



**SCHOOL OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENTS OF HISTORY AND HERITAGE**

**MANAGEMENT**

**A HISTORY OF PATRIOTIC RESISTANCE IN MÄRHABÉTÉ**

**AREA, 1936-1941.**

**BY: TSEGAYE GENET AYELE**

**DECEMBER, 2021**

**JIMMA, ETHIOPIA**

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**BY**

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**1936-1941.**

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## **LISTS OF ACRONYM**

- NALA -Ethiopian National Archival and Library Agency.
- EOTC-Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church.
- IES-Institute of Ethiopian Studies.
- MS -Manuscript.

## GLOSSARY

*Abba* – title Father, used particularly for monks.

*Abéto* - a medieval title which came to be increasingly appropriated by Shāwan rulers after the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

*Abun*- bishop, the highest ecclesiastical title of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

*Afa-negus*-mouth of the king, chief justice.

*Agafari* – title superintendent of banquets.

*Ato* – the title is equivalent to Mr.

*Askaris*- (Swahili), colonial Soldier.

*Awuraja*- an administrative unit below the level of province

*Azzaž* – Commander in Chief of the imperial court.

*Balabat*- hereditary landowner.

*Balambaras* - head of an Amba.

*Banda*-Ethiopian collaborators or soldiers fighting for the Italians.

*Basā*- military title-derived from Turkish, Pasha

*Blatta* - the highest political title was given by the king, equivalent to *Balambaras*

*Blattén geta*- The chief commander of the palace, Master of the *Blatta*

*Dājazmač* - commander of the gate or the military title below *Ras*

*Fitawrari*- The general of the vanguard, commander of the vanguard.

*Gerazmač* - The commander of the left military wing ranks below *Fitawrari*.

*Lej* - child, honorific title generally reserved for sons of the royal family and of the upper nobility.

*Qāññazmač* –military title-The commander of the right military wing.

*Qafir*, -a guard who informed the patriots about the approach of an enemy.

*Qés*- title priest.

*Ras*- the second-highest rank next to *Negus*.

*Šālāqa* - the chief of the thousands.

*Sheikh* - The leader of the Muslim community, family village.

*Šefta*- bandit.

*Wārāda* – administrative unit below *awrajja*.

*Woizero*-title equivalent to Mrs.

*Yāktāt Awaji*- Mobilization order

*Zāmāča* – campaign.



## KEY TO TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

**I-The seven sounds of Ethiopia alphabets are represented as follows**

Value	Symbol	Symbol
1 <sup>st</sup>	Ä	ጠ=Bä
2 <sup>nd</sup>	U	ጠፋ=BU
3 <sup>rd</sup>	I	ጠፊ=Bi
4 <sup>th</sup>	A	ጠፈ=Ba
5 <sup>th</sup>	É	ጠፎ=Bé
6 <sup>th</sup>	E	ጠፈፈ=Be
7 <sup>th</sup>	O	ጠፊፊ=Bo

**II- Palatalized sounds are represented as follows**

Symbol	Example
፺=Šä	ተሻሻሎ=Täšomä
፻=Čä	ቸርነት=Čärnät
ኘ=Nä	ዳኘ=Danä
፸=Jä	ደጃዝማች=Däjjazmač

**III-Gluttonized sounds are represented as follows**

Symbol	Example
m=Ṭä	ጠረጣጠር=Tarmabär
φ=Q	ቀበሌ=Qäbälé
ጨ=Ĉä	ቅቃሹም=Ĉiqašum
θ=Ş	ፀጋዬ=Şägayq

### V. Germination sounds always are written in the following way

Example
ተሰማ = Tässäma
ዘገየ = Zäggäyä

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## PREFACE

This thesis attempts to reconstruct A History of Patriotic Resistance in Märhábété Area 1936-1941. The period is delimited with two major historical themes; the Italian invasion and the Liberation of Ethiopia. The thesis has four chapters. The first chapter focuses on the introductory part, which consists of the geographical and historical background of Märhábété, historical overview of Italo-Ethiopian relations, and the backgrounds of the second Italo-Ethiopian war. The second chapter emphasizes the Italian occupation of North Šäwä in general and the Italian occupation of Märhábété in particular, the birth of resistance groups in Märhábété, the Coordination of patriots of Märhábété with neighboring devoted leaders, the different battlefield fought between the patriots and the Italians, emasculation of inhabitants in Märhabété by fascist, genocide committed by Italy in Amäšäñä Waša and the drooping of poison gas in Märhabété. The third chapter deals with organization and leaders of the resistance, Inner patriots, the role of women, the challenges of the patriots during the resistance in the Märhábété area. The last chapter emphasis on the liberation of Märhabété and the effects of the war: the return of the emperor, the evacuation of Italians from Märhabété, the liberation of Märhábété area, the impacts of the occupation on the local population, The establishment of Ethiopian Patriotic Association and the rewards of the patriots after Independence.

In conducting this work, I used primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are collected from various archival centers such as the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES), the National Archives, and Library Agency (NALA), North Šäwa Ancient Patriot Association Office, and Addis Ababa University Libraries. I have interviewed the informants between January to April 2021, to collect genuine information. Necessary efforts were made in selecting appropriate informants, evaluating their information carefully, and checking up the information given by my informants with the archives and secondary sources. The secondary sources were collected from Addis Ababa University and Debre Berhan University as well as in the Märhabété Wäräda Public Library.

I have faced challenges while conducting this thesis. There is no archives center especially in the study area and Debre Berhan. Changes in the government of 1974 and 1991 had the greatest role in the destruction of the archives. As the head of the Ancient Heroes Association told me, the military government burnt the documents that existed in the center. The Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front too destroyed the file document as soon as the seizure of the city. The inability of the informants to put the exact themes and periods was

another challenge that I have faced. The most necessary accounts of the study area had been written in non – English or Amharic languages. Regarding the Amharic names, places, and titles I have used the transliteration system. Although this work is far from being complete, it is hoped that it can initiate and give a clue to other historians who have the interest to study the history of the patriotic resistance in the study area further.

## ABSTRACT

*This thesis deals with a history of patriotic Resistance in Märhábété, 1936-1941. The objective of this thesis is to reconstruct a history of the patriotic resistance against the Italians in Märhábete area. In this regard, the thesis analyzes the births of the resistance groups, natures of the resistance, challenges of the resistance and legacy of the Italian rule on the people of merhabete area. In the reconstructing the history of the resistance of the area under consideration archives have been used from National Archives and Library Agency, Addis Ababa University, institutes of Ethiopian study, Jimma Universty. These have been further substantiated and counter-checked by secondary materials and interviews made in Märhábete areas.*

*In the thesis historical research and historiography research approach implemented. Documented the history of the patriotic resistance in Märhábété, provide a better understanding about the sacrifices made by the people of Märhábete to eliminate the fascist Italians, identify the patriotic leaders and their coordination with neighboring district patriots, the role of women, and the role of inner patriots, the collaborators, the foreign support, and the liberation of Ethiopia. The study stimulates other researchers to construct history of patriotic resistance in different areas that their history did not well document. It will serve as a background for further studies on the same topic since the available of references in the country is a serious problem, was the findings of this Thesis.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL BACKGROUND

### 1.1. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA

Getting sufficient information regarding the geographical setting of places and events is crucial for such historical research. It is, thus, crucial to provide readers of my thesis an overview of the geographical and historical background of the area under study.

Märhabété is one of the 24 rural *wäräda* of North Šäwa zone in Amhara Regional State.<sup>1</sup> The administrative center for Märhabété *wäräda* is Aläm Kätäma town; which is, 189 Kilo Meter far from Northwest of Addis Ababa (National capital), 589 Kilometer far from Bahir Dar city the regional capital, of the Amhara region and 142 Kilometer km, away from Debre Berhan, the capital of North Šäwa zone, to the west.<sup>2</sup>

It is located astronomically in between 9° 50'-10° 10' N, longitude and 38° 42'- 39° 20' E latitude.<sup>3</sup> Märhabété is bordered on the south by Ensaro *wäräda* where the Jäma river acts a boundary, on the west by the Därra *wäräda*, on the north by Midda Wäramo *wäräda*, which separates it by Wonçit river,<sup>4</sup> on the south east by Morätña Jirru and also bounded by the Jäma river and on the east by Mänz Qäya Gäbrél *wäräda*.<sup>5</sup>

Based on figures published by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia in 2007, the territorial extension of Märhabété *Wäräda* was estimated to be 115,960 hectare / 1,121 square kilometers. As a result, it is one of the largest *Wäräda* in the North Šäwa zone.<sup>6</sup> The *Wäräda* in general is composed of Twenty Three *Qäbälés*, out of which Twenty One are rural *Qäbälés* while the rest two *qäbälés* are urban. According to the oral and written accounts, the

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<sup>1</sup> “Bä Amara Kelelawi Mängest plan enna Economi Lemat Béro, “Yä Sämen Shewa Mästäädäder Zone Yä plan enna Economy, Yä Sämen shewa Zone Atäqalay Gašta 1997-2002”,( Bahir Dar, Mäskäräm,1997 E.C),p.74; ANRS North Shewa zone Märhabété Woräda Cultural Tourism Office. A letter written from Tourism Promotion Officer to North Shewa Zone cultural Tourism Office, dated 24/09/2004 E.C. in file no.መወከ/154/2004 file title leaflets document.

<sup>2</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda Mängest* Communication *Gudayoç* bulletin 2004, no. መወከ/ሀ-1/933/04, p.1; *Märe Mäshét*.1996, P.26; “Fana Märhabété Yä Neged Tiretña Bazar”, 2001.p.1

<sup>3</sup> Käfäläñe Čarnet, “the Impacts of climate change and variability on rural livelihoods and Community responses in Märhabété *Wäräda*, North Šäwa zone, Amhara region, Ethiopia”, (MSC, in Geography and Environmental studies, Debre Berhan University, 2020), p.28; .Märhabété *Wäräda* Communication Affairs Office Bulletin, 2003E.C, P.4.

<sup>4</sup>Wänçet River is a 160 km long sub tributary of the Abbay River. It springs up at more than 3,000 M A.S.L. on the northern slopes of Mount Abuyä Meda in the South-Wällo zone of Amhara kállél

<sup>5</sup> *Yä Märhabété Wäräda* Communication *Biro* Report, 2002.E.C. No. መወከ/4864/02, p.9; Märhabété Yä Neged Tiretña Bazar”, 2001, p.3

<sup>6</sup> Central Statistical Agency. Population and Housing Census Ethiopia, Addis Ababa: NP, 2007; *Ibid*, p.2.

rural *Qäbälés* in Märhäbété *Wäräda* were, Goranda Mariyam Särka, Kusayé Çäfé, Buyo Gädäjäwa Wärkamba Rämäšet, Gedäb Wärago , Agärit Qumamba, Koso Ṭärähna, Sese Amba , Zäyita Magas , Särgena , Korra Wänçit , Jäma Nunuta, Gäw Märgäzhe, Ambat, Korra Tamo, Gerét, Ofna Sebiwaša, Lejiagba Amdän, Géb Zämoy, Däläma Anšäbägul, Afäzäz Bäreqato, Gären, Yedämäqo Märehäzhe, Harogända Säbagé.<sup>7</sup> Aläm Kätäma and Fétra are regarded as small towns in the *Wäräda*.<sup>8</sup>

The year 1941 saw the expulsion of the Italian Fascist government from Ethiopia and the restoration of Emperor Haile Selassie I to power. These were followed by a revival of the centralization drive in the country. To realize this objective, the Emperor issued a series of decrees and proclamations beginning in 1942 to reorganize the government.<sup>9</sup>

As part of the centralization project, the central state sought to establish a uniform local administration system throughout the country. The Haile Selassie government wanted to increase its presence in the peripheries; thus, all governors were centrally appointed. The 1942 decree was the foundation for local administration in the period 1941-1974.<sup>10</sup> Hence, the empire was reorganized and divided into *Ṭäqlay Gizats* (general-Governorate), Sub-Provinces (*Awrajjas*), *Wärädas* and *Meketel Wärädas*. The Šäwa *Ṭäqlay Gizat* (General Governorate) had eleven *awrajjas* of Ethiopia. These *awrajjas* were Männagäša, Märhabété, Mänzena-Gešä, Yifatina-Temuga, Tägülätäna-Bulga, Hayqočäna-Butajira, Kämбатаena-Hadya, Yärärena-Kärryyn, Jibatina-Méça, and Salale.<sup>11</sup> Addis Ababa was the administrative centre of the General Governorate.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Yä Märhäbété Wäräda* Communication *Biro* Report, 2002.E.C. No. መወከ/4864/02, p.9; Märhabété Yä Neged Tireña Bazar”, 2001, p.3.

<sup>8</sup> Tewodros Ayele, “A History of Aläm Kätäma Town (1941-1991)” (BA, Department of History, Dessie: Wollo University, 2005), p.11; Informants: Awulačäw Gäbrämariam, Ashiné Ayäle.

<sup>9</sup> Alberto Sbacchi, *Ethiopia Under Mussolini; Fascism and Colonial Experience* (London: Zed books, 1985), pp. 212-213; Markakis, p. 119; Donald Crummy, *Land and Society in the Christian Highland Kingdom of Ethiopia from the 13th to 20th Centuries* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), pp. 234-235.

<sup>10</sup> John Markakis, *Ethiopia: Anatomy of Traditional Polity*, (Oxford: Oxford University press, 1974), p. 119; Crummey, 2000, pp. 234 – 237.

<sup>11</sup> Yä Šäwa Keflä Hagär Selä Hagär *Deledel*, NALA. Folder No. 17.1.3. File No.53.03; Alain, Gascon, “Šäwa, Ethiopia's Prussia: Its Expansion, Disappearance and Partition”, (*In: Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim, 2009), p.91; Märe Mäşehét, 1996, p.24

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*



The territory of the former Märhabété *awurajja* was included the present-day the *Wärädas*. These were Lay Bét, Tač Bét, Midda, Därra, Wäramo Wajitu, and Bita-Billo.<sup>13</sup> During this Time, Märhabété began to be called Korra *Wäräda*. However, because of the demands of the people to change the names of the *Wäräda* as Lay Bét (upper house) and Tače Bét (lower house) Merhabete *Wäräda* administration. During that time, the center of the *Wäräda* was Korra. However, because of the demands of people, the center of the *Wäräda* shifted from Korra to Zoma then to Offina. Finally, Aläm Kätäma has become the center of the *awurajja*.<sup>14</sup> According to the 1987 administrative reforms, Šäwa was divided into four regions; Addis Ababa, west Šäwa (capital Woliso), South Šäwa (capital, Zäway), North Šäwa (capital Däbräberhan). At present, the former regions of Šäwa are divided in to West Šäwa (capital Ambo), North West Šäwa (capital Fičé) and East Šäwa (capital, Adama Nazrét) as part of the Oromia and North Šäwa (capital, Däbrä Berhan) as one of the zones in the Amhara region.<sup>15</sup> Under this administrative reform, the former parts of Märhabété *awurajja*, merged Bita Biläw with Jämma *Wäräda* in South Wällo, while Därra *Wäräda* was transferred to the Oromia region.<sup>16</sup> At present, Märhabété included the two former *Wärädas* namely, Lay Bét and Tač Bét Märhabété *Wärädas*.<sup>17</sup> The *Wäräda* became one of the 24 rural *wärädas* of the North Šäwa zone.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dächasa Abäbä, “The Peopling of Morät and Märhabété C. 1700-1889” (MA Thesis in History, Addis Ababa University, 2003), p.2. ; Märe Mäšehét, 1996, p.13; Informants: Tämtm Wändmagañ, Wändafraš Ayälä.

<sup>14</sup> Informants: Ašagré Kerämté, Amha Abära, Abära Bäyänä

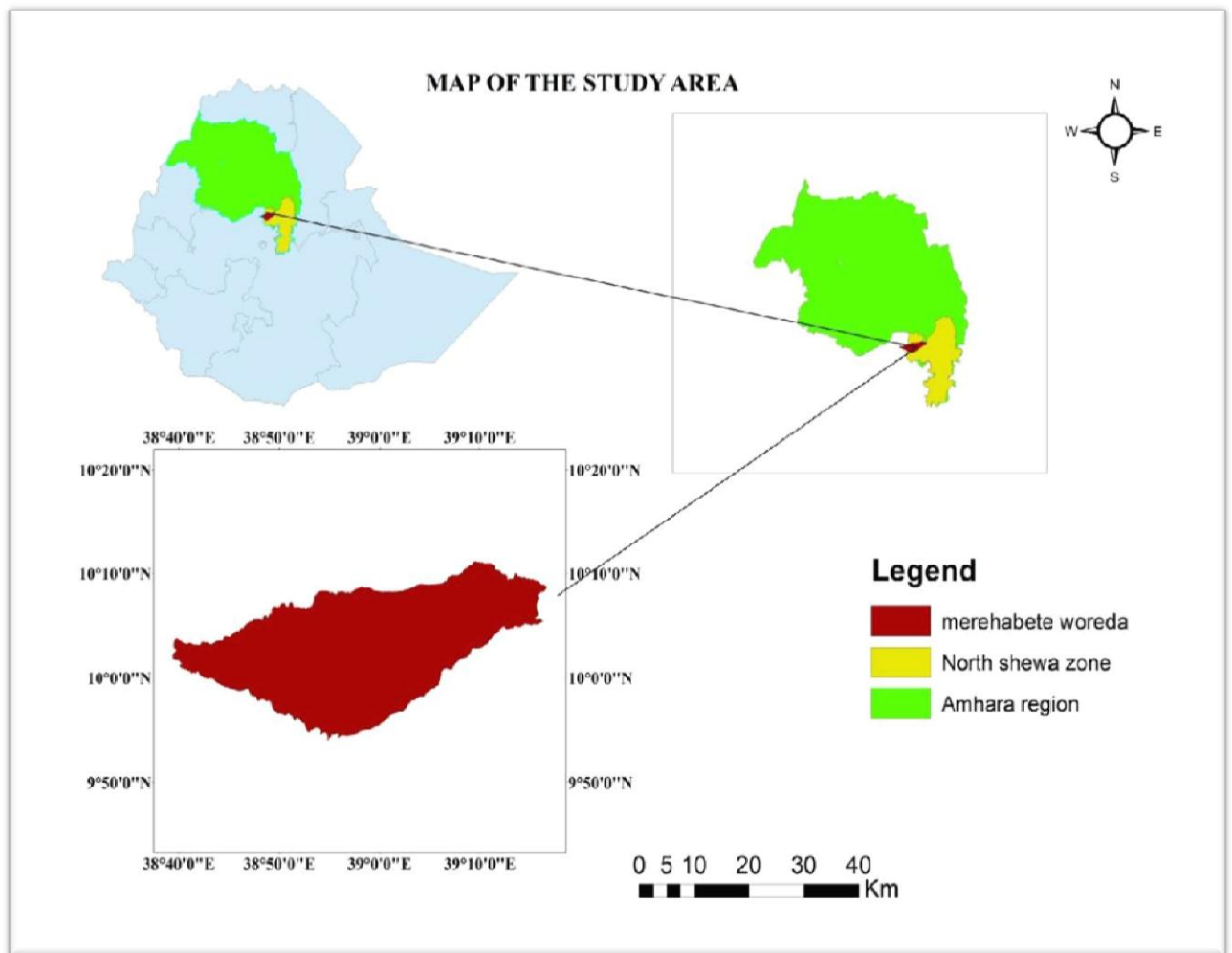
<sup>15</sup> Alian Gascon, Shawa, Ethiopian Prussia. Its Expansion, Disappearance, and Partition. *In: proceedings of the 16th International Conferences of Ethiopian studies*, Ed. By Svein Ege, Harold Aspen Birhanu Tefera and Shiferaw Bekele, Trondheim, 2009, P. 87

<sup>16</sup> Informants: Ašagré, Amäha, Abära.

<sup>17</sup> The *Wäräda* Administration Office of Annual Reports, 2004 E.C,P.2; “The Märhabété *Wäräda* Communication Affairs Office Bulletin”...P.2; “Bä Amara Kelelawi Mängest plan enna Economi Lemat Béro, “Yä Sämen Šäwa Mästädäder Zone Yä plan enna Economy, Yä Sämen shewa Zone Aṭaqalay Gašta 1997-2002”,( Bahir Dar, Mäskäräm,1997 E.C),p.74;Informants: Awulačäw Gäbrämarian, Ashiné Ayäle.

<sup>18</sup> The *Wäräda* Administration Office of Annual Reports, 2004 E.C,P.4.

**Map-1: The location maps of the study area**



**Source:** Adapted from GIS, 2017.

The Biophysical conditions of the *Wäräda* are characterized by highly mountainous, dissected, and terrain nature; dominated by lots of ups and downs with slopes ranging steep to almost flat. A considerable range (60%) of the area has rugged mountainous and undulating slopes in nature. Only 20% of the area is plain.<sup>19</sup> According to the *Wäräda* development office, 40% of the land is characterized by hills, 20% as mountainous, 15% as gorge, 20% as plain, and 5% others. These figures could show us that *Wäräda* is rugged and mountainous.<sup>20</sup> Its elevation ranges from 1300 to 3200 meters. The agro-ecological zone of the *Wäräda* is classified into three traditionally categorized groups: - Wäyna-Däga, which accounts for 70 percent of the area coverage, Däga, which covers 6 percent of the *Wäräda* and Qola, covers

<sup>19</sup> The Rural and Agricultural Office Annual Report, 2003 E.C, P.5; “The *Wäräda* Administration Office Annual Reports”, 2005E.C, P.2.

<sup>20</sup>Märhäbété *Wäräda* Agricultural development office; Hana Awuraris, “Some Aspects of the History of Alām Kätäma Town”, (BA Thesis, Dilla University, June 2018), p.2; Märhäbété *Wäräda* Mängest Communication *Gudayoç* bulletin.2004.No.መወከት/1/933/04.p.5.

24 percent of the *Wäräda* area.<sup>21</sup> There are three seasons in *Wäräda*. These include the dry season (*Bäga* from October to February), the big rainy season (*Kerämt* from June to September), and the small rainy season (*Bälg* from March to May). Märhäbété receives its rainfall from the two seasons *Kerämt* and *Bälg*. The average rainfall of the *Wäräda* ranges between 700-1200 millimeter meters per annum.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, the temperature of the *Wäräda* varies from place to place due to the altitudinal effect. The mean annual range of temperature is higher for *qäbälés* or places along with lower altitude and gorges of the two rivers *Jäma* and *Wänçet*. However, the average temperature of the *Wäräda* ranges from 14.4°C to 23°C.<sup>23</sup>

According to Märhäbété *Wäräda* agricultural development plan, the major soil types in Märhäbété *Wäräda* are red, brown, and black; constitutes about 15%, 75%, and 8% of the total area respectively. The remaining 2% of the area is covered with gray soil. Brown soils are the dominant soil type in the area.<sup>24</sup>

According to the information obtained from Märhäbété *Wäräda* Gebrena Enna Gätar Lemat Şefat Bét, the land use system of the area shows the following pattern. Out of the estimated total land area of 99,540 hectares; 42,089 hectares (42%) is cultivated land, 3,151 hectares (3%) is used for grazing, 32,947 hectares (33%) is covered with natural forest and shrubs, 6,700 hectares (7%) is allocated for residential and infrastructure development, and 14,653 hectare (15%) is not suitable for any economical purpose.<sup>25</sup> There are two perennial rivers, *Jäma*, and *Wänçet* drain toward (Blue Nile) Abay River all year. The rest are seasonal and intermittent. There are also some one hundred sixty springs, which are suitable sources of drinking water, and eighteen springs are suitable for small irrigation schemes.<sup>26</sup>

According to the *Wäräda* water and energy office, thirty-eight springs that were used for drinking water are shrivel/died within the last ten years. Patterns of vegetation of the area

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Märhäbété *Wäräda* Mängest Communication *Gudayoç* bulletin 2004, no. መወከራ/ሀ-1/933/04, p.1; *Märe Mäşhét*.1996, P.26; “Fana Märhabété Yä Neged Tireña Bazar”, 2001.p.1

<sup>23</sup> Tewodros Ayele, “A History of Aläm Kätäma Town (1941-1991)” (BA, Department of History, Dessie: Wollo University, 2005), p.11.

<sup>24</sup> Märhäbété *Wäräda* Agricultural Development Plan Bulletin, 2002 E.C, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> Märhäbété *Wäräda* Gebrena enna Gätar Lemat Şefat Bét, *Yä ekstenşen Yä Sera Hidät Hebrätäsäb Čeger Fäçi Dasäsa Ţenat* Report,” (Miyazya, 2000 E.C), pp. 2-4

<sup>26</sup>The Water and Irrigation Office Annual Report, 2006 E.C, P.2; “The Rural and Agricultural Office Annual Report”, 2005 E.C, P.4

vary with the agroecology zone. The types of vegetation in the area include Wanza, Omedila, Grevillea, Gäba, Šäfaré, Šefäraw, Ṭed, Acacia, Shrubs, and Eucalyptus plantations.<sup>27</sup>

However, their area coverage is very small due to deforestation and agricultural expansion except for eucalyptus trees, and remnants of natural forests found around the churches. The increasing demand for land, in turn, produced massive deforestation of forests. These areas had been used for crop cultivation. Deforestation resulted in the reoccurrence of drought in the region. There are building terraces in several areas and terrain of Märhäbété including steep slopes and ravine. These practices become common to preserve the natural balance of the environment.<sup>28</sup>

According to the 2007 population and housing census of Ethiopia, the total population number was elevated to 126, 501 persons. Of which 63,997 were Males and Females constitute 62,504.<sup>29</sup> From the total population of the *Wäräda*, 113,361 inhabited rural areas and 13,109 lived in urban areas.<sup>30</sup> Productive people include males 32,997 and females 33,029 mainly 66,026. The population density of the *Wäräda* was 134.1 persons per square kilometer. Compared to the zonal level population density (i.e. 134.4 persons/Km<sup>2</sup>), *Wäräda* has relatively the same figure. However, it is higher than the regional figure (i.e.120.1 persons/Km<sup>2</sup>).<sup>31</sup>

It also further states that Orthodox Christianity is the dominant religion of the population in the *Wäräda*.<sup>32</sup> Besides, Orthodox Christians Muslims and Protestants also live in the area, particularly in the town of Aläm Kätäma and Fétra. However, the local people did not see it as a difference and even arranged marriage to tie each other.<sup>33</sup>

Regarding the distribution of towns, schools, and health services, Märhabété has one *wäräda* town and one smaller town. According to the *wäräda* education office Märhabété has 53 schools, of which 49 primary, 3 secondary and 1 preparatory schools.<sup>34</sup> The Health Office

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Märhäbété *Wäräda* Agricultural Development Office Report 2008 E.C, p.12.

