et al. "Dietary Studies in Ethiopia: III. Dietary Patterns among the Sidamo Ethnic Group." Acta Societas Medicorum Upsaliensis, LXXVI, 3-4 (1971), 158-78.
- Simone, Ed. "The Amhara Military Expeditions Against the Shāwa Galla (1800-1850): A Reappraisal." In Proceedings of the United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies. 1st. East Lansing, 1973, pp. 135-41.
- Smeds, Helmar. "The Ensete Planting Culture of Eastern Sidamo, Ethiopia." Acta Geographica, XIII, 4 (1955), 1-39.
- Southard, Addison E. "The Story of Abyssinia's Coffees." Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, XXXIV (1918), 212-15; 324-29.
- Spaletta, A. "Il Caffé nell'Abissinia." L'Agricoltura Coloniale, XI (1917), 7-88, 111-32, 196-222, 284-97.
- Stanley, S. "Ensete in the Ethiopian Economy." Ethiopian Geographical Journal, IV, 1 (1966), 30-37.
- _____. "The Political System of Sidama." Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies. 3rd. Addis Ababa, 1966, III, pp. 215-28.

- Stitz, Volker. "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shoa During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." Rural Africana, XI (1970), 70-81.
- Sylvain, Pierre G. "Ethiopian Coffee--Its Significance to World Coffee Problems." Economic Botany, XII (1958), 111-39.
- Taye Bezuneh and Asrat Feleke. "The Production and Utilization of the Genus Ensete in Ethiopia." Economic Botany, XX, 1 (1966), 65-70.
- Traversi, L. "Informazioni Geografiche dallo Scioa." Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana, XXXI (1894), 390-93.
- Tsehai Berhaneselassie. "The Life and Career of Dejazmaç Balça Aba Näfso." Journal of Ethiopian Studies, IX, 2 (1971), 173-89.
- Turton, E. R. "The Impact of Mohammad Abdille Hassan in the East African Protectorate." Journal of African History, X, 4 (1969), 641-57.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis." Comparative Studies in Society and History, XVI, 4 (1974), 387-415.
- Wellby, M. S. (Capt.). "King Menelek's Dominions and the Country Between Lake Gallop (Rudolf) and the Nile Valley." Geographical Journal, XVI (1900), 292-306.

Unpublished Sources
(Theses, Papers, Miscellaneous)

- Alemayehu Mekonnen. "The Cultivation of Enset in Ethiopia." B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1967.
- Asres Kokebie. "A Regional Study of Gerbicho." B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968.
- Bailey, Alfred M. "Journal of the 1926-7 Abyssinian Expedition." Library, Field Museum, Chicago, mimeo.
- Baxter, P. T. W. "The Social Organization of the Galla of North Kenya." Ph.D. thesis, Lincoln College, Oxford, 1954.

- Blackhurst, Hector. "A Community of Shoa Galla Settlers in Southern Ethiopia." Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester, 1974.
- "Correspondence of the White-Coates Abyssinian Expedition (1928-31)." Registrar, Field Museum, Chicago.
- Digest of Old Ethiopian Judgments. Vol. I. Law Library, Addis Ababa University, n.d., mimeo.
- Eshetu Yimer. "Land Use Study in Hanasho (Sidamo)." B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1972.
- Fantaye Berek. "The Production and Consumption of Enset in Sidama." B.A. thesis, Department of Geography, Addis Ababa University, 1968.
- Getachew Kelemu. "The Internal History of the Aleta Sidanchos." B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1970.
- Hamer, John H. "Cultural Diversity and National Integration in Ethiopia: The Sidamo Case." Paper presented at the Symposium of the African Studies Association, October, 1966, mimeo.
- Hinnant, John. "The Gada System of the Guji of Southern Ethiopia." Ph.D. thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1977.
- Marcus, Harold G. "T'sehai Negus (Sun King)." Paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, 5th, Nice, 1977.
- Mude, Kenneth A. "A History of the Amaro Burji." B.A. thesis, Department of History, University College, Nairobi, 1968, mimeo.
- Pankhurst, Richard. "The History of Šāwan Towns from the Rise of Menilek to the Founding of Addis Ababa." Paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, 5th, Nice, 1977, mimeo.
- Shibru Tekle Giorgis (Trans.). "Compilation and Translation of Ethiopian Government Land Grant Orders." Law Library, Addis Ababa University, 1969, mimeo.
- Singer, Norman J. "Governmental Recognition of Non-Governmental Laws and Legal Institutions in Ethiopia." Law Library, Addis Ababa University, n.d., mimeo.

- _____. "The Relevance of Traditional Legal Systems to Modernization and Reform: A Consideration of Cambata Legal Structure." Paper delivered at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, 5th, Nice, 1977.
- Stitz, Volker. "Distribution and Foundation of Churches in Ethiopia." Paper presented at the Historical Society of Ethiopia Conference, Addis Ababa, 1973, mimeo.
- Teketel Haile Mariam. "The Production, Marketing, and Economic Impact of Coffee in Ethiopia." Ph.D. thesis, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1973.
- Teleki, Samuel (Count). "East African Diaries, 1888." Translated by Charles and Vera Teleki. Manuscript, Michigan State University Library.
- Triulzi, Alessandro. "Social Protest and Rebellion in Some Gäbbar Songs from Qélläm, Wällägga." Paper presented at the International Conference on Ethiopian Studies, 5th, Nice, 1977.
- Tsehai Berhaneselassie. "Menelik II: The Conquest and Consolidation of the Southern Provinces." B.A. thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1969.
- Wedekind, Klaus. "Gedeo Work Songs and Their Musicological, Linguistic and Sociological Context." Working paper, mimeo.
- Wood, A. P. "Migration and Settlement in the Forest Fringe, Illubabor Province, Ethiopia." African Population Mobility Project. Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, 1975, mimeo.