<sup>29</sup> Central Statistical Agency, Population and Housing Census Ethiopia, (Addis Ababa: NP, 2007), p.34.

<sup>30</sup> Central Statistical Authority, 2007 Census Result for Amhara Region: Summary and Statistical Report (Addis Ababa, 2008), p.62.

<sup>31</sup> Käfäläñe Čarnet,p.30.

<sup>32</sup> Märé *Mäšehét* issued in October 1996, p.15.

<sup>33</sup> Märé *Mäšehét*, 1996, p.13; Informants: Tämtme Wändmagägn, Wändafrašh Ayele.

<sup>34</sup> Märhäbété *Wäräda* Gebrena enna Gätar Lemat Šefat Bét, Yä ekstenšen Yä Sera Hidät Hebrätäsäb Čeger Fäči Dasäsa Tinat Report,” (Mizia, 2000 E.C), pp. 2-4

also indicates that Märhabété has one general hospital, 5 clinics and 23 health posts distributed in each *qäbälé*.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, the area has 21 veterinary posts with very limited functions.<sup>36</sup> Similar to other *Wärädas* in the north Šäwa administrative Zone, Märhabété is poor in terms of its infrastructure. The main infrastructure problem of the *Wäräda* is road transportation. All roads are limited to the town. Only the road that connects Aläm Kätäma to Däbräbirhan and Aläm Kätäma to Addis Ababa is well constructed. Other roads connecting different *Qäbälés* of the *Wäräda* are used only in the dry seasons.<sup>37</sup> The development of infrastructure in the area is low; the area has 84.21 km all-weather and 21.09 km seasonal roads, only used in winter. After 2009, *Wäräda* started using electric power and wireless phones.<sup>38</sup> The livelihood of the people in the district depends mainly on mixed farming (crop and livestock production). Crop production is entirely rain-fed, except in very specific and small areas where vegetables are cultivated based on traditional and small-scale irrigation. Dominantly growing crops in the study area include Sorghum, Wheat, Barley, Maize, Bean, Pea, Chickpea, Vetch, Linseed, Wool, Téff, Nug, Mašo, and Abeš.<sup>39</sup> Land preparation is carried on using mainly ox plowing but tilling by hand occurs in the hilly areas on steeply sloping lands. Recently crop productivity is very low as the result of climate variability, especially the absence of rainfall in the *bälg* season that helps crops need long growing seasons, like sorghum, late coming early withdrawal of rainfall at summer season, and unseasonal rainfall during harvesting time.<sup>40</sup>

In the case of trading activities, trade plays a pivotal role in the history of the people of Märhabété *Wäräda*.<sup>41</sup> The urban settlers of Aläm Kätäma and Fétra town are simply small-scale traders.<sup>42</sup> The other economic activity is handicraft technology. Various materials are produced and brought to markets that are held weekly. In the market pots, Jars, baskets, metal

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<sup>35</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda Mängest* Communication *Gudayoč* bulletin 2004, No. መወከገ/ሀ-1/933/04, p.1; *Märe Mäshét*.1996, P.26; “Fana Märhabété Yä Neged Tireña Bazar”, 2001.p.1

<sup>36</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda* Agricultural Development office report 1992 E.C, File .No.21, P.6.

<sup>37</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda* Communication Office report 2005 E.C, bulletin .No. 16. p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> Seläše Bäkälä, “The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Improving the Livelihoods of the Rural Communities: The case of Menschen Fur Menschen in Märhabété *Wäräda* of the Amhara National Regional State”, (MA, in development studies, Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, 2009), p. 52

<sup>39</sup> Nigus Gurmis Bälaynäh, Bosäna Tägägnä, Aläleñ Adämä, “Determinants of Smallholder Téff Producer Farmers Market Participation in Märhabété District, Amhara Region, Ethiopia,” *International Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2019, pp. 136.

<sup>40</sup> Käfäläñe, p.31.

<sup>41</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda* Agricultural Development office report, 2008. E.C, p.2.

<sup>42</sup> Märhabété *Wäräda* communication affairs report, October 2010 E.C, p.5.

tools like Plough, Knives, are bought, and sold. The subsistence agricultural economy had been supported by handicrafts. The most important handicraft technologies are pottery, metalwork, weaving, Basketry. The products are sold widely on Market day mainly on Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. These are some of the main duties of the community, which enabled them to gate cash income.<sup>43</sup>

Population growth, land scarcity and land degradation, low crop productivity, and lack of grazing land many people involve seasonal migration to Addis Ababa, Alām Kātāma, Mizan, Wāneje, and Wālqetē and in different parts of the country to subsidize their livelihoods through daily laborer and farming of contract lands from other nation.<sup>44</sup> There are different ways and styles in how people of the *Wārāda* build their houses. The most commonly used are circular houses made of stone and mud in isolated farms or small villages.<sup>45</sup> While in other areas of Ethiopia people built houses by using wood and mud. However, in the areas of Märhābētē houses of the rural area are built in stone. This is because of the existence of wind and shortages of wood. These houses can resist such climatic conditions in the area. Most of the time, these houses are built in the hilly area and farmlands. This is because of the peasants' desire for the search of dry areas and managing and controlling the farming and grazing lands of the surrounding area themselves and their cattle. Stone structures forming compounds surrounded the house or the village against human and natural dangers.<sup>46</sup> In such types of small settlements noticeable markets, rural community churches, and the traditional associations are important focal points for creating and maintaining social relations of the local community. These are important social organizations enabled to have coordination among the people, share their happiness, sorrow, and different things or ideas.<sup>47</sup>

Livestock plays an important role in the livelihood of the area. The most manifested problem of livestock production in the area is the shortage of grazing land and feed. The number of domestic animals found in the Märhābētē *Wārāda* includes Cattle (99,338), Sheep and Goats (71,585), and Poultry (670,427), Beehives (5,384).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*; Märhābētē *Wārāda* Agricultural Development office report 1992 E.C, File .No.21, P.6.

<sup>44</sup> Informants: Tämtme, Awulačāw, Dälälāñ

<sup>45</sup> Mahtāmā Silassiē Wäldāmāskäl. “*Yä Šāwa Tarik*”. Sene 12, 1946, IES, Ms, No. 2537(B)

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> Märhābētē *Wārāda* Culture and Tourism Office Report, January 2009 E.C, p.9; Informants: Awulačāw Gābrāmariam, Wändmagāñ Bālgū, and Negusē Ayälä.

<sup>48</sup> Märhābētē *Wārāda* Agricultural Development office report, 2008.E.C, p10; Informants: Abābā Gābru, Wagayä Mamo, Amāha Abāra.

Depletion of ground and surface water, land degradation, pest influx, and livestock diseases are among the other problems in the study area.<sup>49</sup> Among the commonly known diseases in the area are; Blackleg, Rinderpest (däseta), Anthrax (Abba Sängga), pasteurellosis, external and internal parasites that attack domestic animals in the area. Cow Dung is used as fuel because; there are shortages of wood in the region.<sup>50</sup>

Märhábété *Wäräda* has a number of natural heritages. From these; Abreham *Waša* (Abreham cave) and Kidanämehrät *Waša* (Kidanämehrät cave), *Aşé Waša* (*Aşé* cave) located in Zoma *Qäbälé*. Kidanämehrät *Waša* (Kidanämehrät cave) was between Abreham *Waša* and *Aşé Waša*, and served as a cover for arcs of covenant of Kidanämehrät during the fascist occupation. Reserved forest in *Abo Şäbäle* is some of the potential tourist attracting sites of *Märhábété Wäräda*.<sup>51</sup> Märhábété is also rich in cultural heritages, the largest part of cultural heritages associated with Christianity. When Christianity entered Ethiopia during the fourth century, many churches were built during the Aksumite Empire. The first churches were; Ofna Amanuél, Zämoy Gäbrä Mänfäs Kidus, Kora Mariam, Ṭärähna Kidist Mariam and Mażäqna Kidus Gäbrél. From these churches, the first three churches in Märhábété embrace a number of diverse heritages. There were also other churches, which were rich in heritages like; *Aşé Waša* Kidus Giyorgis, Anşäbägul Kedus Gäbrél, and Grét Egiziabhérah church.<sup>52</sup>

However, the *Wäräda* did not benefit much from the natural and man-made tourist attractions. Because; there are no standardized facilities like; transportation, road, hotels, and others, which could attract those who tour in the area. In addition, these tourist areas are not protected from man-made and natural challenges. Farmers and other individuals damage these tourist attractions (forest, drainage, and other resources) for their economic purpose without preserving these resources.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, p.6.

<sup>50</sup> Informants: Tämäsäläw Sälämon, Abäbä Gäberu, Amäha.

<sup>51</sup> Henok Seyum, "North Şäwa Tourism Directory" P.25; Informants: Ashine Ayele, Wondmagegn.

<sup>52</sup> Märhábété *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office Report, January 2009 E.C, P.9. Informants: Awulačäw, Wändmagañ, and Nigusé Ayälä.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*.

## 1.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

The name Märhabété originated from two geez words “Märhä” and “Bété”. The word “Märhä” refers to Lead, Instruct, and the word “Bête”, refers to house, home, or shelter.<sup>54</sup>

Hence, the name Märhabété referred to:

“መርተህ ወደ ቤቴ አስገባኝ”<sup>55</sup>

*You led me to my house*

As Aläqa Dästa Täklwold also wrote in the Amharic dictionary, Märhabété has become the name of the country.<sup>56</sup> The name Märhabété was given by Emperor Abrha-Wä-Aşbäha in 328 E.C. This Emperor after accepting Christianity at the beginning of Ethiopian Popes (Patriarch) Käsaté Berhan as *Abunä Sälama* has expanded Christianity. While they were expanding Christianity, they built churches in Märhabété. Among those Churches Ofna Kedus Amanuél Church was then known. During that time, when they observed the geographical site and environmental condition, they believed it was similar to that of the site of Axum from the beginning avenue to the end. Because of this, they called it Märhabété.<sup>57</sup>

Hence, Täkläşadiq Mäkuriya in his book, which is entitled *history of Ethiopia from Lebnä Dengl to Aşé Tewädros*, asserts the son of the Emperor Lebnä Dengl named *Abéto* Sebisté quarreled with his brothers and went to sit in Märhabété. *Abéto* Sebisté stayed in the area as a servant for a ruler of Märhabété named Mäzämer.<sup>58</sup> In addition to this, during the periods of *Abéto* and his son *Märed Azmaç* Abeyä, the power of the central government was very weak. During this period, Märhabété was ruled by a person named Wäldu, centered at Korra Mountain.<sup>59</sup> The founding father of Märhabété was Bézanä Wäld. He said Bézanä Wäld appealed to the king at the time for the position of administrator of Märhabété, knowing that the king would appoint an excellent fighter as administrator over some of his domains. Fortunately, he deserved the position since he met this criterion and was given the appointment. After this, he built his town on Korra Mountain and began to administer Märhabété.<sup>60</sup> After the death of Bézanä Wäld, his son Bawla succeeded to the position. At the

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<sup>54</sup> Märe *Mäşehét Tekemet*, 1996, p.12.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>56</sup> Aläqa Dästa Täklwold Keflé Amharic dictionary.

<sup>57</sup> Informant: *Qes* Ababu Wäldäyäs, (Aläm Kätama) date 13/05/2020.

<sup>58</sup> Täkläşdek Mäkuriya, *Yä Etiyopya Tarik Kä Aşé Lebnä Dengl Iskä Aşé Tewodros*, (Addis Ababa, Tensaé Zä Gubaé Matämiya Bét, 1953), p.434.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>60</sup> Däçasa Abäbä. “A Socio-Economic History of North Şäwa, Ethiopia (1880s-1935)”, (PhD, In History, university of South Africa, 2015), p.2.



same time, a man called Wäldu came from Gondär. He was a cousin of Bawla. When he asked for a place to settle he was given Wäyira Amba by Bawla so that Wäldu would not come to Korra. Bawla did this because of a prophecy, which foretold that if the latter were to come to Korra he would be the Chief *Negus* of Märhabété in the place of Bawula.<sup>61</sup>

Nevertheless, as the story explains, Wäldu gained the position by ousting his rival, Bawla, in the absence of the latter. Bawla kept a mistress, down in the Jäma basin, and visited him frequently. Obtaining this information, Wäldu sent a spy to the town of Korra, who would smoke something as a signal if Bawla was in his court at midday, and burn a torch at midnight if he was not there. The spy did accordingly so that Wäldu knew that Bawla was elsewhere. Wäldu then marched to the top of Korra and declared that from that time onwards he had overthrown Bawla. He ordered his army to guard all passes to the Amba of Korra and became the ruler of Märhabété. There are still sits on Korra *Amba* called Bézanäwäld *Gebi* and Wäldu *Gebi*.<sup>62</sup> Hence, the later generations of *rest* holders claim that they are the descendants of these fathers;

መርሀቤቴ ኮራ የወለዱ ልጅ<sup>63</sup>  
*Märhabéte the son of Wäldu.*

The former Šäwa province of modern Ethiopia was initially inhabited by the Amhara, Gafat, Gurage, and Argoba. As different sources indicate, the origin of the Oromo is traced back to the time of their movement in the 16th century. By the turn of the seventeenth century, the Tulema Oromo also known as Šäwa Oromo<sup>64</sup> largely controlled all the plains, which are found south of the Mofär River, the central uplands up to Gedem, and in the west, they also settled south of the Wänçit River in the present-day Märhabété.<sup>65</sup> Following their settlement in the heart of Ethiopia during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, they came into contact with the Amhara and Gurage with whom they significantly influenced the Tulema. Today, they are preponderantly Orthodox Christians, and much intermarried with the Amhara and the Gurage. The change was generally believed to have been facilitated by the incorporation of the Šäwa Oromo by Emperor Menelik II (r. 1889-1913), and subsequently, by the

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<sup>61</sup> Dächasa Abäbä, “The Peopling of Morät and Märhabété C. 1700-1889”, MA Thesis in History. Addis Ababa University, 2003, pp.41-42.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p.43.

<sup>63</sup> Täkläşdek, p.434. Dächasa Abäbä, “The Peopling of Morät...” p.38.

<sup>64</sup> Abreham Alemu Fanta, *Ethnicity, and Local Identity in de Folklore of the Southwestern Oromo of Ethiopia: a Comparative Study*. (VU University, Amsterdam, (2015), pp. 80.

<sup>65</sup> Tsegaye Zeleke, “The Oromo of Sälalé A History, (C.1840-1936)”, (MA, Thesis in History, Addis Ababa University, School Of Graduate Studies, June, 2002), pp. 49-50.

establishment of the new capital of Addis Ababa in 1886. However, despite all the influences of the peoples and cultures in the central part of Ethiopia, the Tulema retained large elements of Oromo cultural traditions including ritual aspects of the *Gada* system.<sup>66</sup>

### 1. 3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ITALO-ETHIOPIAN RELATION

Most of the European countries that have historical relations with Ethiopia include Britain, France, Italy, and Portugal. Each European country had developed an imperialist interest in Africa, and by 1899, all Ethiopia's neighboring countries were under the rule of Britain, France, and Italy. The relations of Ethiopia and these European powers were initially friendly and respectful but later changed and even the Europeans tried to colonize Ethiopia. In this regard, among other countries, the interest of Italy seemed to be the strongest. Italo- Šäwan relations had officially started with the coming to Šäwa of an Italian geographical society mission (geographical studies team) under the leadership of the naturalist Orazio Antinori in 1876.<sup>67</sup> King Menelik, Later Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia, offered to the group the *Let-Maräfia*, a village in the Ankober area.<sup>68</sup> Italy, however, used the place for its colonial interest rather than peaceful relations. The place helped the Italians to further collect data and to accomplish their mission in the name of research and academics. The hidden mission, similar to those of other European countries, of Italy was to colonize Ethiopia and establish an empire in the horn of Africa. Before the signing of the *Wuchale* Treaty, the immediate cause of the First Italo-Ethiopian war at the battle of Adwa, two peaceful and friendship treaties were made between king Menelik and Italy. In 1882, an Italian envoy Count Antonelli and king Menelik of Šäwa, later Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia, signed the treaty of commerce and friendship. In this agreement, both were agreed upon free movement of people and free trade. Nonetheless, it became clear that Italy wished to expand and link its holdings in the Horn of Africa.<sup>69</sup>

As a result, the then governor of Märäb Mällash, *Ras* Alula Engida, also known as *Aba* Näga, warned the Italians to clear out of the Ethiopian regions. However, the Italians were not willing to leave out the regions because they have colonial interest in the Horn of Africa. For the Italians, in this case, colonizing Ethiopia meant laying down a base to colonize the

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, p.80.

<sup>67</sup> Täkläşadeq Mäkuria, *Aşé Menelik Ena Yä Ethiopia Andinät*. (Kuraz Printing Press, Ethiopia, 1983), pp. 35-37.

<sup>68</sup> Lapiso G.Delebo, *The Italo-Ethiopian War Of 1887-1896: From Dogali to Adwa*, (Addis Ababa, 1996), p.23.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 81-83.

Horn of Africa. Finally, *Ras Alula* at Dogali some 20 kilometers inland from Massawa attacked and annihilated a column of around 500 Italians.<sup>70</sup>

After the battle of Dogali Italy needed the support of King Menelik of Šäwa more than he needed theirs, even Italy wanted Menelik to fight Emperor Yohanes IV from the south. However, King Menelik was not willing to fight against Yohannes. The Italians wanted his neutrality in the event of war with Yohannis. As a result, King Menelik of Šäwa agreed to the convention of Neutrality on 25 October 1887. In return, he gets from Italy 5,000 Remington rifles on sale. Menelik also left Enṭoṭo for Wollo on 27 December 1887 with an army of 130,000 men following the emperor's order.<sup>71</sup> The friendly relationship between Menelik and Italy reached its apex at the end of the nineteenth century with the signing of the Wuçalé Treaty on May 2, 1889.<sup>72</sup>

This treaty was the treaty of friendship and commerce between Ethiopia. This treaty can be seen as an attempt to conquer Ethiopia diplomatically. The content of the Treaty of Wuçalé had two versions; Amharic and Italian Version. The treaty contains twenty articles, but the most important articles in terms of their relevance and cause of conflict to the first and second Italo-Ethiopian war were Article Three and Seventeen.<sup>73</sup>

Article Three, of the Wuçalé treaty, was about boundary demarcation. Article Seventeen was related to foreign relations and policy. To this end, Article Seventeen of the Wuçalé Treaty had a different meaning. In Italian, the treaty stated that Ethiopia was “obliged to conduct all foreign affairs through Italian authorities, in effect making Ethiopia an Italian protectorate, while the Amharic version merely gave Ethiopia the option of communicating with third powers through the Italians.” Thus, the Treaty obliged Ethiopia to handle her foreign affairs through Italian officials and it meant creating a de facto protectorate over Ethiopia. This article may be viewed as an Irony. This treaty clearly shows the imperialist and colonialist ambition of Italy over Ethiopia. Finally, in October 1889 Italy notified the major powers of Europe that Ethiopia had become her protectorate. Again, this shows Italy's commitment to the implementation of the Berlin conference.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ian Campbell, *The Plot to Kill Graziani: the Attempted Assassination of Mussolini's Viceroy*, (Addis Ababa university press, 2010), p.6.

<sup>71</sup> Lapiso, p.56.

<sup>72</sup> The Wuchale treaty was signed on May 2, 1889 between Italy and Menelik. *Wuchale* was a place found in the present day of Northern *Wollo* where the treaty was signed.

<sup>73</sup> Täkläşadeq, pp.42-47; Bahiru Zewde, *the History of Ethiopia; from 1847- 1983*, (Addis Ababa University press, Ethiopia, 1999), pp. 82-83.; Lapiso G.Delebo, p.64.

<sup>74</sup> Tedla Zä Yohanes, *the History of Ethiopia; Italy in Ethiopia; From Wal Wal to Gondar (from May 1927- November 1934)*, (Mankusa Publishing. p.l.c, 2004), pp. 8-10.

## 1.4. THE BACKGROUNDS OF THE SECOND ITALO-ETHIOPIAN WAR

The Italians, one of the latecomer colonial powers, began to put their influence over Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular, immediately after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.<sup>75</sup> Although the newly emerging nation-state of Italy was little more than a bystander in nineteenth-century Europe scramble for Africa, an Italian missionary was to buy the Ethiopian Red Seaport Of Assab. Acquired on behalf of the private Italian shipping company named Rubatino from the local chiefs, the port was declared an Italian colony in 1882. As a result not only enjoy easy access to the horn of Africa but also have a foothold there, thus providing the opportunity to make abide by some of the last few territories on the African continent that remained not colonized.<sup>76</sup> Between 1868 and 1879, another Italian missionary G.Massaia became a resident evangelist in Šäwa and served king Menelik as his first European foreign policy advisor until he was expelled from the country by the emperor Yohannes IV in 1879.<sup>77</sup> In February 1885, the Italians got the chance of adding another important sea outlet. The British that sought to control the influence of its fiercest rivalry, France, encouraged Italy to take control of Massawa, which later served as a foundation for the Italian plan to colonize Ethiopia.<sup>78</sup> After they occupied the port, the Italians made an encroachment to the inland of the country. This led to the first military confrontation between Ethiopia and Italy. On 25 January, *Ras* Alula Engida ambushed the Italian fortress at Dogali.<sup>79</sup> Alberto Sbacchi described the incident as the first major setback received by any European power at the hands of the African army.<sup>80</sup> Despite their Dogali defeat and the repeated warnings from the Ethiopian rulers, the Italians were unwilling to leave the Ethiopian territories rather they were working hard to achieve their colonial ambition. These Italian actions led to the dramatic and historic battle of Adwa, held on 1 March 1896. The Ethiopians almost from all regions organized under the leadership of the Emperor, the Empress, and other nobility fought the Italians and achieved surprising victory. By doing

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<sup>75</sup> Campbell, p.5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Lapiso, p.52.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1991* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa Press, 2002), p.145.

<sup>80</sup> Alberto Sbacchi, *Ethiopia under Mussolini: Fascism and the Colonial Experience* (London: Zed Book Ltd, 1985), p. 8.

that, they were able to defend themselves from European colonization. The victory on the other hand left Italy under a shameful mark.<sup>81</sup>

Although the Italians suffered a devastating defeat that was a blow for her colonial ambition over Ethiopia and signed a peace treaty immediately after the victory, they never gave up their colonial efforts. A decade after the Adwa victory, the Italians seemed to have renewed their colonization policy when they signed the tripartite treaty of 1906 with Britain and France. In which Ethiopia was divided into three-sphere of influence.<sup>82</sup> The entrance of Italy in the First World War on the side of the allied powers and the treaty of friendship with the British to build a dam on Lake Tana were other clear manifestations of the restoration of Italian colonial policy over Ethiopia.<sup>83</sup>

Above all, however, the rise to power of the fascist party headed by Benito Mussolini in 1922 moved the colonization of Ethiopia one step further.<sup>84</sup> The new government of Italy was eager to avenge the battle of Adwa and to invade Ethiopia. Therefore, to facilitate military mobility for the conquest of Ethiopia, in 1925, Mussolini gave necessary commands for the building up of Eritrea's economic infrastructure and the transportation of necessary war equipment. Eritrea and Somaliland became the center of military training and the store of war logistics.<sup>85</sup> Side by side with a huge military preparation, the Italians strongly worked to win the support of some individuals and groups who were dissatisfied with the emperor's treatment through the subversive policy.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, the Italians had already practiced this policy before the battle of Adwa. All their efforts ended in vain after some year's success.<sup>87</sup>

The policy gained new momentum in the late 1920s and the early 1930s after Mussolini intensified a plan of revenge for the battle of Adwa.<sup>88</sup> To advance his plan of colonial ambition quickly, Mussolini opened many consular offices in different cities of northern

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Campbell, p.8.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>84</sup> Aregawi Berhe, *Revisiting Resistance in Italian Occupied Ethiopia: The Patriots Movement (1936-1941) and the Redefinition of Post War Ethiopia* (The Netherlands: Beill, 2003), p.88.

<sup>85</sup> Tadässa, p, 269; *Addis Zämän* (Ter 12, 15, 1979), p.7; Aregawi, p.58.

<sup>86</sup> Campbell, p.11.

<sup>87</sup> Alberto Sbacchi, *Ethiopia under Mussolini: Fascism and the Colonial Experience* (London: Zed Book Ltd, 1985), p. 4.

<sup>88</sup> Minale Adugna, "Women and Warfare in Ethiopia", (Addis Ababa: Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, 2001), p.21.

Ethiopia intending to agitate the disaffected nobility against the emperor. They also ordered to weaken the national unity by provoking antagonisms among the different ethnic groups.<sup>89</sup>

Rafael De Lauro was one of the consuls assigned at Gondar. He strongly worked to quarrel with the different ethnic groups in Gondar and the surrounding areas. After De Lauro became the Italian consul at Gondar, he spent most of his time traveling from region to region to meet influential persons including the churchmen. He was in a good position in adopting Ethiopian culture. For the effective implication of his hidden agendas, De Lauro changed his name to Rufael, the Ethiopian name. He made a traditional dressing style. Throughout his time at Gondar, he was busy visiting the churches and attending the church ceremonies, and on the way; he gave money, gifts, and materials for the needy. He established both the Amharic and Italian schools, which were very near to his office. He taught the students the fascist greeting style. By doing that, he played a leading political role in the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in general and Gondar in particular by indicating the Sätit-Gondar road. He had also opened the way for the act of collaboration.<sup>90</sup> De Lauro and his colleagues were able to win the attention of many regional lords and nobilities. Among the prominent nobles who favored the Italian rule were *Ras* Hailu Täklä Haymanot of Gojjam, *Däjjazmač* Haile Selassie Gugsä of Tägré, and *Däjjazmač* Ayaléw Berru of Semén.<sup>91</sup>

The global developments of the inter-war periods were very crucial for Mussolini's invasion plan. The tensions among Ethiopian powers benefited him a lot. British and France, which did not want to see the alliance of Adolf Hitler and Mussolini, allowed Mussolini to take control of Ethiopia. According to Donald Kagan and others, to keep Italy as an ally, the British government facilitated Mussolini's plan of invasion by allowing free transit for his soldiers and transporting necessary materials through the Suez Canal.<sup>92</sup> The ineffectiveness of the League of Nations also gave a green light for Mussolini to carry out a harsh invasion of Ethiopia.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Harold, G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (London: University of California press, 1994), pp.82-83; J.F.C Fuller, "The Battle of Mai chio, 1936, (summer 1940), *The Journal of the American Military Institute* Vol. 4. No.2, p. 77.

<sup>90</sup>Aregawi, p. 88; Emilio De Bono, *Anno XIII, The Conquest of an Empire*, (London: Crescent Press 1937), p.2; Pietro Badoglio, *The War in Abyssinia*, (London: Methuen Publishers, 1937), pp. 8-11.

<sup>91</sup>Seltene Seyoum, "The History of the Resistance in Gojjam, 1936-1941" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1999), p.14.

<sup>92</sup>Bahru, p. 152; Imru Haile Selassie, *Kayähut Kämastawusäw*, (Addis Ababa University Press, 2002), P.260.

<sup>93</sup>Daniel, P.128.

Following the occupation of its boundary in the eastern tip of Ogaden by the Italians on 5 December 1934. Finally, they provoked an incident by penetrating some 100 kilometers as far as the watering hole named; where Wäl Wäl precipitated a clash with an Ethio-Anglo military survey team. Shooting broke out, in which more than 100 Ethiopians were killed.<sup>94</sup> The Wäl Wäl hostility provided a situation to exploit, although it remains unclear if at the outset the Italians intended to transform the incident into a war.<sup>95</sup> Haile Selassè thought the crisis could be settled peacefully but the Italian refused to negotiate claiming aggression that rendered article 5 of the 1928 treaty of peace and friendship.<sup>96</sup> Italy insisted that Ethiopia should formally apologize to Wäl Wäl I, pay an indemnity of \$ MT 200, 000.<sup>97</sup> Besides this case Ethiopia by their envoys *Fitawurari* Täklähawariat Täklämariam respond to envoys of France and England, Piyer Laval and Anthony Eden in the following way;

“ኢትዮጵያ ሞትን የምትመርጠዉ ከነኩብሯ ሰለሆነ ፤  
 ካሳዉንም አትከፍልም፡፡ይቅርታም አትጠይቅም፡፡”<sup>98</sup>  
 “Because Ethiopia prefers death to its glory,  
 It does not pay compensation. It does not ask to apologize.”

The Ethiopian government took the case before Italy to the League of Nations seeking an immediate solution.<sup>99</sup> However, the league failed to pass a fair decision on the matter of the Italo- Ethiopian crisis, Now Mussolini had completed his military readiness, won the support of British and France, found the League of Nations toothless, and succeeded in the subversive activity.<sup>100</sup>

## 1.5. FASCIST INVASIONS OF THE COUNTRY

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government took the case to the league of the nations, which spent the next eleven months discussing the matter. Having thus allowed Italy to complete its massive capacity build-up, the French and British declared their countries neutrality.

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<sup>94</sup> Campbell, p.38.

<sup>95</sup>Täklä Šadiq Mäkuria, *Yä-Ityopia Tarik Ka-Atse Tewodros eskä Qädamawi Haile Selassie 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (Addis Ababa: Kidus Giorgis Printing Press, 2000).pp. 210-211.

<sup>96</sup> Harold G. Marcus, *Haile Sellassie I the Formative Years 1892-1936*, (the red sea press, 1998), p.148. Campbell, p.10.

<sup>97</sup>Zewde Rāta, *Yä Qädamawi Hailäsilasé Mängist, 1930-1935*, (Shama Books, 2007), p, p.107.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, p.124.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 104.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, p. 14; Bahru, p.152.

<sup>101</sup>According to Mussolini's foreign minister, report to the League of Nations and European countries indicates in the following passages;

*ተወዳጁ መሪዎችን ዱቻ ሞሳሎኒ እድለኛ ለሆነው ለጣሊን ህዝብ የተከበረ ታሪኩን ለማደስ በሰጡት ተስፋ መሰረት የዛሬ አርባ አመታት ኢትዮጵያ ያደረሰችበትን በደል ለመበቀል ፤ ዛሬ ጥቅምት 3 ቀን 1935 ዓም ከንጋቱ በ አሰራ ሁለት ሰአት ፤ በታማኙ ዠንጎል ኤምሊዮ ደ-ቦኖ የሚመራው ጆግናው ሰራዊታችን የኢትዮጵያን ግዛት ጠርገምሶ በመግባት እድዋን በእጁ አድርጓል።<sup>102</sup>*

*On October 3, 1935, at midnight, our heroic army, led by the faithful general Emilio Debono marched on Ethiopia and invaded Adowa in retaliation for the promise made by our beloved leader Duce Mussolini to restore the glorious history of the Italian people.*

Then on Wednesday, 3 October 1935, at midnight Fascist Italy penetrated the Ethiopian border and invaded the historic place Adwa.<sup>103</sup> Accordingly, the Italian army under the leadership of Marshal Emilio De Bono opened an aggressive offensive against Ethiopia by crossing the Märäb River.<sup>104</sup> The northern tips of Ethiopian territories such as Adwa, Addigrat, and Enጥጋ became the targets of the advancing Italian force. Thus, they were bombed and fell in the hands of the enemy easily between fourth and sixth October. Mäqälä was also seized by the force of De Bono on 8 November 1935.<sup>105</sup> *Leul Ras* Seyoum Mängäša tried his best to defend the historic area of Adwa but was bitterly defeated.<sup>106</sup> Because the Italians came 40 years later both to erase the “shameful scar” of their defeat at the battle of Adwa fought on 1 March 1896. They were determined to restore the glory of the old Roman Empire. Fascist Party was highly dedicated to restoring Roman glory.<sup>107</sup> They also included the formulation of the purported reasons for the invasion. The fascist was to bring good governance to Ethiopia; in the forms of a “civilizing mission”<sup>108</sup>

However, De Bono occupied the above-mentioned areas within a month with little resistance. Some reasons accounted for the rapid success of the Italians. The first was technological

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<sup>101</sup> Zewde, pp.190-192

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*; Campbell, p.39; Zewude, p.170.

<sup>104</sup> Bahru, p.152; Seltene, p.14.

<sup>105</sup> Donald Kagan et al, *the Western Heritage since 1300. Sixth ed.*, (New Jersey: Prentice Hill, Inc. 1998), p.552.

<sup>106</sup> Harold Marcus, p.140. , Zewude, p.180.

<sup>107</sup> Gashaw, Ayferam, “Amäṣāñña Waša (the Cave of Zeret), the cave of the last battle of the Italo-Ethiopian war. Guerilla fighting against Fascism and colonialism during the second Italo- Ethiopian war,” *International Journals of political science and development*, Vol.3 (2), (Ambo University February 2015), p.121; Bahru 1991, 151.

<sup>108</sup> Campbell, p.38.



superiority: the Italians came with the latest weapons such as aircraft, machine guns, tanks, and banned gas. Moreover, the Italians were superior not only in technology but also numerically. Mussolini who did not want to see the repeat of the nightmare of Adwa deployed a huge force.<sup>109</sup> Thus, De Bono came with 250,000 white armies divided into nine divisions and 150,000 colonial soldiers. On the other side, Mussolini assigned Rudolf Grazzaini to lead the force of one division from Somaliland.<sup>110</sup>

On behalf of Ethiopia, there was no organized military preparation and mobilization until the Italians bombed many areas in the north. In his book entitled *a history of Ethiopia* Harold G. Marcus noted that in suspecting of the Italian hidden goal (military preparation); he appealed to the provincial governors to come to the capital with their huge force. Because of the rainy season, most of the nobles reached Addis Ababa in September and October.<sup>111</sup> Finally, on 28 September 1935, the Emperor declared *Yä Ketät Awaj* (General mobilization order).<sup>112</sup>

Following the emperor's mobilization order, the Ethiopian force organized under notable war leaders marched to war. In the northern direction, the Ethiopian force had been put under the overall command of *Ras Kassa Hailu*, and he led the following notable war leaders. *Ras Mulugéta Yegäzu*, *Ras Seyoum Mängäša*, and *Ras Imru Haile Selassie* were assigned as his subordinate to lead the Ethiopian army in Ambaradom, Tämbén, and Shiré columns respectively.<sup>113</sup> To repulse the force of the enemy led by Grazzaini, in the South and Eastern part the emperor also deployed a huge force under the commandership of *Ras Dästa Damšaw*, *Däjjazmač Mäkonän Endalkačaw*, *Näsibu Zämanuél*, and *Afäwärq Wäldä Sämayat*.<sup>114</sup>

For the war, the emperor mobilized armies of 100,000 to 300,000<sup>115</sup>, which was smaller than the Italians had. Furthermore, the Ethiopians had no modern weapons and poorly equipped.

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<sup>109</sup> Bahru, p.153; Aregawi, P.89; Michael Glover, *an Improvised War: the Ethiopian Campaign, 1940-1941* (London: Leo Cooper, 1987), p.14.

<sup>110</sup> George Baer, *The Coming of the Italo-Ethiopian War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p.7; Harold Marcus, p.142.

<sup>111</sup> Marcus, pp. 142-143.

<sup>112</sup> De Bono, p.2; Charles Schaefer Serendipitous, "Resistance in Fascist Occupied Ethiopia, 1936-1941", *North East Africa Studies*, New Series, Vol. 3, No.1, (1996), p.85; The official proclamation declared by Emperor Haile Selassie during the second Italian invasion of Ethiopia, *Leyu Leyu Nägusawi Awajoč*. IES, MS, No.2557, about, The official proclamation declared by Emperor Haile Selassie during the second Italian invasion of Ethiopia, p.11.

<sup>113</sup> Aregawi, p.89; NALA, Folder.No.62.1.File. No.18.18.

<sup>114</sup> Paul.B. Heinz, *Layers of Time*, (London: C.Hurst& Co., 2000), p. 217; NALA, Folder.No.62.1.File. No.18.18.

<sup>115</sup> Haile Selassie, p.190; Täklä Šadiq, Kā Tewodros..., p.249; Tadässä Zäwäldé, *Yä Abälashän Zämän* (Addis Ababa: Berhanéna Salam Printing Press, 1955 E.C.),p.9; IES,MS,No.2557,The Emperor's War Declaration.

During the Italian invasion, the Ethiopian army had only 200 light artillery, 1000 machine guns, and rifles with 150 rounds per person. The other factor was the political situations that existed during the period; allowed General De Bono's force to control many areas with no or little resistance *Däjjazmač* Haile Selassie Gugsä, an influential man in Tägeré deserted Italians and played a significant role in the seizure of other areas in Tigray.<sup>116</sup>

Subsequently, on 16 November 1936 Mussolini replaced Emilio De Bono, with Marshal Pietro Badoglio, to invade Ethiopia within a short period.<sup>117</sup> Badoglio also increased the bombing of Ethiopian regions and war logistics. It was during this time that the enemy used airplane to drop outlawed mustard gas and bombs, thank to carrying a machine gun.<sup>118</sup> On the contrary, the Ethiopian army was waiting for the counter-attack, because for two reasons; the first one was by the trust of the League of Nations, and the second one was to encircle Italians when they entered the interior part. Later on, the counter-attack had begun. In March 1936, the Ethiopian force under Emperor Haylä-Selassé was marched from Mähan, a place near Mayçäw and reached Mayçäw and he began the warfare.<sup>119</sup>

Thus, the Italian army was headed by Petro Badoglio whom he authorized to use mustard gas and flame-throwers.<sup>120</sup> Besides, only *Rasa* Imeru achieved minor success in the Western direction. Nevertheless, the rest forces were highly crushed by the Italians. The war commanders of Ethiopia in the South were fought with courage and sentiment against Italians, unlike the Northern. However, Italians achieved a victory again on the Southern front.<sup>121</sup>

The most important factor for the Italian victory over Ethiopia was technological supremacy and unlimited use of mustard gas.<sup>122</sup> From the start, the attack was a disaster, though so hard-fought that the Italians did not immediately pursue the retreating enemy. By the evening of 3

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<sup>116</sup> Qädamawi Haile Selassie, *Heywäté Ena Yä Ityopia Ermejja*, volume I.,(Addis Ababa, 1965 E.C.),pp. 191-193; Alula Yohannes, "The History of Dämbäça Wäradä to1991", (MA Thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 2011), p, 41, Edward Hamilton, *The War in Abyssinia: A Brief Military History*, (London: The Union Press, 1936), p.7.

<sup>117</sup> Zewde, p.207.

<sup>118</sup> Angelo Del Boca, *the Ethiopian war, 1935-1941* (Chicago, 1969), p.69; Marcus G. Harold, *A History of Ethiopia*, (London: University of California press, 1994), p.144.

<sup>119</sup> Bahru, pp.153-157., Zewde, p.245.

<sup>120</sup> Campbel, p.40.

<sup>121</sup> Bahru, pp.157-158.; Zewde, pp.239-241.

<sup>122</sup> Giulia, Barrera, "Dangerous Liaisons: Colonial Concubinage in Eritrea, 1890's -1941". *PAS Working Papers, Number 1, Program of African studies* (North Western University. Illinois, 1996), p.137; Gashaw, p.121; Aregawi Berhe, *Revisiting resistance in Italian Occupied Ethiopia: The patriots Movement (1936 – 1941) and the redefinition of post war Ethiopia*, pp.92 – 93.

April 1936, however, mounting Italian pressure forced the emperor and his escort to move southward to the safety of Lake Ašängé; however, the fascists killed mercilessly attacking the defenseless fugitive and spraying them with mustard gas.<sup>123</sup>

Finally, a crown council was deciding that the Emperor and his family should go abroad to symbolize Ethiopia's refusal to accept defeat.<sup>124</sup> At 4:00 A.M. On 2 May 1936, a special train carrying the imperials left the capital for Djibouti, where it arrived on 3 May 1936. The next day, the emperor, his family, and ranking officials boarded a British war vessel for five troubled years of exile and self-doubt in England. They left behind a nation that fought against the Italians.<sup>125</sup>

After defeating the force of Ethiopia, General Petro Badoglio entered Addis Ababa at 4:00 pm on 5 May 1936, arrived in the city, and raised the Italian flag over the Imperial Palace.<sup>126</sup> At that moment, Italian army supreme command Marshal Badoglio had declared the following proclamation in Addis Ababa;

...ዛሬ የሐያላት የኢጣሊያን ንጉስ ስራዊት አዲስ አበባ ገብቷል። በከተማው እና በያገር ቤት ያለው ሰው ወደ ጥንት ስራው ይመለስ። እነዚህ ጦርነቱን ትተው ወደ ጥሩ ስራ የተመለሱትን በማናቸውም ነገር መወቀስ የለባቸውም። ካቸናፊዋ የኢጣሊያ ባንዲራ ጥላ ዉስጥ የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ስያሜ እና ልምላሜ ሊያገኝ ነው።  
<sup>127</sup>

...*People of Ethiopia! The troops of powerful Italy today entered Addis Ababa. Normal life returns to the cities and villages. No action will be taken against those who abandon their weapons and resume their fruitful labor. Under the shadow of the victorious tri color of Italy, the people of Ethiopia will have peace, justice, and prosperity.*

The main objective of the proclamation was to win the mass support of Italian colonialism in Ethiopia and to remove all resistance movements for the establishment of a stable colonial administration system. Nevertheless, silence against foreign enemies is not the culture of Ethiopian people and patriots.<sup>128</sup> Some days earlier, on 2 May the Council of Ministers decided to send the Emperor to Europe for the appeal of justice for Ethiopia. Therefore, the

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* Zewde, p.248.

<sup>124</sup> Marcus G. Harold, *A History of Ethiopia*, (London: University of California press, 1994), pp.145-146.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*; Campbell, p.43; A. Sbacchi, *Legacy of Bitterness: Ethiopia and Fascist Italy, 1935 – 1941*, (Lawrenceville. N.J., 1997), pp. 166 – 185.

<sup>126</sup> Charles Schaefer, “Serendipitous Resistance in the Fascist-Occupied Ethiopia, 1936-1941,” *Northeast African studies*, vol.3, No.1, (Michigan State University press, 1996), p.87. Ian Campbell, p.48.

<sup>127</sup> “*Kä 1909 amäte Mahrät Jämro Yätäsafut Leyu Leyu yä mängast Awajoč, Mastawäqiyawoč ena Tezazoč.*” IES, MS, No.2555, p.50. Campbell, p.49.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

emperor along with the royal families and delegates journeyed to Europe.<sup>129</sup> However, before his departure, the emperor transferred his message to the Ethiopian people in general and the chiefs, in particular, to form guerrilla warfare in their province. To resume the resistance, the emperor set up a provisional government in Gore, South-Western Ethiopia.<sup>130</sup> The following Poem shows the fascist control of Ethiopia and the call of Ethiopia was expressed literally as follows;

ጆግና አልተተካም ወይ በቴዎድሮስ ስፍራ?  
 ሰዉ የለበትም ወይ በምኒሊክ ስፍራ ?  
 ጠላቱ ሲወረኝ ብጣራ ብጣራ  
 ወይ እኔ ኢትዮጵያ የጆግኖች እናት  
 ሁሉም አለቁና ትተዉ ባዶ ቤት  
 ደርሶብኝ የማያወቅ አገኘኝ ጥቃት”<sup>131</sup>  
*“Is there no hero set in place of Tewodros?  
 Is there no Man in place of Menelik?  
 My enemy invaded me when I call and after  
 Call Me Ethiopia the mother of heroes!  
 All Heroes died and left empty home  
 I faced the attack, never happened before”*

The Ethiopian patriot paid immense sacrifices to defend the country after the emperor, his family, and notable officials left Addis Ababa via Djibouti to Europe. At the same time, Benito Mussolini declared that Ethiopia became the colony of Rome, and Victor Emmanuel III as king of Ethiopia and Italy declared her new empire on 9 May 1936 which is called Africa Orientale De Italiana, (AOI).<sup>132</sup> The conquest of Ethiopia by Italy was concluded between 3 October 1935 and May 5, 1936, within about seven months.<sup>133</sup> The control of Addis Ababa was not only a long-year plan of Benito Mussolini but also the result of the investment of several Millions of money and the great scarification of life by the people of Italy and Eritrean *Askaris*. It is estimated that over 12 million dollars were invested in the conquest of Ethiopia.<sup>134</sup>

By the time of the Italian occupation of Addis Ababa and the declaration of the establishment of the Italian East Africa Empire on 9 May 1936, only the northern section of the country was firmly under the control of Italians. Badoglio and Graziani controlled only one-third of the

<sup>129</sup> Informants: Tämtem Wändmagäñ, Ababu Wäldäyäs, Ashiné Ayäle.

<sup>130</sup> Solomon A, p.32; Bahru, p. 155; Fuller, p.88;

<sup>131</sup> Ghelawdewos Araia, “Revisiting Fascist Italy’s Crime in Ethiopia, (*Institute of Development and Education for Africa, Incorporated Company*), April 7, 2008), p.4.

<sup>132</sup> Angelo Del Boca. Trans/ P.D. Cummins. *The Ethiopian War 1935-1941*. (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1965), p.197; A. Sbacchi, *Legacy of Bitterness: Ethiopia and Fascist Italy, 1935–1941*, (Lawrenceville. N.J., 1997), pp.166–185.

<sup>133</sup> Charles Schaefer, p.87; Emperor Haile Sillase appealed about the Italian invasions of Ethiopia to the League of Nations, in Geneva, NALA.folder No. 63.1.file No. 37.13.

<sup>134</sup> Del Boca, p.198.

country.<sup>135</sup> Ethiopia became part of the Italian East Africa Empire that included Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, and Ethiopia. Badoglio was appointed as the first viceroy of Italian East Africa. Italians under fascist military administration glorify military and war. Because of the nature and strong military administration in Libya and East Africa, Mussolini earned the nickname as “Butcher of East Africa”. After the appointment of Rodolfo Graziani as the viceroy of the Italian East Africa Empire, he was given unlimited power by Benito Mussolini to use force to crucify members of any resistance group. Any civilian who resisted in any way or simply who had refused to submit to the Italian overlordship was referred to as rebels or *bandits* and they were shot. Even the Ethiopian soldiers and patriots who had surrendered were not released rather they were cruelly executed. Many patriots of Ethiopians were taken as rebels. Mussolini instructed and ordered for his military generals that all peoples of Ethiopia who were regarded as a rebel by Italians were to be shot without any excuse.<sup>136</sup>

After a few days between the flight of Emperor Haylā Səlassie I to Europe and the Italian occupation of Addis Ababa, there was mass violence, burning, looting and shooting become common in Addis Ababa. After the defeat of the Ethiopian force, Italians had begun to practice divide and rule policy, and the Italian East Africa Empire was divided into six Linguistic and ethnic-based administrative regions with their respective capitals. Asmara, Gondar, Jimma, were become the capitals of the region established by Italian<sup>137</sup> Heavy bureaucracy, corruption, characterized the Italian colonial administration and officials were irresponsible, narrow-minded, and racist.<sup>138</sup>

Although Italians were successful in defeating the Ethiopian army, they could not establish a stable administration system in the country. There was a widespread patriotic resistance movement in several regions of the country. These patriotic *bands* were mostly concentrated in the regions of Šāwa, Gojjām, and Bāgemidir. These patriots constantly challenged the Italians.<sup>139</sup>

The Patriots were able to maintain almost total control over several mountainous and militarily strategic areas of the country. Italian forces could only go through temporarily and

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<sup>135</sup> Ghelawdewos, p.94.

<sup>136</sup> Ian Campbell, *the Massacre of Däbrä Libanos Ethiopia 1937*, (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa press, 2014, pp. 26-27; the Amharic version of Urgent telegram from Mussolini to Grazziani to disarm and kill the every People of Ethiopia, IES MS, No. 2555. P, 183.

<sup>137</sup> Bahru (2002), p.162.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.* p, 171.

never predominantly established their colonial rule in the mountainous regions.<sup>140</sup> Especially after the massacre of February 19, 1937, Ethiopian freedom fighters continued their struggle by changing the war tactics from open struggle to guerilla warfare.<sup>141</sup> This forced Italians to recognize the success of the Ethiopian new guerilla war tactics. Italians were far from controlling areas outside the urban centers. Particularly, it was apparent that in the final years of the Fascist occupation power was falling out of the hands of the Fascists who were enclosed by Ethiopian guerillas.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Paul B. Henz, *Layers of Time: A History of Ethiopia*, (London Hurst Company, 2000), p. 28'Campbell, p.227.

<sup>141</sup> Paulos Milkias. *Africa in focus Ethiopia*. California: Library of Congress, 2011, p.54.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.* p. 58.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN MÄRHABÉTÉ

#### 2.1. THE OCCUPATION OF NORTH ŠÄWÄ

Šäwa is one of the Ethiopian regions, which have their names recorded in several European languages: Choa in French, Shewa/Shoa in English, Schoa in German, and Scioà in Italian.<sup>143</sup> The region currently called North Šäwä is located in the central highland of Ethiopia. It is the land between the Jämma and Käsäm rivers, which are fed by different tributaries. Jämma and Käsäm are tributaries of the Abay and Awash rivers respectively. Numerous tributaries fall from the highland of the region flowing westward to join Jämma River. Similarly, many tributaries flow eastward to join the Awash. The valleys of all these rivers and streams hosted the resistant groups, their relatives, and their supporters.<sup>144</sup>

In 1936, the Italians banned any reference to Šäwa, which was an unpleasant reminder of their defeat at Adwa. The victor Menilek was after all the king of this region, which had brought together all the *Ras* and Ethiopian provinces to ally. According to Alain Gascon, their mixed origins, being both Amhara and Oromo, the Šäwan's resisted the « divide and rule » doctrine implemented by the occupying power.<sup>145</sup>

The region was one of the centers of guerrilla fighting resistance against the Italian occupation. In the rural area of the region, the residence of the peasantry was conducive to guerrilla warfare. Mänz, Tägulät, Märhabété, Yefat, and Ankobär were the forefronts of patriotic resistance in the province.<sup>146</sup> Within the five years of Fascist, occupation the patriots of the region fought the force of the enemy and played immensely since the Italian war of aggression. Several patriotic soldiers from North Šäwa had fought bravely against the Italian advance. During the years of Fascist occupation, North Šäwa became the main center of the Anti-Fascist resistance movement. The patriots had faced the problem of shortage of military armaments and they preferred to fight with traditional military armaments. They were informed to keep and continued their struggle until the return of the Emperor from exile.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Alain Gascon, p.85.

<sup>144</sup> Dechassa, p.24.

<sup>145</sup> Gascon, 1988, p.86.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, p.23.

<sup>147</sup> Sahlä Takalñ. *Yäsdät Zämän Tarik*. IES, MS, No.999, (26), p.15.

Generally, there are several suggested reasons for the existence of strong patriotic resistance in North Šäwa. Some of the reasons are; the geographical proximity of the area to the capital, Addis Ababa, the natural topographic Condition and the region is the birthplace of prominent ruling classes.<sup>148</sup>

The geographical proximity of the North to the capital, Addis Ababa, due to its close geographical location, several individuals were exiled from Addis Ababa to this particular region during the fascist occupation. Especially after the February massacre of 1937, the local peoples of Addis Ababa began to search for shelter in the nearby regions like Mänz, Tägulät, and Märhabété. Thus, it mobs important militant groups that struggle for the independence of the country with their families.<sup>149</sup>

The other reason that made the region famous is the natural topographic Condition, also one of the factors that enabled the region to be the focal point of the patriotic resistance. Mountain Chains, ranges, characterize the geographical setting of North Šäwa Valley, Plateau, and natural caves. The geographic features served as forts and shelters for patriots. These types of natural barriers became difficult for the Italian army and they were unable to defeat and clear the resistance groups from the region.<sup>150</sup>

The birthplace of most of the prominent ruling classes was in north Šäwa, which can be mentioned as the other factor, which made the region become the center of guerrilla resistance. This means, many residents of Addis Ababa, politically and militarily active individuals during the early phases of the foundation of Addis Ababa were from this region. Hiruy Wäldä Silassié, Woldä Giorgis Woldä Yohannis, Täklä Häwaryat Täklämaryam, and Dañačaw Wärqu, Märsé Hazän Wäldäqirqos are the Šäwan born individuals.<sup>151</sup>

Therefore, during the period of the Italian occupation of Addis Ababa, many peoples, and their descendants had rushed to north Šäwa, which became an active patriotic resistance group.<sup>152</sup> This enabled the patriot soldiers to have better coordination and unity. The peasants provided whatever the patriots needed. They contributed a lot by providing shelter, food, provision, and important information for the patriots.<sup>153</sup> Thus, North Šäwa served as center of

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<sup>148</sup> Däčasa, p.23

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* p.26.

<sup>151</sup> Reidulf. K. Molvaer, *Black Lions: The creative lives of Modern Ethiopia's Literary Giants and pioneers*, (Asmara: the Red Sea press, 1997), pp.2-85.

<sup>152</sup> Däčasa Abäbä, p.26.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*



the anti-Fascist resistance movement. Italians mobilized several unsuccessful military expeditions to remove the bases of patriotic resistance. The number of patriots in northern Šäwa is estimated to be about 9000 to 10,000.<sup>154</sup> Generally, due to the mentioned reasons the region can be referred to as the center of guerrilla resistance fighting against the fascist Italian invasions from 1936-1941.

## 2.2. THE ITALIAN OCCUPATION OF MÄRHÄBÉTÉ

On 22 October 1936, the Italians force under the leadership of General Kuntish reached Märhäbété and was able to control the area. The military force was organized into two major military fronts. The first front came in the direction of Morät *ena* Jirru and wanted to cross Jamma River, while the second front was from the north through the Midda area and attempted to cross the Wänçit River.<sup>155</sup>

The Wänçit River which serves as a boundary between Wällo and Märhäbét became impregnable for two main reasons. Firstly, the natural topographic condition of the area became difficult for the newly arriving fascist force. It is marked by deep gorges, valleys and has a single passing way and became a trap for Italians. Secondly, the patriots of Märhäbété put up a heroic resistance against the Italian colonists from the outset.<sup>156</sup> There was continued conflict between the force of Italians and the patriots for about fifteen days in October 1936. In the conflict significant numbers of Italians and their collaborators had participated from different localities.<sup>157</sup>

October 1936, was the time in which the force of the Patriots of Märhabété was attacked by the Italian army under the leadership of General Quntish. Italians had killed a large number of people in Märhabété. They also continued their attack to remove the patriotic resistance of the areas in all posts. Aircraft aggravated the area of Märhabété for about thirteen days and several individuals including elders, Children, Men, and women. Large numbers of churches were burned particularly in the locality of Korra, Tammo, Jamma, and Wänçit region in April 1936.<sup>158</sup> Accordingly, the Patriots were unable to withstand the huge Italian Fascist army and

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<sup>154</sup> Tawoldä Täkua, *the Ethiopian Integrity and Italians*, (Addis Ababa, 1990), p. 490.

<sup>155</sup> Mahtämä Silassié Woldä Mäskäl. *Yäšäwa Tarik*, IES, MS, No. 2537(B), p.1.

<sup>156</sup> Tädla Zäyohanis, pp.208-209.

<sup>157</sup> Dechasa Abäbä, *Peasant and Resistance*... p.33.

<sup>158</sup> Tadäsä Zäwoldé, *Qärin Gerämaw: the History of Šäwan Patriots* (Addis Ababa: Far East Printing Press, 2008), p.154; “Yö Däjjazmač Täšomä Šänqut Yö Hywät Tarik”. IES, MS, No.1000, p.20.

Italians had successfully landed in Märhabété.<sup>159</sup> When the Italians arrived in Märhabété, the process was followed by the burning of houses and properties to ashes. Moreover, large amounts of properties of the local people were taken and robbed by *bandits*.<sup>160</sup>

### 2.3. THE BIRTH OF RESISTANCE GROUPS IN MÄRHÄBÉTÉ

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia on 3 October 1935 resulted in the occupation of Addis Ababa on 5 May 1936. The years 1936-1941 were full of crucial events that decided the fate of Ethiopia either to be a colony or to remain independent.<sup>161</sup> Their victory in the northern front gave the Italians a green light to further expand their conquest.<sup>162</sup> The defeat of Ethiopia troops at Maychaw not only subjected the country to foreign rule but also led to the flight of Emperor Haile Selassie.<sup>163</sup>

Be that as it may, the Italians faced a nationwide war of resistance from different peoples of Ethiopia. On the northern front at the last decisive battle of Maychaw on 31 March 1936, several patriots from different regions of Ethiopia went to the battlefield and paid immense sacrifices. Accordingly, on 27 November 1935, Emperor Haile Selassie began to march from Addis Ababa to Dese. Beside these, the notable leader of Märhabété *Däjazmač Wändrad Difabačäw* and his recruits marched with the Emperor and they reached after two days' journey. Then in Dessie, "*Märho bêtä-mängist*" (Märho palace in Dässé), founded by Prince Asfawosen Haile Selassie, established the center for national campaign of the war and stayed from 30, November 1935, to 23 December 1935, for the next eighty consecutive days. From this palace, he sent and received messages to notable war leaders and appreciated the patriots that fought against the fascist forces in the northern and southern fronts. However, the messages received from patriots on both fronts were not good.<sup>164</sup> Up to the beginning of the battle of Maychew *Däjazmač Wändrad Difabačäw* and other partner like *Fitawurari Biru Wäldägäbriél* (Former War Minister), *Däjazmač Haile Selassie Abayneh* (Leader of Qimbinit

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<sup>159</sup> Informant: *Ato Aščänaki Aqñaw*, *Almaz Gäläta*, *Abera Beyene*.

<sup>160</sup> Informant: *Tämtem*, *Ašagré*, *Addis Abäbä*.

<sup>161</sup> *Alemu Shuie*, "Wallagga during Italian Occupation 1936-1941", (MA Thesis In History Presented to the school of Graduate studies of Addis University, June 2002), p.28

<sup>162</sup> *Tamrat Wasihun*, "The Patriot Of Gayint 1936-1941", ( MA Thesis In History Presented to the school of Graduate studies of Addis Ababa University, June,1999,p.13

<sup>163</sup> *Alemu*, p.28.

<sup>164</sup> *Zewude*, p.239. Informants: *Abäbä Gäbru*, *Tämtem*..

and Tebé *Awuraja*), *Däjazmač* Adefrsew Yenadu (Leaders Of *Gibi Zäbäñoč*), *Qäñazmač* Teklemarqos Woldegebriel (Ministry of Post), provided important advice to the emperor.<sup>165</sup>

Finally, *Däjazmač* Wändrad marched to fight against the fascist forces with general war minister's emperor Haile Selassie and *Fitawurari* Beru Wäldägäbriél, Wändwäsän Kassa, *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa, *Ato* Wäldägiyorgis Wäldäyohannes, and Doctor Mälaku Bāyan (doctor of Emperor Haile Selassie doctor)<sup>166</sup>He died at the battle of Michaw.<sup>167</sup>

After the battle of Maychaw, the Anti-Italian resistance movement had continued. Many groups from the defeated army went into the bush and started the resistance action. Throughout the Italian occupation, these patriots remained active and made life difficult for the Italians Thus, the Fascist Italians never effectively occupied the country. The patriots of Märhabeté followed the footsteps of *Däjazmač* Wändrad and they continued their struggle by creating a common front against the enemy.<sup>168</sup> During the five years of fascist occupation, the people of Ethiopia fought bravely against the enemy force by electing there anti-fascist patriotic leaders. Beside this, the people of Märhabeté and its vicinity are determined to fight the enemy who invaded their country by electing *Grazmač* Täshomä Šänkut as their leader.<sup>169</sup>

According to my informants, in July and August 1936, the fascist Italy force did not come into Märhabeté. The main reason was the patriots did their best to prevent the enemy from entering Märhabeté *Awuraja*. The other reason is the enemy force that came from Wäraillu through Midda area did not want to cross Wänçit River and the enemy force that came through Morät *ena* Jiru area did not want to cross Jamma River. Because, the areas were between these two overflowing Rivers due to summer rain.<sup>170</sup> These two rainy seasons of 1936, we are creating a good opportunity for *Grazmač* Täshomä Šänkut.<sup>171</sup> Because he took time for giving military assignments to his brothers namely Häilë Šänqut, Abäbä Šänqut, Yenäsu Šänqut, Ṭelahun Šänqut and other relatives and friends like Fäläkä Ejigayähu, (*Lam waša*), Gäläta Qorčo, Kebräsilasé Adära, Wärké Bāyānā, Zāwudé Asfaw, were the prominent that fought in determination with collaboration of “*Yäšänqut Lejoč*”(the sons of Šänqut) in

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<sup>165</sup> *Ibid*, p.230.

<sup>166</sup> Campbel, p.244. Zewude, p.280.

<sup>167</sup> *Lä Kibur Däjazmač Kābādā Tāsāma Yätāšafu*, NALA.Folder.No.62.1.File No.18.18, pp.5-6.

<sup>168</sup> Ghelawdewos, p.94.

<sup>169</sup> Alāmayähu Abäbä Šänkut. *Yä Šänkut Lejoč: Yä Šārā fašist Italiya Tägadlo Bā Märhabeté ena Akababiwu (1928-1933) E.C.*, (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University press, 2008), p.12.

<sup>170</sup> Informants: Mulugéta, Täčanä, Tämtme.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*.

Märhäbété.<sup>172</sup>Based on the order of Täshomä Šänqut, the patriot leaders made contact with the people of Mänz, Zärät, Aläm Kätäma, Fétra, Korra, Lam Waša, Hrogända, Goranda, Kolaš, Midda, Morät, Wärkamba, Rämäšit, Agärit, Afäzäz, Zoma, Dära, Särgna, and other areas of Märhäbété.<sup>173</sup>In the meeting, they were awarded with the local population, they thought that the Ethiopian people are proud people who have never paid tribute to the enemy; they told the people that Ethiopia should not be occupied by fascist forces while they are in the area. They were creating awareness to make people have enough concepts of freedom and recruiting followers. In this case, they made an oath and promised that the people would not submit their land to the enemy. During the five years of fascist occupation, the people of Ethiopia in general and the people of Märhäbété, in particular, fought the enemy ferociously. Among these, the five sons of Šänqut (*Yä Šänqut Lejoč*) played a leading role in the areas of Märhäbété.<sup>174</sup> Besides this, Alämayähu Abäbä citing the sources of Italian historian Jusepe Mareliyo elaborates the heroic deeds of the sons of Šänkut as follows;

አገሩ ወጣ ገባ ነው፤ ገረላማና ሸለቆም ነው። እንኳን ባህር አቋርጦ በሰው መሪነት ለመሄድ ቀርቶ ለአገሩ ነዋሪ ጭምር አስቸጋሪ ነው። የሸንቁጥ ልጆች ግን ከነሰራዊቶቻቸው በዚያ በተወላጊደ ቦታ በጠላቶቻቸው ላይ የፈጸሙት አደጋ ምንጊዜም አይረሳም። በመትረየስ፤ በመድፍ፤ በአወሮጥላን እና በመርዝ ጢስ ብንደቤድባቸውም ሊጠፉ አልቻሉም። እርግጥ ብዙ ሞቶባቸዋል። በኛም በኩል ብዙ አልቀዋል ። ይሁን እና የመንዝ እና የመርሀቤቴ ህዝብ ከንጉሱ የበለጠ ስላመነባቸው ፤ በየቀኑ ቁጥሩ የበረከተ ሰራዊት ስለሚከተላቸው በመሬት ላይ ያለውን መከራ ሁሉ ብናወርድባቸውም ከመርሀቤቴ መሬት ዱካቸው ጨርሶ ሊደመስስ አልቻለም። የሸንቁጥ ልጆች ሀይለኛ እና የጦር ሰዎች ናቸው።<sup>175</sup>

*The country is rugged, with hills and valleys. It is difficult even for natives let alone for foreigners but the son's Šänqut with their soldiers in that awkward place the danger they inflicted on their enemies will never be forgotten. We were beaten by airplanes, cannons, Machine guns, and Poison Gas. But they could not be extinguished. Of course, a lot of them have died. The people of Mänz and Märhäbété believed in him more than the kings and the army multiplied with him every day. Despite all the suffering on the ground their footprints could not be erased from Märhäbété. The son of Šänqut was powerful and militarist.*

In addition to this, during the five years of fascist invasion, the newspapers were published in Addis Ababa. This newspapers are “*Yä Roma Berhan*” and “*Yä Qésar Mäle’eketäñoč*” newspapers in there column characterized the brave patriots of the country in general and the sons of Šänqut in particular as *Rebels* (አመጸኞች) and robbers (ወንበዴዎች).<sup>176</sup>

<sup>172</sup> Tadässä, p.152; “*Yä Däjjazmäč Täšomä Šänkut Yä Hywot Tarik*”, IES, MS, No. 1000, P.46. The Patriot Leaders Of Shewa Their Fame Were Persisted Until Libration, NALA. Folder No.63.1. File No. 47.14.

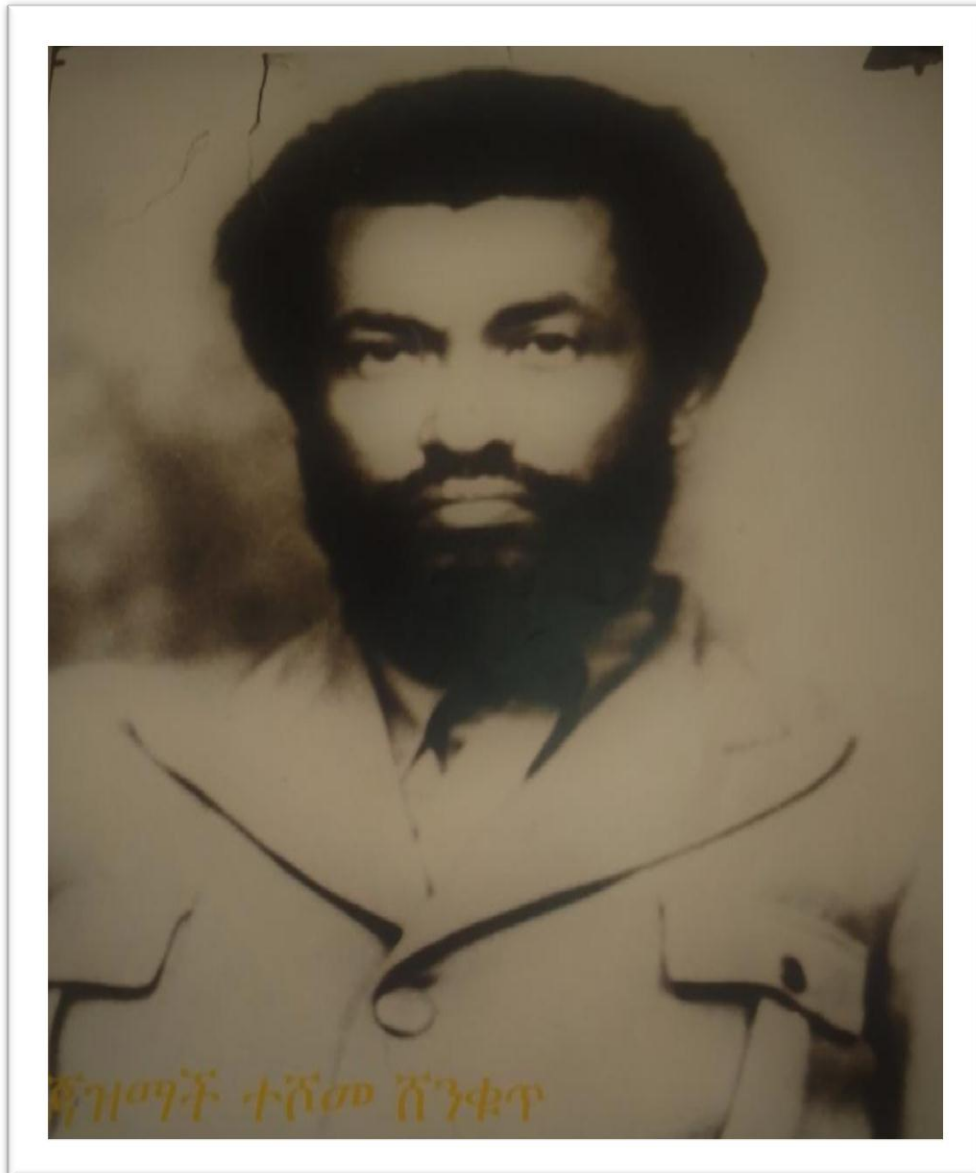
<sup>173</sup> Alemayehu, p.21

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid*, pp.13-14

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid*, P.14.

**Figure-1: Photos of DäjazmačTäšomeä Šänqut**



**Source: NALA, Photo Collection.**

Figure-2: The Photo of *Däjazmač* Abäbä Šänqute



Source: NALA, Photo Collection.

## 2.4. COORDINATION WITH NEIGHBORING COMPATRIOT

The Patriots of Märhábété had strong relations with the neighboring patriots, especially With *Balambaras* Abäbä Arägay in Jirru, *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa, and *Šaläqa* Mäsfän Seläše in Säälälé, *Däjazmač* Käfäläw Wäldäšadiq in Mänz. They tried to help each other while they were being harassed by the brave chief leader who came from all over the area.<sup>177</sup> In the beginning, on 15 September 1936, the patriots of Märhábété made an oath with the patriots of Fečä in Säälälé under *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa and *Šaläqa* Mäsfän Seläše to support each other against common enemies. *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa was given enough bullets for their weaponry and they were returned to home Märhábété. This spirit of cooperation has been a great moral strength for the patriots of Märhábété. The groups of *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa and *Šaläqa* Mäsfän Seläše became close partners for the patriots of Märhábété.<sup>178</sup>

After they returned from Fečä they continued to mobilize the people and recruited more followers in Märhábété and Mänz. They were also widely accepted in their area. In the meantime, the commander of the fascist army under the leadership of General Quntish left Wällo and turned his face towards Märhábété after his first confrontation with *Ras* Abebe Aregay's army in Jiru. On 28 February 1938, the fascist army commanded by General Maleti marched from Wära Illu, in Wällo and set fire to all the areas of Qäya and Gäbriel, looted and burnt every property. Afterward, the leaders of the patriotic resistance of these areas *Lej* Käfäläw Wäldäšadiq and *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänqut began to write about various issues. They also wanted to take measures against fascist devastation of the areas.<sup>179</sup>

According to the decision, *Lej* Käfäläw Wäldäšadiq and *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänqut were appointed to open war on the enemy. Beside this appointment, *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänqut left from Zärät and *Lej* Käfäläw Wäldäšadiq left from Gäbriél. The force of the two Patriotic leaders reached a place called Gudba. At that moment, the combined army of *Lej* Käfäläw Wäldäšadiq and *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänqut went to Wänčit areas. In these areas, the patriots agreed to break through one of the gates of the Italian army and distributed the gates to their commander from Ahiyafäj to Zoma.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, pp.21-22.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid*, pp.47-48.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid*.

For the time being, the war was started. After such an attack, the patriots held in a fort until morning and confused the enemy by showing fire from behind. Then the fascists left the door and ran away to Wäraillu. At six o'clock in the afternoon, the Patriots went with huge war captives and many cattle. They also carried weapons and other items by *bandas*. After defeating the enemy, *Lej Käfälāw Wäldäşadiq* and *Grazmač Tāşomā Şānqut* buried their dead and left for their respective province. From this war onwards, the horse names of *Grazmač Tāşomā* became “*Abba Damṭaw*”.<sup>181</sup>

## 2.5. THE FEATURES OF THE PATRIOTIC RESISTANCE IN MÄRHABÉTÉ

While a large number of the local people fled to another region, some of the people also changed into *bandits* (patriots), and fought against the Italians. There were two types of military strategies in the area. These were open and guerrilla warfare, in which the local patriots of Märhabété had reacted to the Fascist Italian army. The Italians were unable to occupy and rule the regions of Märhabété in particular and the country in general effectively.<sup>182</sup>

Since their arrival in Märhabété on 22 October 1936, Italians had been determined to crush the strong patriotic resistance in this particular region. The patriots of the region had fought the Fascist Italian force since the beginning of the war on the northern front. They also tried to prevent the penetration of Italians in northern Şäwa in general and Märhabété in particular. In doing this, they engaged in the defensive war of Ergebeot to prevent the advance of the force of the enemy from Ergebeot. They fought in different battles in alliance with other patriots of Şäwa. Most of the time patriots of Märhabété had confronted the Italians in open battles and sometimes they had used a system of a surprise attack on the force of the enemy in the nighttime as a hit-and-run tactic.<sup>183</sup>

The geographical condition of Märhabété also enabled the patriots to open a surprise attack on the force of Italians.<sup>184</sup> The Italians had established an unstable administration system in Ethiopia in general and Märhabété in particular. They had established only a temporal administration system in the region. The rural areas of the Ethiopian region were under the

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<sup>181</sup> Informants: Berhanu Lebsäwärq, Bälayhun Mäkuriya, Bälayhun Tämtm, Daniél Amdä.

<sup>182</sup> Informants: Tämtm, Abäbä, Bäkälä Goşu, Dälälāñ Wäldäyäs, Daniél Bäkälä.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*



control of Guerilla fighting patriotic forces. The patriots continued and strengthened their organized patriotic resistance. Among the three Italian colonial viceroys, Rodolfo Graziani's administration system was militarist, racist and brutal. Especially after the attempted assassination of Graziani on Feb 19, 1937, virtually the entire population of the town was ruthlessly exhausted. Furthermore, the number of victims is estimated to be between 1,800 and 2,200 among them monks, priest deacons, teachers, and pilgrims who have visited the monastery founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by St. Täklähaymanot.<sup>185</sup> There were mass killings and massacres of innocent peoples of Addis Ababa and Monks of Däbrä Libanos monastery. The force of fascist Italians devastated following this starting from mid-April 1936, different areas of Märhabété. The Italian military leader, General Tilinti was ordered to take harsh measures by Graziani's order to suppress any patriotic resistance in the region.<sup>186</sup>

Generally, Italians had used two methods for removing the guerrilla fighters in the country. According to Daniel Mamo, the fascists used chemical weapons to terrorize the patriots and civilians to bring their submission.<sup>187</sup> This was the most dangerous military strategy that was used by Italians on the innocent Ethiopian people. These mass killing weapons are not only used to kill the Ethiopian freedom fighters, which are called "rebels" or "*bandits*" by Fascist Italians but also innocent civilian Ethiopians. Thus, the use of chemical weapons brought the death of a large number of people. It brought several effects not only on human beings but also on the surrounding living things including plants and animals. It also brought air and water pollution which resulted in the death of a large number of living things.<sup>188</sup>

Graziani's brutal method had terrorized including those Ethiopians who had been prepared to accept Italian rule. Some of the women who had taken the oath of loyalty now systematically distrusted Italian authority while others broke the Oath and went over to the patriot's group. This was a terrible state of affairs after the Fascist occupation of Addis Ababa. They understand the alliance that would be fruitful in realizing the independence of their country.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, the fascist were devastating the entire villages, execution, and hanging

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<sup>185</sup> Ian Campbell, *The Massacre of Debrelibanos Ethiopia 1937: the Story of One of the Facisms Most Shocking Atrocities*, (Addis Ababa University Press, 2014), p.171.

<sup>186</sup> Campbell, 2014, p.93.

<sup>187</sup> Daniel Mamo, *Yä Italiya Yä Märze Gaz Tiqat Bä Ethiopia Ena Wäqetawi Yä Mesiraq Africa Segate*, (Addis Ababa: Far East Trading press, 2009), p.125.

<sup>188</sup> Erqyihun Bälaynä, *Yä Ityopiya Tarik Kä Imam Ahmed Eskä Dagmawi*, (Addis Ababa: HY International printing P.L.C), p.18.

<sup>189</sup> De Boca, p.140.

of the Patriots in public.<sup>190</sup> This was made to terrify the patriot's resistance and by which they wanted the submission of the resistance groups. Italians had executed women, children, elders, and men indiscriminately. The educated Ethiopians, members of the black lion organization, were the targets of Fascist execution. This was to create the missing generation of intellectuals in Ethiopia between the pre-war and post-war periods. Additionally, such Fascist terror and brutal measures brought the escalation of the struggle and change from the first conventional war to the second phase of Guerrilla warfare.<sup>191</sup>

## **2.6. THE REACTION OF MÄRHÄBÉTÉ PEOPLE TO THE ITALIAN RULE**

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia on 3 October 1935 resulted in the occupation of Addis Ababa on 5 May 1936. The year 1936-1941 was full of crucial events that decided the fate of Ethiopia either becoming a colony or remaining independent.<sup>192</sup> The defeat of Ethiopian troops at Maychaw not only subjected the country to foreign rule but also forced the emperor to leave the country.<sup>193</sup> Then, the fascist army attempted to occupy several areas of the country. At the same time, the fascist had attempted to explore several areas of Märhabété to remove the resistance of the patriot's force. In doing this, the fascist served Däbrä Sinä as the military garrison and base of Italian military logistics in North Šäwä. Mobilizing from this particular region, the enemy began to put pressure on the people of Märhabété areas. Wärra Illu and Midda is also the other base of Italian encroachment into this particular region.<sup>194</sup> Using these areas as a springboard, on 22 October 1936 the Italian army entered Märhabété and continued their attack. Then, they had established the first garrisons at Ergebeot, in Ambat *Qäbälē* and had recruited local collaborators to facilitate effective occupation in the region.<sup>195</sup> The people of Märhabété had tried to overturn the severe military strategies of Italians. Therefore, the local people had engaged in different means against the Italian aggression and occupation in Märhabété areas<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Campbell, 2014, p.32.

<sup>191</sup> Bahru, 2002, pp.170-172.

<sup>192</sup> Alemu, p.28.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid*, p.28.

<sup>194</sup> Tädla, p.209.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid*. p. 210.

<sup>196</sup> Tadäsä, *Qärin Gerämaw...*, pp.177-178.

## 2.7. VARIOUS ENGAGEMENTS FOUGHT BY PATRIOTS

### 2.7.1. THE FIRST DEFENSIVE WAR AT ERGEBEOT

The fascist Italians force arrived in Märhábété on 22 October 1936. They established the first military base at Ergebeot, in Ambat *Qäbälé*. Ergebeot is the region, which is located between Kollaš and Doba.<sup>197</sup> From Ergebeot, the Italian army tried to control other parts of Märhábété by leading different military expeditions. In the struggle, the patriots of Mänz, Märhábété, Midda, Ensaro, and Jirru had fought several battles to prevent further expansion and aggression of Italians from their military bases.<sup>198</sup>

Hence, the patriots of Märhábété had opened defensive wars to prevent the Italian advance into other regions. Then the Italian had mobilized its military force to Ergebeot so as to put other regions under its control. Yet, the patriots were ready to crush such Fascist proposal. Besides, *Grazmač* Täshomä Šänkut also went to Kollaš on 22 October 1936 to defend their further expansion of fascist to other areas of the region. The first military engagement between the patriots and fascist was started in October 1936 at the battle of Ergebeot. In the battle, patriots were defeated and turned back to the strategic place of Kollaš.<sup>199</sup>

However, the patriots were not hesitated by the defeat of the battle; rather they began to deal about what to do next. They had agreed to be prepared for the next victory in the coming November. They had started the combined struggle in collaboration with *Šaläqa* Mäsfen Seläše of Sälalé and *Balambaras* Abäbä Argay of the Jiru patriotic resistance group.<sup>200</sup> At the same time, Italians have informed the existence of well-organized patriotic forces in the region and hurried to organize the military force and they were supported by the local collaborators of Märhábété namely, *Qäñäzmač* Wäldämikaél, who was ordered to command the Italian force to control Kollaš *Amba*.<sup>201</sup>

Following this, the patriots of Märhábété, including *Leji* Häilé, *Lej* Abäbä, and *Lej* Yinäsu, and *Lej* Ṭelahun had agreed to continue defensive wars against Italians at Ergebeot, before the coming of Italians to control Kollaš. By doing this, the organized patriotic groups of Kebräsälāsé Adära, *lej* Häilé Šänquṭ *Balambaras* Meliké Çufa, *Lej* Fäläkä Wäldäsamayāt and Zäwudé Asfaw Dargé, had defeated the force of the enemy. In the battle, the Italian military

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<sup>197</sup> *Ibid*, p.274

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*, pp.152-154.

<sup>199</sup> Alāmayehu ,p23

<sup>200</sup> Dechasa, *Peasant and Resistance...*, p.31.

<sup>201</sup> Kollaš is an *amba* in the center of Märhábété.

forces held the first defeat. The patriot's victory of Märhabété drove away the enemy from Ergebeot and retreated to other military bases in Midda.<sup>202</sup>

It was the most decisive victory achieved by the patriotic forces and it became a crushing blow for the Italian army. It took time to recover to the normal position; to start another war against the patriots; *Grazmach* Täšomä Šänquṭ had continued guarding the area. This was to prevent the expansion of the force of the enemy from Kollaš.<sup>203</sup> Thus, *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänquṭ safeguarded the Italian expansion beyond Kollaš for about three years. From their base, Wärra Illu, the enemy tried to organize a military force to take revenge and control Kollaš. Then, on 28 October 1936, the patriots confronted the fascist army at the battle of Šärafit, a place near Kollaš.<sup>204</sup> Hence, the Patriots offensive war was the crushing blow for Italians who began to take strict measures against the resistance group by killing civilians, destroying and burning their property and homes on their way in the regions of Mänz and Märhabété areas. Nevertheless, they were not successful. For this reason, the collective and united efforts of the patriots of *Märhabété* and Mänz defeated the force of the enemy. After this battle, there were various consecutive fighting between the patriots and Italian invaders and their collaborators.

### **2.7.2. THE BATTLE IN DÄRRA**

On 21 October 1936, the Fascist Force fought the patriots of Märhabété at the battle of Dugda.<sup>205</sup> Dugda is a place located in the present day Dära *Wäräda*<sup>206</sup>. In Dära, inhabitants decided to accept the Italian rule and live peacefully. The patriots who were led by *lej* Abäbä Šänquṭ confronted the Fascist force for about five hours and finally the patriots defeated the enemy. In the battle, a man who collaborated with fascist force, *Ato* Dames, was executed by patriots. From patriots, five heroes died and the other four also wounded in the battle. Among the dead patriots in the skirmish of Dugda were Täsfu Gäbryä and Täkläselasé and also Čärenät Abba Säytan and Šawul Argaw, wounded.<sup>207</sup> When Čärenät Abba Säytan and Šawul

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<sup>202</sup> Tadäsä, *Qärin Gerämaw...*, p.156.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>204</sup> Alemayehu, p.57.

<sup>205</sup> Dechasa Abebe, *Peasant and Resistance...*, P.31.

<sup>206</sup> Informants: Amha, Temeselew, Daniel Amde.

<sup>207</sup> Alemayehu, P.65.

Argaw wounded their legs, Tayä Gäbräyäsus and Näwayä Mariamwäreq helped them to escape from the enemy.<sup>208</sup>

### 2.7.3. THE DEFENSIVE BATTLE OF DOBA

Doba is the place where Emperor Haile Selassie and other nobility's ancestors were found five kilometers from Zärät. Accordingly, the enemy wanted to occupy Kollaš, the most strategic place for the further occupation of Märhabété. The patriots under the leaderships of *Fitawurari* Kibräselasé Adära, *Grazmač* Täshomä Šänkute, *Lej* Abäbä Šänqute, and *Agafari* Šešegu Gonṭ, struggled with fascist force. On 3 April 1937 the major target of this skirmish was defending Kollaš from fascist occupation. In this battle, the fascists used very modern warplanes, Machine Gun, and Mustard Gas. As a result, because of the military superiority, the patriots did not survive the assault. In the meantime; *Grazmač* Täšomä sent *Grazmač* Wärqé Bāyänä and Fälākä Gučo to Fičä, for getting support from *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa. However, for an enigmatic reason, *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa was not able to join them, even though he promised to join them.<sup>209</sup> Since the Italian force opened an aggressive attack to occupy Kollaš, an *amba* in the center of Märhabété from the hands of the resistance groups occupied it after fighting for eight days and nights.<sup>210</sup> The reason why the Italians broke Kollaš was that the patriots did not get additional support from anyone.<sup>211</sup>

### 2.7.4. THE BATTLE OF QEBÉNA

After the occupation of Kollaš by fascist force, they also took control of Ses Amba, villages, ten kilometers from Aläm Kätäma, on 4 April 1937.<sup>212</sup> Consequently, *Dējazmač* Zäwudé Asfawu Dargé hears the news of the fascist occupation of Ses Amba. During this period, he was in Zoma camp. Then, he decided to march attacking fascists in Ses Amba. However, the time was dark, they were forced to stop their march to the battle, and they stayed in the small villages of Ras Mäsk. Then, in the very mooring time, the patriots under *Dējazmač* Zäwudé Asfawu marched to Ses Amba. At the same time, the enemy traveled from Ses Amba to Ras Mäsk they met at the place called Qebéna, in Ses Amba.<sup>213</sup> In the battle, the enemy force under Major Berskeli, accompanied by several local and colonial collaborators fought a battle

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<sup>208</sup> Tadäsä Zäwäldš, *Qärin Gerämaw....*, p.274

<sup>209</sup> IES, MS, No.1000, p.25.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid*, P.275; Dechasa, *Peasant and Resistance....*, P.32.

<sup>211</sup> Informants:Täntem, Tafäsä Wäldäšadiq,Ašené Ayälä

<sup>212</sup> Ephraim Bäträwärk, *Behérah Héyawan, Tarik Kämäs Lebewäläd*, (Z A Matämiya Bét, 2005),P.55

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid*,

of no more than one hundred patriots of *Déjàzmač* Zäwudé. The patriots fought bravely with the help of the local people. Finally, the enemy devastated the patriots by a huge number of collaborators and was supported by poison gas dropped on a plane.<sup>214</sup> Among the patriots who died in this merciless war was, *Lej* Qošťantinos Hailämäläkot, *Fitawurari* Hailu Dubalä, Aščänaqi Wäldämariam, *Grazmač* Wändimu, Mäkäta Endayikäfañe, and *Lej* Dästahun Abära. At the end of the day, the army of Zewude Asfaw was forced to retreat to Zoma camp. Because his forces had lost key figures of patriots in the battle.<sup>215</sup>

### **2.7.5. EMASCULATION OF INHABITANTS IN MÄRHABÉTÉ BY FASCIST**

Like all the colonial powers, the Italians naturally used the classical policy of "divide rule" to strengthen their position in the country in general. The ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity that characterizes Ethiopia provides itself easily to this major objective of the invader.<sup>216</sup> Within this context, the region of Northwestern Šäwa was an ideal region for the application of such a policy. The initial challenges to Italian power came essentially from the society of Yefat, Mânz, Tâgulât, Mârhabeté, and sections of the Abichu Oromo of Tâgulât area and the Dugugguru Henna and Jallé clans and a few sections of the Afar under the patriotic leadership of local chiefs. The Italian major objectives were to strike hard and effectively move at this opposition. One early method they used was infiltrating the opposition ranks and dividing them from within.<sup>217</sup>

Thus, the Italians were successful in penetrating among the peoples of such ethnic and religious diversity to recruit collaborators. The main agents for this purpose were mainly the local *balabbats* and *sheiks* who mobilized the peoples within their ethnic and religious domain against the resistance groups in the region. They became loyal to the Italians and collaborators.<sup>218</sup> Besides, the arrival of the Italians, the *Sheikh* of Bati was associated with sort of radical Islamic positions; and strong sentiments towards an all-out the so-called "Jihad" had developed within their leadership as a response to the repeated ethnic confrontation in the area. It was with the leadership of this community that the Italians cultivated an effective

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<sup>214</sup> Tadesse, *Qärin Gerämaw*...., P, 248.

<sup>215</sup> NALA, File No.63.1.Folder No.29.24; Märe Mäšehét, p.10.

<sup>216</sup> Ahmed Hassen, "The Italian Impact On Ethnic Relations ;A Case Of A Regional Policy In Northern Shoa (Ethiopia ),1936-1941", *Annals D'ethiopia*,Volume.16,Année.2000,p,151.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid*, p.147.

<sup>218</sup> Tilahun, Tasew, *Addabay*, (Addis Ababa, 1983), p.163; Ahmed Hassen, "The Italian Impact on Ethnic Relations....." pp.151-154.

alliance in the first years of their occupation. The Italians knew the nature of the strong anti-Christian aspiration of this community and encouraged them to stage their "Jihad" with catholic Italian support.<sup>219</sup> This was well organized by the Italian regional war commander, General Ruggero Tracchia at one of his headquarters in Šäwa, Dâbra Sina, into two fronts: namely, the Menjar front and the Märhabété front. This was so because the highest concentration of patriotic groups was believed to have been located in these two directions.<sup>220</sup> The oral traditions indicate that these collaborating campaigns against the patriots had a background of profound antagonism and desperation because they were dramatic in June 1937, only a few months after the February attempt on the life of Marshall Graziani. Thus, Graziani declared that it was necessary to disarm the people to put an end to the resistance movement.<sup>221</sup>

In the meantime, On 9 June 1937, General Ruggero Tracchia ordered the fascist commander of general Galina, General Tilinti, and Colonel Linorce supported by the Cavalry forces of Raya, Azebo, and Wajirat bandit sent in the direction of Märhabété.<sup>222</sup> Then the raiders, Announced the fascist policy of disarming the local people.<sup>223</sup> Following the announcement of the disarming propaganda, the raiders began to take ruthless measures on those who refused to obey the order of giving up arms. The brutal action of the Italians had terrorized not only the people who had been prepared to submit the Italians, but also those who were loyal and as a result, many people went over to the patriots.<sup>224</sup>

In Märhabété, Nidaw Čeinqilo, *Grazmač Wäldämikaél*, and Täklämariam were notable collaborators with fascist and he announced the people must have been accepting the official.<sup>225</sup> Particularly, *Grazmač Wäldämikaél* warned the people to accept the Italian government. He also warned the people, "If you don't accept the official you will be in trouble for opposing the Italian government". He also announced the main purpose of the visit of this official. According to my oral informants, the hidden purpose of the

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<sup>219</sup> Ahmed Hassen, p.153.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid*, p.154; Shumye Woldesilase, "The patriots of Tegelde, 1936-1941," (BA Thesis in History, Presented to the school of Graduate studies of Addis Ababa University June, 1985), p.3.

<sup>221</sup> Informants: Wagayä, Asäläfäč Säyum, Ašiné, Wändafraš, Šähäynäš.

<sup>222</sup> Ahmed, P.155.

<sup>223</sup> *Ka 1909 Jämro Yätätsafu Leyu Leyu Yämängist Awajoč, Mastawäkiawoč Ena Tezazoč*. IES, Ms, No. 2555, P.183.

<sup>224</sup> "Yö Däjjazmač Täšomä Šänqut yä hywot Tarik." IES, Ms, No.1000, p.20; Ahmed, The Italian Impact on Ethnic Relations, p.153.

<sup>225</sup> Dechasa Abebe, "Peasants and resistances against Italian occupation in North Shewa (May 4, 1936-May 5, 1941)", *Ethiop.j.soc.lang.stud*, Vol.3, No.2, 2016, p.27; Informants: Tämtme Wändmagägn, Mulugéta Wäldäšadik, and Täčanä Aknaw.

announcement was to massacre the disarmed communities of the area and the fascists used this system to diminish the harassment of patriots of the area. The people diverted and believed the fascist false propaganda. Then, they proceed to be ready to welcome the visitors by hiding their bullets. They were also ready to give chickens and eggs as a gift to fascist officials.<sup>226</sup>

However, the fascist force massacred the disarmed people of Jihur in Moret, Denab, Korra, Kollash, Gret, in *Lay Bét Märhabété* and Däläma, Bärqato and Gärän in Tače *Bét Märhabété*. The raiders start the campaign by burning houses and killing civilians everywhere in the area. They cut off the breasts of females; injure the Kids, Adults, and Elders. During this incursion, *Lej Yinäsu Šänqut* became the first victim of fascist emasculation from the son of Šänqut. His dead body was found on the Beach of Jämma River around Korra *Qolla*. His hands also were cut off and mutilated by the raiders.<sup>227</sup> In this way, the leaders of the fascist army set up the most brutal massacre on the people of the area. In the meantime, on 18 June 1937, *Ras Abebe Aregay* thrashed one fascist warplane.<sup>228</sup> Then, the plane with five Italians falls on the border of Jämma River specifically, at Amäd Waša *Qäbälé*, in the present-day Morätna Jirru Wäräda.<sup>229</sup> During the event, immediately *Grazmač Täšomä* sent Addisé Kormé and his brother Wäldäyohannes Kormé to preserve the fascist plane from a further problem. However, the groups of people from Märhabété and Jirru around the uprisings made forceful action to the Italian in the plane by Javelin and Axe before they reached the soldiers sent by Täšomä Šänqute.<sup>230</sup>

They also cheat all the properties including two Machine Guns in the plane. Subsequently, the fascists wanted to take revenge for the assault. The leader of fascists in these raids was General Galina. Using this accident as a cause; General Galina assigned General Tilinti and the known collaborators of Märhabété, *Grazmač Wäldämikaél*, to take revenge for the blood of their dead. According to Täntem Wändmagäñ and others, the fascist General Tilinti decided to kill one thousand people for one injured Italian as compensation.<sup>231</sup> The fascist emasculation orders cover the area from Qenbebit, in Kollaš to Gärän, and Jihur to Ensaro

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<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> Tadese, *Qärin Gerämaw.....*, p.275.

<sup>228</sup> Morätna Jiru Wäräda Culture and Tourism Office Report, 2013, p.23; Informants: Abärä Täšomä, Addis Täšomä.

<sup>229</sup> Alemayehu, p.38; Informants: Täntem, Berhanu, Abäbä; IES, MS, No. 1000, pp.23-24.

<sup>230</sup> Alämayähu, p.39.

<sup>231</sup> Ephraim Bätrewärk, p.57. Informants: Täntem Wändmagäñ, Däläläñ Wäldäyäs, Tafäsä Wäldäšadiq.



from the left and right sides of the Jamma River.<sup>232</sup> The people of the area described the cruelty of General Tilinti was explained as follows by the poem;

*መሬዎች በሙሉ ሆኑ መስዋዕት፤  
ከጠላት ወገንም ትሊንቲ ወንድ ናት፤<sup>233</sup>  
All the Märés had been sacrificed  
On the side of the Fascist Tilinti was the hero.*

When the Italians began to kill all the adult Men of the area the collaborators also began to emasculate Men and kill women in a very atrocious manner.<sup>234</sup> Along the borders of Märhabété, Ensaro, and Morät the mutilation of the inhabitants by the Rayya and Azebo banda was very severe. The existing condition was explained on the memory Täšomä Šänqute as follows;

*“ራዩና አዘቦ በየ አለቃው በተራ እየመጣ የሰለበውን አንዱም እስከ ሃያ፡እስከ ሰላሳ እስከ አርባ፡አምስት ከሰልቻ እያዎጣ የሰውን ብልት ይዘረግፍ ጀመር። እያንዳንዱ ሰው በየተራ እየመጣ ቢዘረግፈው አንድላይ የተከመረው የደህና ገበሬ ምርት ያህል ሆነ።”<sup>235</sup>  
“Rayya and Azebo were under their command that had emasculated up to twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, and they dropped the human phallus from their sacks and began to prostrate on the ground. The prostrated human phallus by each individual seems the product of a better peasant.”*

According to written and oral sources, the reading by the Yefat, Mânz, Tâgulât, Bulga and Mârhabété communities is remembered as “*Yä Rayya Zämäčä*”.<sup>236</sup>

**Table-1: Lists of some Märhabété’s Victimized by Fascist Emasculation.**<sup>237</sup>

No	Names of the victims	Place to emasculate	Conditions during situation
1.	<i>Qés Šägayä Talé</i>	<i>Zoma Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated,
2.	<i>Ato Čärqos</i>	<i>Zoma Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated and killed
3.	<i>Ato Wäldamlak</i>	<i>Zoma Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
4.	<i>Abba Akäbäräñ</i>	<i>Däläma Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated

<sup>232</sup> Informants: Tämtem, Berhanu, Abäbä; IES, MS, No. 1000, p.23.

<sup>233</sup> Alämayähu , p.38

<sup>234</sup>IMS, MS.No. 1000, p.23.

<sup>235</sup>*Ibid.* Ephraim, p.57.

<sup>236</sup> Ahmed, p.157; Informants: Asäläfäch, Däläläñ, Tafäsä, Birhanu, Tämtem.

<sup>237</sup>Informants: Tämäsäläw , Tägäñe Bäkälä, Addis Täšomä, Asäläfäch, Ashiné Ayäle, Däläläñ Wäldäyäs, Mulugéta Wäldäšadiq, Tafese Wäldäšadiq, Tämte Wändmagägn

5.	<i>Abba Näsibu</i>	Däläma <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
6.	<i>Abba Kebäbäw</i>	Dälema <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
7.	<i>Abba Fäqargé</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated but still alive in Jirru, at Yeqoru <i>Qäbälé</i>
8.	<i>Abba Täšomä</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
9.	<i>Abba Čäru</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
10.	<i>Balambaras Abté</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
11.	<i>Qés Enbaqom</i>	Gerét <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
12.	<i>Ato Zäwudé Kebrät</i>	Gerét <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
13.	<i>Ato Wärqälämahu Tämtem</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
14.	<i>Aba Niqodimos Gončä</i>	Dänab <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated.
15.	<i>Ato Tames Keberät</i>	Embsam <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
16.	<i>Qés Mäkonen Kebrät</i>	Embsam <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
17.	<i>Aba Gäbräselasé Wärqu</i>	Bärqato <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
18.	<i>Aba Wäldämälak</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated
19.	<i>Abba Ašmägiyorgis</i>	Tamo <i>Qäbälé</i>	Emasculated

**Sources:** Informants from different victim areas. Date, 10-14/05/2021 E.C.

## 2.7.6. THE BATTLE OF MIDDA

Until 21 September 1938, *Grazmač* Täshomä and *Lej* Abäbä Šänqut settled on Kolaš Amba. Moreover, *Lej* Häilé Šänqut marched with Qäya patriots of *Baša* Lägäsä, *Baša* Gälamte, *Ato* Täfära Käskes, and *Ato* Mäšäša Bärqes fight and crush the enemy at Qäya Mountain. Afterward, these compatriot leaders aware of the people about fascist brutality around there camp at Läbqa Eyäšus, on the border of Wonçit river.<sup>238</sup> However, the enemy force made a sudden attack from the side of Wäreilu to the patriots of *lej* Hailé and the same assault made by enemy forces from Midda to the patriots under *Baša* Gälamite. Hence, both forces of *lej* Hailé and *Baša* Gälamite were forced to run away and respond against the clash. During that time, *Grazmač* Täshomä and *lej* Abäbä looked at the battle through the battlefield glass and wanted to support the patriots. Though, the enemy force made atrocious massacres to the patriots by their huge numbers of modern weapons.<sup>239</sup> Finally, because of the above reason, the patriots were ruthlessly offended even if the enemy was also injured. As well, the captives, many patriots were sacrificed in the theatre of war. The known dead were *Baša* Lägäsä, Däjäné Wärqé, Zäwudé Säbseb and Däboçe. Unexpectedly, *lej* Häilé and some others were saved after being strongly belligerent.<sup>240</sup>

## 2.7.7. THE BATTLE OF WÄRÄMO

In September 1938, the prominent patriots of Märhäbété *lej* Abäbä Šänqute and *Baša* Gäläta Qorčo plan to assault the opponent in the base camp of Wärämo.<sup>241</sup> In the battle *Qäñazmač* Dämesé, the instrument of fascist, gave the oath to achieve expected disaster to patriots and reached an agreement and went away to the battle of Wärämo. According to accounts, the positions in the war were, on the right side *lej* Hailé, on the left side *lej* Abäbä and *Baša* Gäläta Qorčo.<sup>242</sup> The war was opened on 21 September 1938, started at six-hour, and continued up to ten-hour. As a result, the fascist collaborators *Qäñazmač* Dämesé and other *bandits* were killed in the battle. From patriots Qäyu Anuta, Erdačäw Täsfa and Därbé Jämma died.<sup>243</sup> After, all the fascist forces turned back to the direction of the Därra garrison. Ultimately, *lej* Häilé, *lej* Abäbä, and *Baša* Gäläta Qorčo controlled all materials including machine guns from the fascist force. This led to reaching a good chance for the next battle

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<sup>238</sup> IES, MS, No.1000, p.25.

<sup>239</sup> Alemayehu, p.50.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid*, p.57, IES, MS, No.1000, p.51.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid*, p.58.

<sup>242</sup> IES, MS, No.1000, p.34; Informants: Almaz, Näbeyu Tadässä.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid*, p.52.

and many people in the area understood them and other patriots became partners of the resistance.<sup>244</sup> Further, On 7 November 1938, *Lej Häylé Šänqute* also fought the force of Italians at the place called Tamo *qäbälé*. Though he was wounded and beheaded by the huge force of the fascists, and finally, fascists took his head as a war prize to Ergibiot camp.<sup>245</sup> The peoples told about the death of *Lej Haile Šänqut* as follows by the poem;

አልገዘም ብሎ ለጣልያን መንግስት  
 ሰሰት አመት ተዋጋ ሳይረዳ አረፍት  
 ታወቀ በሸዋ በሮማ የሱ ወንድነት  
 ሃይሌ ታሞ ቀረ የአማኑል ለት።<sup>246</sup>  
*For not colonizing it to the Italian government  
 Fighting for three years without rest  
 His hero known by Šäwa and Roma  
 Haile left in Tamo on the days of Emmanuel.*

### 2.7.8. GENOCIDE COMMITTED BY ITALY IN AMÄŠÄÑÄ WAŠA

Amäšäñña Waša, literally meaning Cave of resistance, is found in Mänz Qäya Gäbrél *Wäräda* in Zärät *Qäbälé* of North Šäwa, Amhra regional state. It is about 27 Kilometers far from the town of Zämäro.<sup>247</sup> Amäšäñña Waša is the name of the cave, because of three main factors. Firstly, before the coming of Italians, there were *bandits* or *Šefta* in the Cave who were not ruled by the then government. Secondly, it served as a shelter for the group of individuals who refused to be ruled and governed by the foreign Fascist Italians. Thirdly, still, no one could find or reach the last edge of the cave and this considered the Cave is considered as *Amäšäñña Waša* or the cave of rebellion. The local and foreign individuals had attempted to know how far the Cave is. While no one could know the last internal border of the cave. Thus, this is the factor why the cave is named as Amäšäñña Waša.<sup>248</sup>

Zärät has a geographical advantage linking Jamma, Qäya, Märhabété, Jirru, and Lalo midir. Later on patriotic resistance fighters from Jamma, Qäya, in Mänz, Märhabété, and Jirru had joined and entered the cave in April 1939. The cave was prepared well. They have all the materials such as local food preparation tools such as *Dest*, *Säféd*, *Enqeb*, *Mosäb*, *Meṭad*; local beverage preparing materials like *Gan*, *Gänbo*, *Madega*, *Doço*; water fetching like

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid*, pp.57-58.

<sup>245</sup> Erqyihun, p.72-73.; Alemayehu, p.62.

<sup>246</sup> Alemayehu, p.63.

<sup>247</sup> Gashaw Ayferam Endaylalu, “Mustard Gas Massacres and Atrocities Committed by Italy in 1939 against the Inhabitant of Menz, Märhabété, and Jamma in Amäšäña Washa/Zärät Cave”, *Cultural and Religious Studies*, September 2018, Vol. 6, No. 9, (Däberä Berhan University, September, 2019), p.506.

<sup>248</sup> Informant: Terunäš Aqnaw, (Alem Ketema), Date, 08/07/2020.

*Ensera* and coffee preparing tools. There is also a large number of cereal baskets including *debeñet* and underground baskets.<sup>249</sup>

The cave has only one entrance gate. The end of the cave is not yet discovered. Even it is difficult to prove it. On the left side of the cave, there is water called *Bahir*. Even two rivers namely *Shint* and *Séṭan Bahir*, Devil River, also flowed through the mouth of the cave. Several *Dibeñet*, underground cereal baskets, cloth made up of cotton, and other food and beverage preparation tools fill the right side of the cave. To enter into the second part of the cave it is must to pass through the very narrow path, which requires traveling like Snake. After some 10 to 15 minutes, it is possible to walk. However, entering the third part, where church property and others are found, is risky. No one has attempted to enter into this part except the resistance fighter to keep properties.<sup>250</sup>The existence of the inhabitants and patriots in the Amāšāñā wašā was informed to the fascists by the local collaborator known by the name Esubalāw Berlé, and Häylé Mariam Gäbré of Zärät. These individuals ordered the Italian military force that came from Märhäbété, Jirru, and Mänz to the cave. They served as means of Italians to the cave. Then the fascist forces implement different tactics to beat up the patriot and residents in the cave.<sup>251</sup>

The first way was the use of *banda* to bring out the patriots from the Cave. The local collaborator Häylé Mariam Gäbré had tried to influence the patriots to offer for the Italian army. During this time, some patriots were come out of the cave and the surrendered individuals were brought to *Cambo*<sup>252</sup>, at Zärät garrison and the Italian soldiers killed most of them although this Italian military strategy was not fully successful.<sup>253</sup>By the second approach on 6 April 1939, Esubalāw Berlé, the local collaborators of fascism were reporting to the rebel troops for Italians. Hence, they began to attack the mouth of the cave with artillery and Machine guns.<sup>254</sup> Nonetheless, they were not effective in bringing about the surrender of the patriots of the cave. However, the Cave is important because it served as a

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<sup>249</sup> Alfred Gonzalez-Ruibal, Yonatan Sahle and and Xurxo Ayán Vila, "A Social Archaeology of Colonial War in Ethiopia ", *World Archaeology*, vol. 43(1), (March 2011) p.44. Gašhaw Ayfāram, "Mustard Gas Massacres ..." p.510.

<sup>250</sup> Gashaw, 507.

<sup>251</sup> IES, No.1000, p.66.

<sup>252</sup> Cambo refers to the area of the present day Zeret, a small town that is located near to the Cave of Ametsegna Washa. Cambo is not Amharic word; it comes from the word Camp, because the area had served as the Italian military Garrison.

<sup>253</sup> Informant, Abäbä Gäberu, (Aläm-Kätäma), Date, 07/04/2020.

<sup>254</sup> IES, No.1000, p.66.

shelter against any fires opened by the Italian soldiers.<sup>255</sup> The third fascist technique for attacking the patriots in the Cave was using airplane-dropping bombs from air on 7 April 1939. This is also not effective and could not bring change more than attacking the external rock of the cave. Given the probable difficulty in taking the place without suffering many casualties and the loss of Italian soldiers, the Italians had requested flamethrowers and Mustard Gas to use on their attack on the patriots.<sup>256</sup> At last, the Italians committed the unkind and horrible mass execution on the patriots of the Cave which is never forgotten in the history of Ethiopia. They were in search of a more advanced and effective method. There were different prerequisite arrangements made to implement Mass-killing programs of Italians in the cave. The Italian military official *Šaläqa Baša* Bogliye was assigned to implement this campaign into effect.<sup>257</sup> On 8 April 1939, by his order, they forwarded the head of two and three Oxen stretched down from the mountain downwards into the cave attached with electric wires. The patriots that lived in the Cave observed these.<sup>258</sup>

Following this, on the same day, 12 barrels of C-500-T bomb filled with poison Gas that was joined by thick electric wire forwarded from top to the bottom of the mountain. The sound created by the cans when they scroll down seems like the actual breakdown of the mountain. Finally, these cans landed in front of the Cave.<sup>259</sup> Following this, Italians burned the landed C-500-T bomb Mustard Gas to 12 barrels by the Howitzer cannons and other guns. Then, the poison gas flew into the internal parts of the Cave. In addition to this the fire opened by the patriots also broke out the container of the poison gas and it began to explode and the three colored Green, yellow, and light purple colored glasses began to scorch the eyes of the patriots.<sup>260</sup>

The entry of the poison gas into the Cave becomes a danger for the patriots of the Cave. It brought difficult effects on the breathing systems not only on human beings but also on any living things on the land surface.<sup>261</sup> He also noted the severity of the poison gas on living things in the following way;<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> *Ibid*, p.67.

<sup>256</sup> Alfred Gonzale, p.52.

<sup>257</sup> Daneil, p.140.

<sup>258</sup> IES, Ms.No.1000, p.66.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid*. p.68.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>261</sup> Daneil, pp.165-166

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid*.

መርዙ በብዛት የፈሰሰባቸው ሰዎች የቆሰለ አካላታቸው ልብስ እንኳን አላሰነካ ብሎ ራቁታቸውን ተጋድመው፡፡ጉማሬዎች እንጂ ሰዎች አይመስሉም፡፡ከሩቅማየቱም ያሰቅቅ ነበር፡፡ እነዚያ ሰዎች የጣራቸውን እድሜ ከማራዘም በቀር፡፡መቼም እንዲያ ከፈራረሱ በሁዋላ የመትረፍ እድል እንደማይኖራቸው የታወቀነው፡፡በወነት፡፡እንዲያ ያለውን መሳሪያ ምንም ጠላት ቢሆን በሰው ላይ ለማዋል የሚጨክን ሰው በልብ ፈንታ ሰባዊ ስሜት የሌለው አሰት ድንጋይ መሆን አለበት፡፡ እንዲያ ያለውን መሳሪያ በሰው ላይ ማዋል፡፡ሰብአዊ ሕሊና ሊሸከመው የማይችል እጅግ ከባድ መሆኑን አለም ሁሉ ያወቀውና ያወገዘው በመሆኑ፡፡የጣሊያን መንግስት በኢትዮጵያ ላይ ከማድረጉ በቀር ሌላ መንግስት በሌላ አገር ላይ አደረገ ሲባል ተሰምቶ የሚታወቅ አይመስለኝም፡፡<sup>263</sup>

*Those Men whose body was wounded with a large amount of poison gas become very difficult to clothing. The naked sleeping Men seem like hippopotamus, not human beings. Looking at them was shocking. These wounded men had no chance to live rather than living for a little time. That is apparent, those, who are even the enemy, had used such and had no sense of humanity. It is very difficult and condemned by the international community. I did not believe that no one could use this poison gas, except Italians in Ethiopia in the world for the first time.*

Surprisingly, the Patriots were able to defend the cave against the Italian attack for about two weeks until April 11, 1939. Conversely, the war concluded with the victory of Italians and the defeat of the force of the Patriots. Many patriots including elders, Women, and Children were killed.<sup>264</sup>

According to Gashaw Ayiferam; the total number of five thousand five hundred lost their life due to the genocide committed by Italy. Nevertheless, there are different data concerning this number. The memoir written by *Dājazmač Tāšomā Šānqut* indicates that more than three thousand patriots and other combatants were said to have been killed by Fascist Italy. Generally, five thousand five hundred people died due to mustard gas in the cave. This number may not include the number of children and women. Along with this, an unknown number of cattle, goats, and sheep have died. When we see the health effects of mustard gas, those who survived faced respiratory system problems, skin related problems and most of them were blind.<sup>265</sup>

According to the Memory written by *Dājazmač Tāšomā*, confirmed that the survivor of the massacre, at 12 hours even the patriotic fighters became unconscious, mad, and insane. This was a very difficult condition for those who resisted the gas with onion and their urine. It was difficult to control them even though they take guns to kill those who are in the cave.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Daneil Mamo, pp.165-166.  
<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.* pp.138-140.  
<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.* IES, MS, No. 1000, P.73.  
<sup>266</sup> Informants: Tāmtem Wāndmagāñ, Yimāñušaāl Wāldāšdeq.

Unexpectedly, on the night of that day, *Grazmač* later *Däjazmač* Täšomä Šänqut decided to leave the cave. He gathered those sixteen resistance fighters who resisted the gas and escaped at night using several tactics. Along with *Grazmač* Šešegu, Dämäqä Čufa (his home is Qälawuha three kilometers from the cave), Zämälak Wubé (from Zärät), and Wäldä-Şadiq Dosãña were the survivor. Fäsäsä Täsäma and Bişawu Täsäma also survived but left their life with eye blindness. After some days of the massacre, Italians entered the cave and murdered inhumanely those who survived but in between life and death. Among the patriot Täšomä Šänqut families, his father *Qañazmač* Šänqut Tédi Däraji, *Wäizäro* Fantayä Šänqut, *Wäizäro* Mamité Mäläsä, *Mäträyäs* Halilé were died in the cave.<sup>267</sup> The mustard gas massacre also causes moral and psychological damage. The surrounding fertile land of the cave is not yet cultivated because the land is viewed as “land of blood”. The cave is also viewed as the “Cave of the devil”.<sup>268</sup>

Due to such conviction plus the difficulty to know the end of the cave, no one is urged to enter the cave. Only a few individuals would enter the cave. Still today, there are human body ruminants, clothes made up of cotton, cereal baskets, and guns. The archaeological remains revealed that women had been playing a crucial role in the war. As shown in the entrance part of the cave, there were tools and equipment used for food and beverage preparation. This shows that the task given to women is similar to the normal condition. Thus, the cave is the most impressive that hosts the patriot fossils that sacrifice their life for their beloved country, Ethiopia. But, there is no well-organized preservation management made to commemorate the immense sacrifices played by these patriots. They had been forgotten which is a very heart-rending condition.<sup>269</sup> The peoples told the history in the cave as follows by the poem;

አመጠኛ ዋሻ ተናገር እባክህ ፤  
 ስንት ህዝብ አለቀ በዙሪያ በዉስጥህ፤  
 ሬሳዉ ዋጋ አጥቶ እንደቀላል ነገር፤  
 ስንቱ የትም ቀረ እንደቀላል ነገር።<sup>270</sup>  
*Ametsgna cave please told the story;*  
*How many people have died around us?*  
*The dead had lost its value;*  
*Many had been left unburied.*

<sup>267</sup> Alemayehu, p.115. IES, MS, No. 1000, P.73.; Informants: Tämtem, Yimäñuṣaal, Tafäsä.

<sup>268</sup> Gashaw, 509.; Informants: Yimäñuṣaal, Abäbä,

<sup>269</sup> Daniel, p.146, Gonzalez, Ruibal Alfred, Sable Yonatan and Ayán Vila Xurxo, p.60.

<sup>270</sup> Alemayehu, p.81.



Alfredo Gonzalez Rubel, Yonatan Sahle, and Ayan Vila in their article explain the effects of Italian chemical weapons on human bodies as follows;

*.... A chemical attacks the skin provoking several blisters and hemorrhages and as they enter the organism, it caused internal bleeding and peels off the uncles membrane of the bronchial tubes it may take several extremely painful days to die.<sup>271</sup>*

**Table -2. Numbers of Victims Executed in the Massacre of Ameşāña Waşa.**

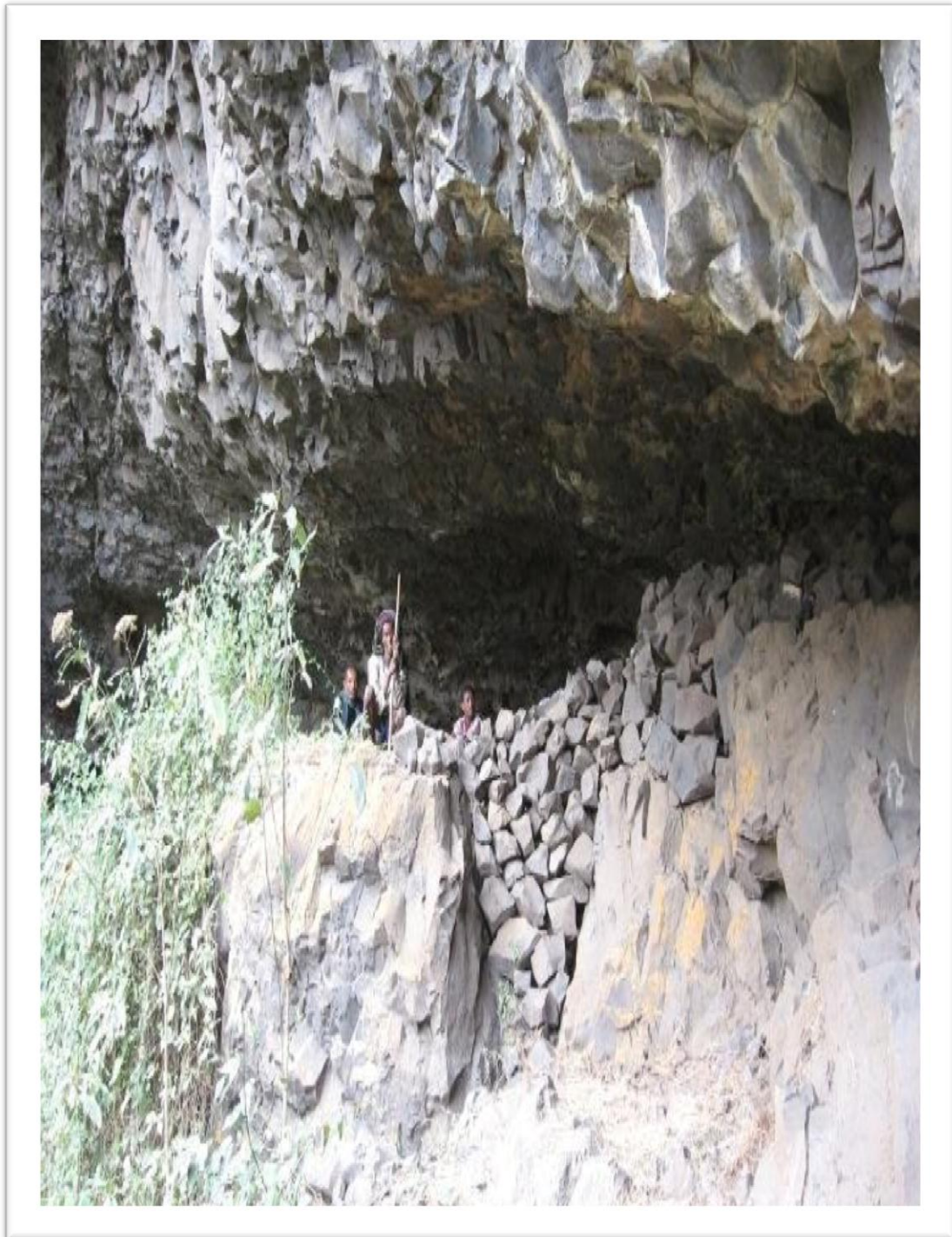
No	Name	Regions		
1.	<i>Qāgnazmač Šānqut Tédi</i>	Mārhābété		
2.	<i>Wizero Mamité Mālāsā</i>	Mārhābété		
3.	<i>Woizero Fantayā Šānqut</i>	Mārhābété		
4.	Mātrāyes Haile	Mārhābété		
5.	<i>Qāñazmači Metek</i>	Mārhābété		
6.	<i>Lej Hailé Yigāzu</i>	Mārhābété		
7.	Tāklé Atbalk	Mārhābété		
8.	Sānge Bālačāw	Mārhābété		
9.	Banjaw Awul	Mārhābété		
10.	Kābādā Tāgāñ	Mārhābété		
11.	Abtāyās Gābrāmekael	Mārhābété		
12.	Bāhabtu Sābseb	Mārhābété		
13.	Ṭāmos Enkeboll	Mārhābété		
14.	Wāgdārāsāñ Tākda	Mārhābété		
15.	Kāfālā Tāklāṭadiq	Mārhābété		

<sup>271</sup> Gonzalez, Ruibal Alfred, Sable Yonatan, and Ayán Vila Xurxo, “A social archaeology of colonial war in Ethiopia”. *Article in World Archaeology* · March 2011, p.55

16.	Wäldägiyorgis Awulé	Märhäbété		
17.	Weldemariam Awulé	Märhäbété		
18.	Adäraw Bayu	Märhäbété		
19.	Tämäsgän Täšomä	Märhäbété		

**Source: Alemayehu Abebe, pp, 115-126; IES, MS, No.1000, p**

**Figure-3: The Entrance of Amäšäña Waša (the cave of Zärät)**



**Source: Gashaw Ayiferam, p.123.**

**Figure-4: Human Remains in the Cave Cave of Zärät with Large Part of the Back Skin Preserved but Without Skull.**



**Source: Alfredo Gonzalez Rubel, Yonatan Sahle, and Ayan Vila.**



**Figure-5: Safety Pin From A 2-Kg Bomb Used To Deliver Mustard Gas Into The Cave Cave Of Zärät.**



**Source: Adapted From Alfredo Gonzalez Rubel, Yonatan Sahle, and Ayan Vila**

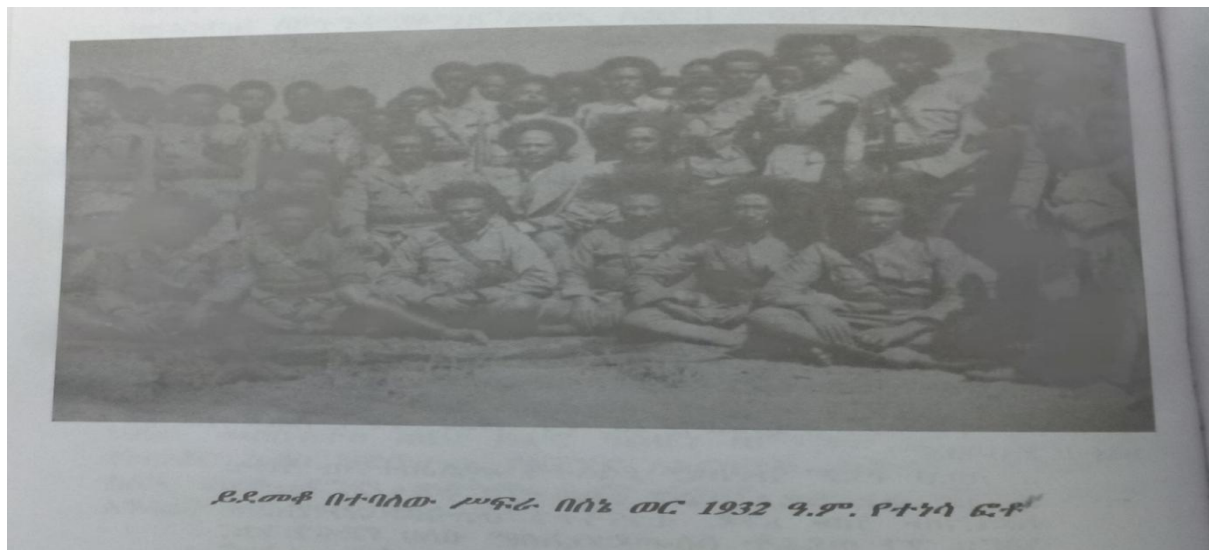
## 2.7.9. THE FIRST BATTLE OF ADÄRÉ

On 1 April 1940, Colonel Rossini accompanied by massive forces came to Märhäbété from Däbrä Berhan garrison to resolve the so-called generals of fascist in Märhäbété areas.

<sup>272</sup>According to accounts, *Grazmač* Täshomä and *lej* Abäbä Šänkute made admirable victories against the fascist force in Märhäbété. Then, Colonel Rossini asked to bring two collaborators, wanting to abolish the patriotic grouping for the last time. He continued his journey by using two collaborators of Märhäbété namely, Wändmtäkahu Wärkagäñähu.<sup>273</sup>

Conversely, *Grazmač* Täshomä has obtained primary information and he looks at the movements of fascist and prepares the groups of patriots ready to open for war at Adäre. *Lej* Abäbä also waits for the enemies silently with his patriots. In the situation, the enemy enters into the targets of patriots and a very severe war happens.<sup>274</sup> In this Battle *lej* Abäbä, Šänkute was severely wounded. Then, *Grazmač* Täshomä with the wounded brothers and other groups of patriots like those that Kassa Tägäñ, Hailämariam Gäbré, and Tägaw Ayälä expelled through Yedämäqo *Qola* to Jämma Forest. In this combat, two patriots were killed. On the side of enemies have gotten very severe damage and for burial it takes three days.<sup>275</sup>

**Figure-6: The photos of groups of Märhabéte Patriots at Yedämäqo Qäbälé in 1932.E.C.**



**Source:- Alämayähu Abäbä, p.56.**

<sup>272</sup> Alemayehu, p.87.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid*, P.85; Informants: Tämtme, Täçanä, Tafäsä Wäldäşdiq, Şähäyenäşe Wärké.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>275</sup> Alemayehu, p.88.

## 2.7.10. THE SECOND BATTLE OF ADÄRÉ

On October 1940, *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänquṭe positioned on the direction of Jamma River, At Säbagé area, *Lej* Abäbä Šänquṭe also placed on the direction of Wänçit River, at Wārka Amba *qäbälé*. Subsequently, they enclosed the fascist encampment of Fétra from two directions.<sup>276</sup> Besides this, informants assert that the fascists are stressed and they were not out from camps and convey people to support them.<sup>277</sup> On 14 November 1940, *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänquṭe, sent patriots to conquer some areas of Dära. Because in Dära the inhabitants were not submitted to the patriots and they collaborated with fascists. Accordingly, the Patriots opened the war and penalized villagers, captured their cattle, and turned to their best *Grazmač* Täšomä and *Lej* Abäbä Šänquṭe. At the same time, the fascist observed the actions taken by *Grazmač* Täšomä Šänquṭe and *Lej* Abäbä Šänquṭe punished the inhabitants of the rebelled areas of Märhäbété and recognize the huge numbers of patriots. At that time, the fascist decided to bring additional force from Addis Ababa and Däbrä Berhan to devastate all the patriots of Märhäbété.<sup>278</sup> Hence, on 29 December 1940, when the fascist began to back to Märhäbété, in the same time, *Lej* Täšomä Šänquṭe and members wait for the enemy with well-prepared manner on the gate of Adäre on 1 January 1941. In the battle, *Lej* Abäbä Šänquṭe becomes severely wounded.<sup>279</sup> Then, the fascists heard the news about the injury of *Lej* Abäbä by their spy. Thus, fascists prepared a very huge army and gave a mission to damage patriots brought from Sälalé, Fečä, and Ensaro pass through *Ṭoṭilish Qola*, in Ensaro. The enemy forces of Jirru and Doba through *Morät Qolla*, the enemy forces of Märhäbété through *Yedämäko* to sandwich the patriots.<sup>280</sup> Finally, on 18 January 1941, they engaged in massive fighting. In the battle, the fascist took the upper hand by their military superiority and the following seven patriots *Ato* Wärqé Dägif, *Ato* Gašaw Dämes, *Ato* Huneñ, *Ato* Däjäné, *Ato* Lägäsä, *Bayä* Habtäyäs, and *Lebéräga* Dässé have died.<sup>281</sup> Then, the patriots retreated to their camps of *Bälbälit*, in Ensaro.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*, p.87.

<sup>277</sup> Informants: Tämtem, Asnaqä Nigatu.

<sup>278</sup> Alemayehu, p.80.

<sup>279</sup> IES, MS, No.1000, p.97.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid*, p.96.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid*, p.100.

### 2.7.11. THE DROOPING OF POISON GAS IN MÄRHABÉTÉ

According to my source, the patriotic resistance intensified from time to time and the threats of the enemy began to escalate. Moreover, on 23 January 1941, the commander of the fascist army general Tilinti secretly flew to Addis Ababa from the Zoma base camp. On the following day, he loaded poison gas and poison water by plane.<sup>283</sup> The plane also dropped the gas first, at a place called Säbagé, because the fascists wanted to devastate the army of *Gerazmač* Täšomä Šänqute. The gas affected peasants, children, elders, plants, and animals. Subsequently, the fascists dropped the gas in another part of Märhabété, Wärq Amba. This was because in this area, another strong patriotic leader, *Lej* Abäbä Šänqute was based. The fascist wanted to devastate the army of *Lej* Abäbä Šänqute. In this village, the gas caused the death of many animals and human beings.<sup>284</sup> It is said that the fascists dropped this poison gas in Märhabété during harvesting season. Because of this reason, the gas burned the entire crop and the trees. The objectives of these fascist atrocities were to create loss of food and destruction of the forest for patriots where they took refuge. Despite the fact that the fascist took inhuman action against patriots, they did not paralyze and give up. Though, the Patriots faced a lack of provision. Yet, the patriots resisted the horrible attack of fascists, and the enemy was forced to retreat from this area to Fétra garrison.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Alemayehu Abebe, pp.101-103.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*



## CHAPTER THREE

### MANY FACE OF THE RESISTANCE

#### 3.1. ORGANIZATION AND LEADERS OF THE RESISTANCE

After the occupation of Addis Ababa by the enemy force, the fascists planned to control all *Awurajas* of Ethiopia.<sup>286</sup> Following the defeat of Ethiopia in the battle of Michaw, on 2 May 1936, the Council of Ministers decided to send the Emperor to Europe for the appeal of justice for Ethiopia. Besides this, before the departure of Emperor Haile Selassie, they discussed the fate of patriotic resistance in the country and outside the country. Zäwudé Reta notes the ways to defend the countries from fascist was as follows;

.....ከአንግድህ ወድህ ጦር አሰባሰቦ ጠላትን ለመግጠም የሚያስችል መሳርያም ሆነ በቂ ሰራዊት ስለሌለ ለነፃነት የሚደረገው ትግል በጫካ የሽምቅ ወጊያ ከሚደረግ በስተቀር ሌላ አማራጭ አለመኖሩን፤ በሁለት ግንባር ጦር ማዘጋጀትና የመጀመርያው በጣርማበር በኩል፤ ሁለተኛው በአህያ ፊጅና በጅሁር አፋፍ በኩል ተመድቦ ጠላትን ለመወጋት እንድትሉ ሚደረግበት?.....<sup>287</sup>

.....the struggle for freedom has no choice but to fight in the jungle, as there are no weapons or enough troops to mobilize your army against the enemy; setting up and fighting on two fronts, the first on Tarmaber; the second is that they are assigned to fight on the side of Aheya Fäji.....

Along with, this decision, *Qäññazmač* Täšomä Šänqute, *Lej* Abäbä Šänqute, Kibräsilasé Adära and *Grazmač* Zäwudä Asfaw, marched from Addis Ababa to Märhabété, to fight the enemy in guerrilla warfare with your brothers, relatives, and trusted patriots in the area up to liberation.

Consequently, the enemy came to Märhabété from Déssé and Wäraillu by crossing Wonçit River and made the first camp in the area between Kollaš and Doba at Ergibiot (Ambat *Qäbälé*). Then, they made a garrison with strong forts and they were ready to open war.

Accordingly, under the order of *Grazmač* Zäwudä Asfaw, the first meeting was held in Aläm Kätäma, near *Yä Amanuel Warka* on October 1937, the present compounds of Ofna Qedus Amanuél Church, in Märhabété Wäräda at Aläm Kätäma. He request *Qäññazmač* Täšomä Šänqute, to be a leader for the patriots.<sup>288</sup>

Moreover, other patriots were involved in the meeting. Those were; *Grazmač* Abäbä Arägay from Morät, *Däjazmač* Awraris From Afqera, Mäsfen Seleše from Sälalé, Käbädäč Seyum, *Fitawurari* Däbäbä Mäsäy and Tafäsä Mäsäy from Midda. These patriots had agreed to struggle Italians under the leadership of *Qäññazmač* Täšomä Šänqute in Märhabété and they support each other against their common enemy.<sup>289</sup> They agreed to struggle with the fascists until liberation.<sup>290</sup>

<sup>286</sup> Informants: Awulačaw, Almaz Gäläta Qorčo, Berhanu Lebséwärq.

<sup>287</sup> Zewude, p.251.

<sup>288</sup> Eprem, P.56; Informants: Abäbä Gäberu, Abära, Ašagré.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*

### 3.2. THE ROLE OF INNER PATRIOTS

Most Inner patriots had given armaments, munitions, and information for patriots. Women became servants for the enemy and collected wood, washed cloth, and were involved in other jobs even as a prostitute. Then they passed information to the patriots as a spy.<sup>291</sup> Inner patriots were also a great source of irritation or frustration to the Italians who considered them more harmful than the guerilla fighters or conventional warriors. Because the inner patriots were so difficult to defeat the Italians since they had lived with them. Most of the inner patriots were women. This was because of their capacity to incite less suspicion and the prominent role they played in that respect.<sup>292</sup> For medical supply and other assistance, the patriots mostly deepened on the “*Yewust Arbenoch*” i.e their supporters who lived and worked with the enemy.<sup>293</sup>

Among the most important inner patriots of Märhabété where *Woizero* Laqäč Mäket, Mamité Adamu, Metek Kebrät, Mamité Täsäma, Asäläfäč Kebräsilasé (daughter of Kebräsilasé Adära) and *Baša* Gäbré Kälel were some of the inner patriots of Märhabété. This inner patriots in Märhabété had provide food, provision, medical supply and information to the patriots in the areas.<sup>294</sup>

### 3.3. THE ROLE OF WOMENS

According to Adolf Parlesak, Ethiopian women were the most powerful women in our land. They had strong courage and became harsh, especially during a war. They were always within their husband in fighting. If her husband was shot by enemy forces, the Ethiopian woman became very angry and fought even more than a man. Women, cook, prepare and support care the wounded,<sup>295</sup> encourage a man by singing a song. The mother who gave birth stayed for forty days with the assistance of other women and turned back to normal life. Nonetheless, the birth rate was slower than the death rate because of typhus.<sup>296</sup> The first woman worthy of mention for her immense military achievements was *Woizero* Käbädäč Seyoum. She was the wife of *Däjazmač* Abära Kassa, who was killed by the Italians for having unsuccessfully attempted to liberate the capital with the help of his brother *Däjazmač*

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<sup>290</sup> Alemayehu, p.23.

<sup>291</sup> Informants: Abäbä, Abära, Ašagré.

<sup>292</sup> Bahru, 2002. p.173.

<sup>293</sup> Tedela, pp.358-359

<sup>294</sup> Tadäsä, p.175; IES, MS, No.1000, p.101.

<sup>295</sup> Adolf Parlesak, *Yä Habäša Jäbdu (Habešska Odyesea)*, (Addis Ababa University Press, Berana Printing Organization, 1989), p.72. Muluken, P.45.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*

Wondwosen and the renowned patriots of Šäwa in July 1936. *Woizero* Kābādāč started her patriotic activity already before the fall of the capital to the Italians. Consequently, when her husband was fighting in the northern fronts she maintained peace and order in the province of Sälalé representing the governorship of her husband. In this region, Kābādāč also did propaganda work of inspiring her men to die for their country and not to allow Italian disarmament and subversive activities.<sup>297</sup>

After the return of her husband from the northern front, she was engaged in taking care of the wounded and reinforcing his army with provisions and supplies. She accompanied her husband in the campaign of July 1936 to liberate the capital. The attempt earned her husband frequent harassment and a call for him to surrender to the Italians. Before he discussed the issue with his brother and surrendered himself, *Dājazmač* Abera sent his wife to Adisge, where she shortly afterward received his letter and arms. The letter contained his justification for surrendering. He wrote to his wife that he did not want to save his life at the expense of his innocent men whom, he feared, the Italians would massacre on failure to get his hands. This must have had a lasting impact on the later career of *Woizäro* Kābādāč. She received the news of the execution of her husband and his brother as soon as they surrendered to the Italians. The news caused much unhappiness to Kābādāč, who since then decided to avenge the death of her husband despite repeated Italian warnings and unsuccessful attempts to capture her. As a member of a royal family, she was able to mobilize a large number of fighters within a short time. The army of her deceased husband, her two sons, and servants made up the core of her fees. *Woizäro* Kābādāč fought many battles in the districts of Mänz, Tägulät, Ifat, Sälalé, and Märhäbété.<sup>298</sup>

She made frequent contacts and often led joint attacks with prominent Šäwan patriotic leaders such as *Ras* Abäbä Arägay, *Dājazmač* Zäwdä Asfaw, *Dājazmač* Täšomä Šänquṭ, and *Šäläqa* Mäsfen Seläše. Throughout the battles, she wore men's uniforms, fought gallantly, and commanded ably, at times finding herself during battles. Surprisingly enough, she was already pregnant when she took over the command of her husband's army. She stayed in the Holy Land until the liberation of Ethiopia in 1941 when she returned to her country and led a lonely career caring for orphan children and churches.<sup>299</sup> Lastly, the participation of women

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<sup>297</sup> Minale Adugna, "Women And Warfare In Ethiopia :A Case Study Of Their Role During The Campaign Of Adwa 1895-96,And The Italo Ethiopian War ,1935-41",(organization for social science research in eastern and southern Africa),gender issue research report series no.13,pp,27-28.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

was great and contributed to supporting the liberation movement of the country including in open battles. The following poem or war weep shows the contribution of Women patriots during the time of Italian occupation of Ethiopia;

*ወንድ የሚበልጠኝ በእርሻ ብቻ ነጩ  
 ጥይት መተኮስ ለሁላችን ነጩ  
 ለሀገር መሞት ለኔም ጭምር ነጩ  
 እተኩሳለሁ እኔ እንኳ ሴቲቲ  
 ፋሽስት ማራኪ ፍጹም ሴቲቲ<sup>300</sup>  
 Man is better than I only in the field am  
 Popping Bullet is for all of us  
 It is also for me to die for the country  
 Even I, a Woman open fire  
 The woman who would capture Fascist.*

During the patriot resistance period, children also had been given a job to keep animals, collect wood, prepare food, keep the mule for patriots, and bring water.<sup>301</sup>

### **3.4. THE CHALLENGES OF THE RESISTANCE IN MÄRHABÉTÉ**

#### **3.4.1. LACK OF PROVISIONS AND MEDICATION**

One of the problems that faced the patriots was the lack of provisions and medication. These were the challenges in the region was a severe food shortage, which badly affected the life of the patriots. The cause of the provisions was the strong nature of the resistance, which made the peasants not plow and cultivate their farmland, aggravating the famine hardship. Thus, food became a great issue of the time.<sup>302</sup>To minimize this problem, the patriots used different methods such as dividing the warriors on the peasant homelands, looting properties of collaborators, ambushing enemy fleets, and seizing provisions as well as armaments. They also assigned some of the fighters to cultivation and, when all alternatives failed, hunting wild animals, and collecting wild fruits and roots of plants.<sup>303</sup>Medication was another problem of the patriots. It was the most important thing to carry out the resistance movement safely. The patriots of Märhabété did not have trained physicians to treat the sick and wounded, it was only the women and unarmed patriots who treated the wounded patriots. The absence of any reliable medical

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<sup>300</sup> Lulu Gembenäh. "Yä häya amstännäw yä arbännöc Beal Mätasäbiya" Yagär gizat minister Mäzgäb bét Miyazya, 27, 1958 E.C, IES, MS, File No.1128, p.191.

<sup>301</sup>Informants: Şähäyenäşe, Tämäsäläw, Awulačäw.

<sup>302</sup>Informants: Wändemsiša Mamuyä, Wagayä Mamo, Terunäş Aknaw, Tämtme.

<sup>303</sup> Informants: Tämtem, Berhanu.

supplies had forced the patriots to depend on the services of traditional doctors (*Wägéša*).<sup>304</sup> This is supplemented by what is protected by inner patriots.<sup>305</sup>

### 3.4.2. SHORTAGE OF ARMS AND AMMUNITIONS

The other serious problem that persisted during the resistance period was the case of firearms. When the Italians made an aggressive spread into the borderlands of Ethiopia, only a few Ethiopians had possessed modern guns.<sup>306</sup> Adolf Parlesak participated in the northern front with *Ras* Kassa Hailu and other notable generals. He described the problems of the Ethiopian army in arms and ammunitions as follows;

“አብዛኛው ሰራዊታችን ከየጥሻውና ከየአምባው የመጣና ኅራይ ብቻ የታጠቀ፤ በመጀመሪያው ቀን ወጊያ ጠላትን ስሎ ጥሩ መሳርያ ለመታጠቅ በፅኑ እምነት የቆመ ጀግናና ጉጉ ጦር ነበር።”<sup>307</sup>

“Most of our troops came from the Jungle and the Fort armed only with the sword; on the first day of battle, he was a very brave and eager soldier who was determined to arm himself with better weapons.”

Besides, as informants told me, during the campaign to Ergebiot, Kollaš, and Midda many of the Märhabété people had possessed traditional weapons such as Axe, knife, sword, and spear. Even after the beginning of the guerrilla warfare type most of the people were without firearms though there were captured arms at the different battles.<sup>308</sup> As far as the distribution of firearms in the country before and the time of occupations concerned, Sälomé Gäbrä Egziabher described that the Shäwa province had more firearms than the other provinces. As she discussed in detail, the price of guns in Gojjam and Gondar was too expensive. In Gojjam, for instance, the price of one rifle was estimated at 500 Maria Theresa Taller.<sup>309</sup>

Therefore, the patriots found it difficult to purchase even one rifle. The problem was not only the quantity but also the quality of the arms. Besides the traditional weapons, the Ethiopians armed with the old aged weapons were probably the treasures of the battle of Adwa and even before it. The majority of weapons were *Nasmaser*, *Senader*, *Moskob*, *Albine*, *Mouser*, *Wäçafo*, *Lebel*, *Pistol*, and some machine guns.<sup>310</sup> Due to their long service, most of the weapons were not active and rusted. Even so, the Italians came with weapons that were automatic, devastating, and latest. The arms included tanks, poison gas, flamethrowers, flame

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<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>305</sup> Glover, 1987, p.13.

<sup>306</sup> Parlesak, p.23.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72, 146.

<sup>308</sup> Informants: Wändmsiša, Ašagrē Kerämtē, Tämtē.

<sup>309</sup> Salome Gebre Egziabher. “The Ethiopian Patriots, 1936-41.” *Ethiopian Observer* 2, No. 12:63-91. 1958, p.65, Parlesak, p.123.

<sup>310</sup> “*Yä Däjjazmäč Täšomä Šänkut Yä Hywot Tarik*”, IES, MS, No. 1000, p.73.

bombs, mortar, shells, aircraft, and military cars as well as various means of communications.<sup>311</sup> Thus, the technological superiority of the enemy made the road to liberation difficult though the Ethiopians fought resentfully in all days. The issue of weapons became a serious problem, which lasted up to the defeat of the enemy. To ease the problem, the patriots of Märhabété, Sälalé, Mänz, and Jirru used different strategies. Hence, assaulting the camps and garrisons was one of the tactics measured by the patriots to acquire modern weapons. The storming of the Fétra camp, Rämāšit camp, and Midda camp played a vital role in providing the weapons.<sup>312</sup>

In the dawn of the liberation starting from 1939, the problem of firearms was somewhat minimized because of the beginning of the cross-border operation and the returning of the *bandas* and *askaris* who came with the gun. Notwithstanding, the issue of the firearm continued as a serious challenge until the final whistle of the liberation.<sup>313</sup>

### 3.4.3. LACK OF COMMUNICATION

The Ethiopian patriots did not well exchange ideas, and letters with each other due to the problem of communication. It was only after the formation of underground patriots that the most vital information was brought to them. In Märhabété, underground patriots organized under *Baša* Gäbré Kälel, who knew the Italian language. He could therefore transfer messages to the patriots by either reading newspapers or hearing dialogues from the Italians.<sup>314</sup> The Märhabété patriots were null of any communication agents like radio, telegrams, newspapers, and letters. They received messages, which traveled a long distance on foot because there was no means of transport. The Mules, Horses, and Donkeys were used as means of transport, which facilitated fast communications.<sup>315</sup> Hence, the different groups of patriots in Märhabété had the opportunity and often exchanged messages with messengers. To do this the patriots must find persons honest and careful who can bring the messages carefully. Drugs, bullets, rifles, and clothes brought to them passing through difficulties in order not to be discovered by the enemy because it would be dangerous to the senders if known. Food and water supplies could be late because of communication problems. In all cases, patriots were very far from information to know about the condition of the country, the

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<sup>311</sup> A.Parlesak, p.196; NALA.folder No. 63.1.file No. 47.14.

<sup>312</sup> Informants: Tämtē, Birhanu, Ašagrē.

<sup>313</sup> "Yä Engliz Mängist Wotadäroč Mälekt Yätor Gize Hig, Awaj ". *British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No. 2556, P.8; Informants: Abera Beyene, Kasahun Mekonen, and Daniel Amade.

<sup>314</sup> Informants: Tämtē, Birhanu, Tafäsä Wäldäšadiq, Mäkdäs Gäbrē, Šāhaynäše

<sup>315</sup> Informants: Wagayä Mamo, Wändmsiša, Abära.

enemy, and the situation of their fellow groups to deal on the common matter that is independence. Therefore, discouraged and despised the patriots in the resistance movement.<sup>316</sup>

#### 3.4.4. THE IMPACTS OF COLLABORATORS

The impact of collaborators was a very serious challenge that the patriots encountered in the resistance movement. During the occupation period, the people of Märhabété reacted differently. The majority of people condemned the Italian aggression; fiercely opposed, bravely fought the Italians, and generally, they were hostile to the enemy. The most common of these was the *Qafir*, a guard who informed the patriots about the approach of an enemy. Despite its nationwide scale, the resistance movement was incomprehensive, traitors, and *bandas* were more harmful than the Italian soldiers as they passed on information to the Italians.<sup>317</sup>

The *bandas*, who had enough knowledge about the geographical nature of the area, the villages of the insurgents as well as the strong and weak sides of the patriots, created more problems for the patriots than the Italians did.<sup>318</sup> This idea is acceptable by my informants who confirmed that the *bandas* were the native people formerly friends but now for the sake of personal interest became pro-Italians. After the Italian propaganda, they had gone and became loyal to them. They knew everything including very little things that the patriots had.<sup>319</sup>

Unlike the *bandas*, the *askaris* were not indigenous Ethiopians rather they were brought from Italian colonies of Libya, Eritrea, and Italian Somaliland. Indeed, they did not have enough information about the topography of Ethiopians but they were superior in military skills. They received military pieces of training before the war and developed their capacity in the course of the fighting from their colonial masters. Besides their military techniques, the *askaris* were courageous, fearless and sharpshooters, and merciless. In the major military confrontations such as in the Shiré, Tāmḃén, Ambaradom, and Maiçäw and the southern fronts, the *askaris* played a leading role for the victory of the enemy. They were at the forefront in controlling different regions of the country.<sup>320</sup> The *bandas* and the *askaris* affected the resistance movement in many ways. They burnt the villages, houses, and looted

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<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>317</sup> Sbacci, 1985, p.97; Seletene, 2003. p.46; Informants: Wāndafras, Tāmḃäm, Dälälāñ.

<sup>318</sup> Bahru, p.174.

<sup>319</sup> Informants: Tāmtem, Berhanu.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.* Araya, p.39.

their properties, taking their families as war prisoners. Nor the *bandas*, the *askaris* burnt many churches and clergies.<sup>321</sup>

The two Well-known collaborators of Italians were Häylä Səlassie Gugsa of Tigray and *Ras* Häylu Täklä Häymanot of Gojjäm. Both individuals were serious power rivals of Emperor Häylä Səlassié. They received arms and money from the Italians. For the Muslim states of Harar and the Oromo kingdoms of Jimma, there was a promise of reinstating the states from the Italians. These regions were forcefully incorporated into the Modern Ethiopian Empire. This had created discontent within the minds of these rulers. Harar also had lost its autonomy by forceful subjugation of Emperor Menelik in 1887 and *Abba* Jobir *Abba* Jifar lost its autonomy in the 1930s. *Abba* Jobir was imprisoned by the Ethiopian state in Addis Ababa, because of his opposition against the operation of Amhara soldiers to collect tax in the region. Thus, the existence of the disappointed group enabled Italians to gain considerable collaborators. The Italian collaborator, *Ras* Häylu Täklä Häymanot of Gojjäm was successful who was responsible for the execution of several patriots of Ethiopia including the Kassa Brothers.<sup>322</sup>

The action of collaboration with the enemy against the motherland and their people had a long history in Ethiopia. So, collaboration in northern Šäwa had been established as a base before the Italian force entered Šäwa. For instance, the Italians were successful in penetrating among the peoples of such ethnic and religious diversity to recruit collaborators. The main agents for this purpose were mainly the *balabbats* and *sheiks* who mobilized the peoples within their ethnic and religious domain against the resistance groups in the region.<sup>323</sup>

The *Ras* and *Däjazmasč* of Šäwa who had discontent with Emperor Hailes Silassie also became collaborators. They claimed that they were demoted from their privileges and Teferi-Haile Selassie had been promoted at their expense.<sup>324</sup> Of course, some individuals were privileged by the emperor but became collaborators after his flight. Few examples from both groups were *Qäñazmač* Täklä Marqos the personal servant of the emperor (defacto chronicler), *Däjazmač* Tayä Gulelat (member of the royal family), *Afänegus* Arägay Bäčaré (father of Abäbä Aregay), *Däjazmač* Mäšäša Tawändbäläy of Jirru, *Fitawurary* Tässäma Kätäma of Bulega, *Fitawurary* Sahilu WäldäGabriel of Menz, Abäbä Zägänu of Däbrä

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<sup>321</sup> Sabacci, 1985, p.98.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.* p.153.

<sup>323</sup> Tilahun Tasew, p.163.

<sup>324</sup> Dechassa, “peasants and resistance...” p.27.



Berhan, and *Däjjazmač* Abawuqaw of Wayyu.<sup>325</sup> Some individuals had a connection with the Italians, who were agents that gave information to the Italians, and who were paid much for that even before the actual conquest of the country. Moreover, the town dwellers were peaceful and a significant number of them collaborated with the Italians.<sup>326</sup>

In Märhabété collaborators were; Esubalaw Birlé, Häylé Mariam Gäbré, *Grazmač* Nidaw Çenqelo, *Grazmačä* Wäldämikaél were the most notable. Among these Esubalaw Birlé and Häylé Mariam Gäbré were giving information to the enemy about the existence of the inhabitants and patriots in the Amäšāñä Wašä. They also played a remarkable role in advising the Italians about the whole condition of the patriots and the people in the cave. Finally, they became the Cause for the genocide of 5,500 people due to fascist C-500-T mustard gas.<sup>327</sup>

*Grazmač* Nidaw Çinkelo, also the main Italian collaborators, was assigned to be the Italian governor of Märhabété. He gives important information about patriots in the area. However, he was killed by *Däjjazmač* Täšomä Šänqut in 1937. In addition to this, *Grazmačä* Wäldämikaél was collaborator, who attacked the patriot's force of *Lej* Gizäčaw Häylé, Abäbä Awraris, *Däjjazmač* Täšomä Šänqut, and *Däjjazmač* Käfalaw Woldä Šädəq. *Grazmačä* Wäldämikaél was lead and he had managed to shelter in the Italian Garrison center of Kolaš and participated in the emasculation of Märhabété people by fascists.<sup>328</sup> These collaborators were encouraged by Italian Money and Materials.<sup>329</sup> Italians had invested a large amount of money for their collaborators. Because the use of *bandas* was the most important means that enabled Italians to win the war of patriotic resistance in the country.<sup>330</sup>

The following poem shows that several local collaborators served Italians, who became obstacles to the further success of patriotic resistance movements. The loyal patriots of Ethiopia had tried their best to advise these collaborators not to support and allied with the force of the enemy. They informed the *bandas* not to be agents to the enemy but to turn back to the patriots and should fight for the independence of our motherland.<sup>331</sup>

አርበኞቹ ጽኑ በተሰፋችሁ በርቱ፤  
 ሞቶ ከመወቀስ ቆሞ ከመዋረድ፤  
 ባንዳ እየተባሉ ከማሳፈር ዘመድ፤  
 አርበኛም ይጠንከር መጋደሉን አይተው፤  
 ባንዳም በከህደቱ ይጽና ምክራችን ካልገባው፤

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<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>326</sup> Tedela, Ze yohanis, *Yä Itiyopiya Tarik, Italia Bä Itiyopiya: Kä Wälwel Iske Gonder*, (1927- 1934), (Addis Ababa, 2012), pp.385-386.  
<sup>327</sup> Gashaw, P.505.  
<sup>328</sup> Märé Mäşehét, 1996.  
<sup>329</sup> Ahmed (1995), P.6.  
<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.* P.1.  
<sup>331</sup> NALA, Folder. No. 63.1.07. File .No. 12.66.

ዋጋ አያጣምና ሁሉም እንደሰራው፤  
 በረሀና ተራራ ምሽግ ከመኖር ብላችሁ፤  
 ጣሊያን ቢንቀጥለል ምን ያደርግ መስሎአችሁ፤  
 ላረመኔ ጠላት ትታዘዛላችሁ፤  
 ተጋዳይ አርበኞች በረሽኛው ሆይ፤  
 ሰው አገሩን ነጻነቱን ካጣ ሞቱ አይደለም ወይ፤<sup>332</sup>  
*“Patriot be courage and optimistic in fortune  
 Not to be blamed after death and alive  
 Not to becoming called Banda and relatives  
 Let patriots be strong and not stop the struggle  
 Lets Banda stay in apostate, and If he could not listen to the device  
 They would gain fruits from their doing  
 Believing not to stay in a desert and forts of hills  
 Why you ordered to the merciless enemy  
 The patriotic warrior, gladiator, patron!  
 The Man is dead if he loses his freedom and country!*

### 3.4.5. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FASCIST CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Nevertheless, the five-year Italian rule over Ethiopia was not a peaceful experience of colonial occupation. They were continuously harassed by Ethiopian patriots and had to live entrenched in their isolated fortifications. Fascist Italy had committed several crimes against humanity. The ferocity of the Italian suppression of the Ethiopian resistance was stunning. The most common method of fighting the patriots is to blackmail them into surrender by terrorizing the civilian population.<sup>333</sup> This they accomplished largely by the bombing and Arial spraying of men, women, children, animals, crops, and drinking water with toxic chemicals provided by the Amara-based chemical warfare service referred to by the Italians as “section k”. Thus, by October when the invasion began an extensive chemical weapon facility covering 12.5 hectares had already been established near Mogadishu in neighboring Italian Somaliland, with a facility for preparing liquid and gas for the invasion.<sup>334</sup> It contained 17 storerooms, for storage together with 35,000 gas masks and decontamination materials for the protection of Italians.<sup>335</sup> By late 1935, the Italian advance on both fronts had almost ground to a halt in the face of Ethiopian resistance, even though her troops were barefooted and sometimes armed with no more than spears.<sup>336</sup>

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>333</sup> Informants: Tämtem, Abäbä, Birhanu, Tafäsä, Abära.

<sup>334</sup> Campbell, *the Massacre of Debrelibanos...*, p.31.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE LIBERATION OF MÄRHABÉTÉ AND THE EFFECTS OF THE WAR

#### 4.1. THE RETURN OF THE EMPEROR

Three days before the entry of the Fascist army to Addis Ababa, Emperor Haile Selassè had exiled to Europe to present his appeal for the League of Nations to get justice for the unjust Fascist aggression of Ethiopia.<sup>337</sup> However, since the League of Nations was dominated by the imperialist powers of Britain and France, It could not give a just solution to prevent the aggressive move made by Italians. They rather encouraged the illegal actions of Italians. Because, they did not want to disappoint Italy, fearing the alliance of Italy with their enemy, Germany. During the Second World War, one important historical event happened in Europe. This was the disloyalty of Italy to its former allies of Britain and France and joined with the new group Germany.<sup>338</sup> This seems dangerous for the colonial interest of the British in northeast Africa. The British were forced to defend their colonies like Sudan, Kenya, and British Somaliland. To this end, the British determined to support the liberation campaign of Ethiopia.<sup>339</sup>

The British opened offensives against Mussolini's East African Empire and Haile Selassè who was in exile in Britain was brought to Sudan with the Gideon force. Brigadier General Dan Sandford commanded that force and Major Orde Wingate crossed the Ethiopian boundary at Omedella in Gojjam.<sup>340</sup> The emperor arranged situations to come to the border region of Khartoum. Major Orde Winget assisted to deal with the Ethiopian case in the west and organized the Ethiopian refugees on the border.

He thus shows the return of the emperor to Ethiopia.<sup>341</sup> On 18 January 1941, in Khartoum Haile Selassè ordered officers to begin their journey and to prepare themselves, a force called Gedeon force that was composed of British soldiers and the Ethiopian patriots who reached Omedella, a frontier village in Gojam, and waited for the Emperor. Accordingly, The Emperor had sent *Azaji Kåbådä Tåsåma* to Ethiopia.<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> NALA. Folder. No .63.1. File. No .37.13. Emperor Haile Sillases appealed about the Italian invasions of Ethiopia to the League of Nations, in Geneva.

<sup>338</sup> NALA. Folder No. 63.4. File No. 34.15, Declaration about Emperor's Entry to Kahartum.

<sup>339</sup> Bahiru Zewde, 2002, p.176.

<sup>340</sup> "Yå Engliz Mångist Wåtatåroç Målekt Yåtor gize hig, Awaj." *British Military Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No. 2556, p.9.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid*, p.170.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*.

Then after he reached Gojjam, he wrote many letters to the notable patriots of Šäwa, Bägémider, Lasta, Agäw, and Säqoṭa to inform the news that the emperor reached Sudan, Khartoum with high ranked war elders of British with logistics. He also addressed the governments of the British who came to Ethiopia to help patriots to fight and crush the Italian invaders.<sup>343</sup>

The patriots of Märhabété , Sälalé and Jirru who received the letter which was written by *Azaji Kābādä Täsäma Were*; *Lei Täšomä Šāñqute*, *Lei Abābā Šāñqute*, *Lej Zägäyā Šāñqute*, *Lei Māšāša Bärqso*, *Baša Gälāta Qorčo*, *Lej Šāhayu Enquselasé*, *Lej Yelma Bāšā*, *Balambaras Tādla Mākonene* , *Lej Zāwudä Bälätä*, and *Ras Abābā Arāgay*.<sup>344</sup>

Two Days Later, With General Charles Orde Wingets Friendship the Emperor Landed at Umedilla with *Itégé* and other officials on 20 January 1941. Then the emperor hoisted the Ethiopian flag.<sup>345</sup>

Finally, the Emperor made general amnesty to those opposing the emperor and declared to join the patriots in their respective regions. He also addressed the *Askaries* of Keren, Gojjam, and Šäwa to join the British and Ethiopian forces.<sup>346</sup>

The British force under the leadership of Major General Sir William Plate had opened a military attack over Italy at a place called Karen; Eritrea. The second British military expedition was called the Gideon force that accompanied Emperor Haile Selassie and Ethiopian patriots. It was organized in Sudan mobilized into Ethiopia under the leadership of Brigadier General Daniel Sandford and Major Orde Charles Wingate in January 1941. The third British military brigade has arrived from Kenya under the leader of lieutenant-general Sir Allan Cunningham that liberated Addis Abābā on 6 April 1941. Finally, Emperor Haile Selassie re-entered Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941 and hoisted the Ethiopian flag.<sup>347</sup> Soon the Duke of Aosta and his army retired to the strategic pass of Amba Alagie in Tigray, leaving Addis Ababa to the patriots who were in nearby mountains and inside the city. Hence, His rule was restored and he remained on his throne for the next 33 years.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>343</sup>Kābādä Täsäma, *Yä Tarik Mastawäša*, (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing printing press, 1962 E.C), p.305; Bahru Zewde. *Society, State and History Selected Essays*. (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University press, 2008)1962, p, 300.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid*, p.304.

<sup>345</sup>“*Yä Engliz Mängist Wätadäroč Mälekt Yätor gize hig, Awaj* “. *British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No.2556, p.9.

<sup>346</sup>*Ibid*, p.8.

<sup>347</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>348</sup> Aregawi Berhe, *Spirit War Vs War Machine: A Patriotic Resistance to Italian Occupation of Ethiopia 1936-1941*, (The Netherlands: Beill, 2003), p.15.

The local poem in Märhabété shows how much Emperor Haile Selassie and the British force had contributed to the liberation of Ethiopia from fascist Italian rule.

“ጠቅል ባይገሰገስ እንግሊዝ ባይደርስ  
ተፈፅመን ነበር አርብና ሀሙስ”<sup>349</sup>  
“Unless Täkle (Emperor Haile Selassie) came to us  
We all died on Friday and Thursday.

## 4.2. THE FINAL WAR: THE EVACUATION OF ITALIANS FROM MÄRHABÉTÉ

Italians had become unpopular because of their policy of racial discrimination, cultural subordination/humiliation, political suppression/extermination, terrorism, and the burning of villages.<sup>350</sup> Therefore, the unpopularity of Italian rule with strong guerilla warfare demoralized Italian rule and leadership during 1940 and 1941.<sup>351</sup> Italians had played a role in fighting the collaborators and patriots. Later on, when the power of the patriots increased, the morale of the collaborators declined and in 1940, most of the collaborators were abandoned.<sup>352</sup>

On 25 February 1941, at eleven-hour morning time the fascist force opened the strict war on *Lej Ṭilahun Šänqut* at the battle of Rämäšit. During this time, his brothers *Grazmač Täšomä Šänqut* and *Lej Abäbä Šänqut* were at Šema, in the present Morät *ena Jirru Wäräda*. When they arrived to Šema, *Grazmač Täšomä* assigned *Lej Ṭilahun Šänqut* as *Qafir* of Rämäšit *Qolla*. Formerly the area was the center of strategic garrisons of the enemy. However, *Lej Fäläqä Ejegayähu* liberated the area with strong resistance. The objective of the enemy in the battle was not only occupying Rämäšit but also wanted to control the resistance led by *Yä Šänqut Lejoč* in Märhabété. In the battle, *Fitawurari Kebräsilasé Adära* and *Lej Ṭilahun Šänqut* fought bravely against an enemy force. However, the number of the enemy force and munitions was greater than patriots.<sup>353</sup> Many fighters lost their lives from both sides. From the patriots, *Lej Ṭilahun Šänqut* was killed then slaughtered by a fascist. Hence, his brothers and members of patriots were very sad when they heard the news of the death of *Ṭilahun* by a fascist. They continued the war in a very courageous way. Moreover, the combined force of

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<sup>349</sup>Informants: Ašené Ayäle, *Daniél Bäkälä*.

<sup>350</sup>Maniazewal Assefa, “The Resistance in Bägemedar, Gojjam and Wellega”, (B.A. Thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie I University, 1970), p.46.

<sup>351</sup>Richard Pankhurst, 1969, *The Ethiopian Patriots and the collapse of Italian Rule in East Africa, 1940-1941.* *Ethiopian Observer. Vol. XII.* Number 2, .92-128, 1969.

<sup>352</sup>Manyazewal, p.34.

<sup>353</sup>Tadesse Zewolde, p.283.

the patriots of Märhabété had beaten Italian forces. Besides this, the camp of Rämäšit was congested and patriots captured several armaments and munitions.

Then, those Italian forces disintegrated with many collaborators and *Askaris* retreated from Märhabété via Wonçit River to Midda then to Wäraillu. Finally, *Lej* Abäbä buried his brother's remains at Šima Gäbrél church. According to my informants, the battle of Rämäšit marked the end of resistance in the Märhabété area.<sup>354</sup>

### **4.3. THE LEGACY OF THE ITALIAN OCCUPATION IN MÄRHABÉTÉ**

#### **4.3.1. NEGATIVE LEGACIES**

The occupation of Italians (1936-1941) had left long-lasting legacies on the social, political, economic, cultural, and religious life of the Ethiopian people in general and Märhabété in particular.<sup>355</sup> During the war, many fighters became the target of the Italian tanks, fighting planes, and the sprayed poison chemical. Many others were severely wounded who later became handicapped. For this reason, families were broken. Those women who lost their husbands and fathers were left helpless to support their family and became widows. Many children were forced to lead the begging life and orphaned.<sup>356</sup>

The Massacre was not limited to the fighters or the patriot leaders but also the civilians. When the Italians bombed the villages, the majority of victims were the women, the elders, and the children. Cited from Anthony Mockler, according to an Englishman who took part in the Red Cross during the time of occupation, most of my patients were women and girls wounded in their back, stomach, thighs, breasts, arms, and ankles.<sup>357</sup> The aerial bombardment and the poison gas badly polluted the atmosphere. As a result, many lives were damaged severely. Moreover, the Italians deliberately polluted streams. In the Cambo of Zoma, for instance, they added unnecessary materials including blood on the water. Still, the people call that river *Gem Wuha* (water of horrible smell).<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>354</sup> Alemayehu, p.105; Informant: Tämtem, Tafäsä, Yemäñušal.

<sup>355</sup> Bahru Zewde, "Some aspects of post-Liberation Ethiopia (1941-1950)", *Proceedings of the Eighth international Conference of Ethiopian studies*, (Addis Ababa, 1988), p.277; Ato Magéça Damäna, (Alem-Ketema), 10/05/ 2020.

<sup>356</sup> Informants: Tämtme, Lämna Gäbru, Däräsä Hailämariam.

<sup>357</sup> Anthony Mockler, *Haile Selassie's War: The Italian Ethiopian Campaign 1936-41* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p.87.

<sup>358</sup> Informants: Wändmagäñ Bälgü, Bälayhun Tämtem, Goräms Kassayä.

The expansion of prostitution was one of the negative inheritances of the Italian rule in the country. As noted above, many women lost their husbands on the battlefields and through natural death related to the occupation. Therefore, the responsibility of feeding the family was loaded on their shoulders. Nevertheless, they could not manage the family properly so they went to the nearby town or Italian camps to search for a job to survive their life. At the same time, the Italian soldiers went to them to satisfy their sexual motive though, the law was enforced by the governors prohibited the whites not to make sexual intercourse with the Ethiopians. However, it did not stop them from visiting the prostitutes.<sup>359</sup>

Nonetheless, prostitution in Ethiopia was expanded greatly from the Fascist occupation onwards. Economically, the Fascist occupation affected the economy of the country in various ways. Above all, the Italians hindered the country's economy by reducing the productive class of the society. The primary targets of the Italians were the young and intellectuals. Quite large numbers of the intellectuals and the youth were executed which resulted in the generation gap.<sup>360</sup> In the second place, the famine that broke out in Märhabété was partially the outcome of the Italian occupation. The majority of the people fell under severe famine. Since almost all men in the region were the fighters engaged in the war with the enemy, no one could cultivate crops safely. Thus, the peasants resisted both the famine and the Italians. They continued their lives by collecting plant roots.<sup>361</sup>

Thirdly, the plundered of the peasant's property by the enemy greatly affected the conditions of the society. Besides the material destruction during the conventional war stage by an air raid and spraying poison gas, the local population lost their wealth during the time of guerrilla warfare. After the enemy made a military engagement with the patriots, it returned by looting the property of the society that included cattle, horses, sheep, and donkeys. For instance, after the Italians committed genocide people of Märhabété and Mänz, in Amäšāña *Waša* they took all kinds of property that belongs to the peasants. Moreover, the enemy permanently bombed the villages and the houses. As a result, the peasants lost much wealth, which was their long-year effort.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>359</sup>Tadese Shewafera, "Patriotic Movement in Menz Lalo Midir *Wäräda*, 1935-1941", (BA Thesis Department of History, Wollo University, 2005), p.6.; Informants: Sintayehu Zewude, Asnaqe Nigatu.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>361</sup> Informants: Nigusé Ayälä, Täšomä Wäldäyäs.

<sup>362</sup> Alemayehu, p.50.

When Italian troops arrived in the area of Märhabété, they had destroyed many houses and shelters of the local people. During the five years of fascist occupation from the area of Jämma *Fit*, Italians destroyed all individual homes. They had used Aero Plane to drop bombs on houses, forests, and religious heritages. Moreover, they also tried to bring damage to the heritage orthodox churches and churchmen. From the outset of their conquest of the country, it seems that the Italians had a strong hatred for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and its clergy whom they blamed for instigating the people to rebel.<sup>363</sup>

The contradiction between the fascists and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church reached its climax when the Italian Abune Petros, the Bishop of Wollo, in 1936. As he was said to have encouraged the people to resist the Italians by excommunicating those who were reluctant to fight.<sup>364</sup> Following the murder of Abune Petros, the clergy, monks and other members of the church strongly challenged the invaders either through anti-Italian preaching or by communicating with those who were engaged in the resistance.<sup>365</sup> The Italians retaliated against these acts through brutal methods. For Instance, in May 1937 they destroyed the ancient monastery of Däbrälibanos. They had discovered a gun in the monastery. On 20 May 1937, Graziani announced to Mussolini as;

*I ordered that all the street singers, fortune tellers, and wizards in town and on the outskirts be arrested and shot.*<sup>366</sup>

By the end of May 1937, the numbers of these victims had reportedly reached 2,509. Had even given an order to his subordinates to eliminate all monks' distinction.<sup>367</sup> Accordingly, the destruction of monasteries and churches, as well as summary executions on priests, deacons, monks, worshipers, and astrologers became common acts of the Italian throughout the country.<sup>368</sup>

In Märhabété, for instance, the following four orthodox religious centers were destroyed and their clergy and monks killed. The Orthodox Church of Dänab Abunä Täklähaymanot, Tamo Giyorgis, Sesamba Mariam, and Gêrét Egziabehérah in the present day Märhabété *Wäräda*

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<sup>363</sup> Tamrat Wasihun, "The Patriot Of Gayint (1936-1941)" MA Thesis In History, Presented To The School Of Graduate Studies Of Addis Ababa University May 1999, pp19-20.

<sup>364</sup> "Yä Engliz Mangiest Wotadäroč Mälekt Yätor Gize Hig, Awaj". *British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No.2556, P.23.

<sup>365</sup> Tamrat Wasihun, P.20.

<sup>366</sup> Ian Campbell, *the Massacre of Debrelibanos...*, p.xiv.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*



was destroyed and burned by the mortar fired by Italian.<sup>369</sup> Politically, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia enhanced the banditry life. To fight the common enemy many people left their houses for the forest regions and rebelled against the Italians.<sup>370</sup> This action resulted in insecurity of life among the society. In the post-liberation period, the situation reached its peak. Those persons who were dissatisfied by the administration of the emperor and other events preferred a banditry life. In this case, Märhabété was one of the areas where the bandits were highly concentrated until the recent era.<sup>371</sup>

#### 4.3.2. POSITIVE LEGACY

When we see the Italian occupation from its good side, the invasion has left some important legacies. The Italians constructed several roads in various regions of the country.<sup>372</sup> To control the resistance in Märhabété, Italians built roads. The first road was from Zoma (Cambo garrison) to Alām Kätäma via Fétra. The road is commonly known by the people as “*Yä Wuleço Mängäd*”, Road of Wuleço. Later on, after the liberation, they entirely gave service to the community of Märhabété.<sup>373</sup> Even though they constructed the roads for their purpose, they played a pivotal role in the fast integration of the country and the development of the road transportation system in Ethiopia in the post-liberation era.<sup>374</sup>

Besides road technology, the Italians established light factories, garages, and schools in the major urban center of Ethiopia. Though the Italians built many buildings in the capital, Addis Ababa, Gondar, Jimma, and Harar were the other cities where they built remarkable modern buildings.<sup>375</sup> Large-scale urbanization is also said to have started during the Italian occupation. There was an exodus of people to urban centers due to the war, which loosened the rural social structures. As informants, one of the positive effects of the Italian occupation in Märhabété was urbanization. Fétra was one of the strong garrisons of Italy in Märhabété from 1937-1940. After the evacuation of Italy, the place became the urban center of Märhabété.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Informants: Wagayä, Täšomä Dägef, Magéça Damäna.

<sup>370</sup> Informants: Lämna, Mamuše Tākätäläw, Dāräsä.

<sup>371</sup> Yä Märhabété Awuraja Gizat, Selä Şäṭeta Aṭābabäqe, NALA, Folder No.17.1.3, File No.57.02.

<sup>372</sup> Bahru, A History of Ethiopia, p.172; Informants: *Ibid*.

<sup>373</sup> Informants: Tämtme, Goräms, Hailu Balçut.

<sup>374</sup> Informants: Magéça, Wändmagäñ.

<sup>375</sup> Bahru, pp.171-172.

<sup>376</sup> Hanna, p, 2; Bahru, p.171.; Informants: Magéça, Wändmagäñ

As a seat of the Italian Šäwa governorate, the Italians tried to beautify Addis Ababa. The city plan was restructured. Their camps and war garrisons in some areas were developed into small towns. The Italian occupation had a significant role in the development of the status of women in the post-liberation period. According to Minale, the war enabled women to be active in military, social, economic, political, and cultural aspects. It enhanced their political participation, provided considerable women with new jobs which previously had never been done by them such as hotel management, bars, and restaurants.<sup>377</sup>

#### 4.4. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ETHIOPIAN PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION

Another most important and enduring legacy of the fascist occupation is the establishment of the Ethiopian patriotic Association. It was established in Šäwa province, by the name, “*yä Ťentawit Ethiopia jägñoč arbäñoč mahbär*” (ancient Ethiopian brave association). The Association aimed to defend and liberate the motherland from external aggression and Occupation,<sup>378</sup> to encourage and inspire the patriots in the region; to cooperate with other patriots from the rest parts of the country, and report the situation of the war to the emperor and also receive messages which encourage the patriots from the emperor.<sup>379</sup> For the establishment of this association, *Ras Abäbä Arägay* was a prominent figure who took the role of Leadership.<sup>380</sup> He tried to create a united and nationwide patriotic resistance movement. The patriots had understood the importance of unity when they had attempted to put danger on the force of Fascists in Addis Ababa in summer 1936.<sup>381</sup>

The first meeting was held 2 November 1938, by the patriots at the place called *Wäräw* in the present-day *Mänz Qäya Gäbriél Wäräda*. It was the first meeting to establish the Association. This was the first step to create a nationwide united anti-fascist struggle and support each other.<sup>382</sup> Under the order of *Balambaras Bäšäh Häylé*, the second meeting was held at the place called *Anqälafiñ*, near One Acacia Tree<sup>383</sup>, in the present day *Moja enä Wädärä Wäräda* at *Sasit Qäbälé*.<sup>384</sup> The prominent patriots of Šäwa arrived in the area with their

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<sup>377</sup> Minale, p.36; Bahru, A History of Ethiopia, pp.172

<sup>378</sup> Kābāddä, p.377; Informants: Dästa Täklü, Denqnäh Kerämté, Täfära Lätibälu, Täkläselasé Kābādä.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>380</sup> Kābāddä, p.300.

<sup>381</sup> Erqyihun, p.62.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>383</sup> Daniel Jote and etal, 2009, p.21.

<sup>384</sup> Tilahun Tasew, *Adabay*, (Addis Ababa: Kuraz Asatami Derajat, 1975), pp.166-167.

followers and took an Oath of unity and cooperation to struggle for the independence of the country. This meeting was held on January 9, 1939, and the association of ancient brave Ethiopian patriots was established. During this time, the most influential patriots of North Šäwa held the leading and key posts of the Association.<sup>385</sup> The founding members of the association are mentioned as follows.<sup>386</sup>

**Table -3: The founding members of ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association in Šäwa**

no	Full name	Position In The Association
1	<i>Ras Abebe Aregay</i>	President of the association
2	<i>Basha Wäldäkiros Gäbrämäsqäl (Däjazmač)</i>	Coordinator
3	<i>Lej Dämesé Wäldäamanuél (Däjazmač)</i>	Member
4	<i>Lej Däsäläh Täkläwäld</i>	Accountant
5	<i>Ato Lisanu Habtäwäld</i>	Main secretary
6	<i>Balambaras Tädla Mäkonen (Major General)</i>	Member
7	<i>Lej Gäbräkerstos Mäkonen (Fitawrari)</i>	Member
8	<i>Lej Šähayu Enquselasé (Däjazmač)</i>	Member
9	<i>Ato Fäläqä Daña (Däjazmač)</i>	Member
10	<i>Ato Šegé Woldemariam</i>	Member
11	<i>Ato Tesfaye Enqusilasé (Däjazmač)</i>	Member
12	<i>Lej Alula Bäqälä</i>	Member
13	<i>Ato Emaelaf Hiruy</i>	Member
14	<i>Ato Zäwudé Habt Wald</i>	Member
15	<i>Ato Wäldäyohannes Yämeru</i>	Member
16	<i>Ato Täfäri Mandäfro</i>	Member
17	<i>Ato Läma Dägifé</i>	Member
18	<i>Grazmač Hailä Selasé Bälaynäh (Qäñazmač)</i>	Member
19	<i>Ato Yishaq Wäldä</i>	Member
20	<i>Ato Tadässä Zäläqä</i>	Member
21	<i>Ato Abäbä Tägayä</i>	Member
22	<i>Ato Admasu Gäbrä</i>	Member

<sup>385</sup> Abära Jämbäré (D.r). *Abba gäsit Ras Abäbä Arägäy*. (Addis Ababa: Central printing press, 1997E.C), p.90.

<sup>386</sup> Kābäddä, 1962, pp.307-312.; Informants: Dästa, Dinknäh, Täfära, Täkläselasé.

Source: Kābāddā Tāssāma, *Yā Tarik Mastawāša*, (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing priting press, 1962 E.C), pp.307-312.

**Figure-7: The one Acacia Tree of Anqālafīni before collapse**



Source:- Daniel Jote and et al, journals of the patriots of Ethiopian association, 1935 1941, 2009, p.21.

In addition to the above founding members of the association, Mäsfen Seläše, Täsäma Ergäté, Lej Gizačäw Hailé, Täšomä Šänqute, and many patriots began to join the association and the members reached more than three hundred.<sup>387</sup> The association had its own rules and regulations that were approved by the members of the association. It was agreed that each member of the association should respect these rules and had to fulfill what was expected from them as the members of the association. There was the national anthem of the association that was sung when members of the association had died by hoisted Ethiopian flag as follows;<sup>388</sup>

ኢትዮጵያ ሆይ አገራችን እናታችን፤  
 ለጥንታዊ ክብርሽ ይፈሳል ደማችን  
 በትጋት ዘርጊ እጆቻችን  
 አይነፍግም አማላክ ልመናሽን፤  
 ብርቱ ምሽግ ናቸው በረሀዎች ወንዞች ተራሮቻችሽ፤  
 የተባበሩት አርበኞቻችሽ፤ ምንም አይሰጉ ከጠላትሽ፤  
 ኢትዮጵያ ሆይ አገራችን እናታችን፤  
 ለጥንታዊ ክብርሽ ይፈሳል ደማችን፤”<sup>389</sup>

Translated as:

*“Ethiopia our country, is our mother  
 For your former glory, our blood would be poured out  
 Stretch your hand to God thoroughly  
 God does not despise your petitions  
 Ethiopia our country is our mother  
 For your former glory, our blood would be poured out  
 Your mountains, desert, and rivers are strong forts  
 Your united armed patriots never worried to your enemies  
 Ethiopia our country, is our mother  
 For your former glory, our blood would be poured out”*

The National Anthem shows how much the members of the association were committed. They had determined to struggle up to death for the independence of their country. Ras Abäbä Arägäy had performed important activities in the coordination of this association especially since January 9, 1939. The one Acacia tree not only served as the place for the establishment of the patriots association of Ethiopia but as a place of conciliation and arbitration among the conflicting parties of several individuals or groups in the region. Thus, it is the symbol of independence and celebration of patriots that sacrificed their lives for the independence of their country. But these historical trees of acacia fell down due to the heavy rain that accompanied lightning after two hundred years, on 11 August 2011.<sup>390</sup> The rule and regulation of the association had twenty-three articles. Among these struggling for the

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>388</sup> Abära, p.91.

<sup>389</sup> ፒላህን, p.243; *Ibid.*

<sup>390</sup> Mojana Wädära Wäräda Cultural and Tourism office “Yä Ityopia Arbäññoč Mahbär yätämäsärätäbat Andit Gerar”, Tir 2010 E.C; Informant: liteblue.

liberation of the country, supporting each other among the patriots and responsibility of the members were included.<sup>391</sup> The one Acacia tree by which the patriots association had established became the place of celebration of the day of Ethiopian independence from fascist rule and Ethiopian national patriot’s day. It is celebrated every year to commemorate Ethiopia’s independence from the Fascist rule on May 5, 1941.<sup>392</sup> Due to the existence of strong patriotic resistance in the region, Italians had been forced to take repressive measures to bring the submission of the patriots by killing, burning homes, and other properties.<sup>393</sup>

#### 4.5. THE REWARDS OF THE PATRIOTS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Several attempts of foreign invasion were made in Ethiopia. However, the plan was not effective due to the great sacrifices compensated by the people of Ethiopia. During the first Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the soldiers of Ethiopia had scored a great victory at Adwa in 1896, which became the symbol of pride of Ethiopians still in the present day. It is not the victory of Ethiopia or Africa, but the victory of the black people in the world. This was the result of strong unity, effective leadership, and determination. During the second Italo-Ethiopian war of 1935-1941, a similar attempt was made to reverse the Italian aggression. However, the force of Ethiopia was easily defeated. This was because the quality and quantity of Fascist military armament were far better than in Ethiopia. Thus, Ethiopia had lost the battle. Emperor Haile Seaside was exiled to Europe and the patriots continued the patriotic resistance movement.<sup>394</sup>

Nevertheless, the Italian colonial effort in Ethiopia from 1935-1941 failed due to the high cost of the patriotic resistance.<sup>395</sup> For the independence of Ethiopia, the patriots of Märhabété played a great role. Besides this, emperor Haylä-Selassé also promised a lot for the Ethiopian patriots as:

“.....የኢትዮጵያ ጃግኖች አርበኞች የእያንዳችሁን ሞያ አጫቀዋለሁ። ስለገራችሁ ጥቅም በርቱ። ሁላችሁም የድካማችሁን ዋጋ ታገኛላችሁ።”<sup>396</sup>  
*“Ethiopian patriots, I know the skills of each of you. You will be rewarded for your efforts.”*

<sup>391</sup> Abära Jämbäre, pp.129-133.

<sup>392</sup> Informants: Mulugéta Wäldäṣadeq, Tägäñe Bäkälä, Sitotaw Zämädkun, Sintayähu Zäwudä.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>394</sup> Charles Schaefer, p.87.

<sup>395</sup> Alberto Sbacchi, “Haile Selassie and the Italians 1941-1943,” *African Studies Review*, (Cambridge University press, vol.22, No.1, 1979), p.25.

<sup>396</sup> Emperor's Declaration about Patriotic Reward, IES, Ms, No. 2556, P.11.

Although the patriotic struggle was ended in late November 1941, by liberation of Gonder the Ethiopian imperial government had made little attempt at least to identify and register those people who had to take part in the patriotic struggle. Ahmad Hessen in his thesis explains that the emperor met with northern Šäwa people during his first visit to Mänz, Mähal Méda, after the liberation in September 1942.<sup>397</sup> During the emperor's visit, the issue of the patriots was given emphasis and he gave medals to some patriots' leaders as well as ordinary patriots whose participation was justified by the testimony of those individuals who were known to have actively taken part in the struggle. There was also a destination of granting a Médal classified by five, four, three, two, and one year patriots.<sup>398</sup>

However, the emperor did little attempt to give recognition and rewards to all patriots, rather he gave land, power, and the house was given for the exiled groups and *Bandas*. The emperor considered exile as the main actor of change as they had observed the civilized external world. *Bandas* also became beneficial; their close relation with Italians was considered by the Emperor as technologically advanced and transformed.<sup>399</sup> The following songs express the injustice of reward by the emperors to patriots that struggled in the bush.<sup>400</sup>

“ ኢትዮጵያ ሀገራ፡ሞኝ ነሽ ተላላ  
የሞተልሽ ቀርቶ፡የሞተልሽ ቀርቶ፡የገደለሽ በላ።”<sup>401</sup>  
“My country Ethiopia is you Snap, or Cheated?  
Who died for you not benefited while they killed you became benefited?”

Later on the patriot's grievance and petition became strong.<sup>402</sup> Besides this, Emperor Haile Selassie, wanted to establish, so-called *Hamlé Asra Sedest Committee* (23 July 1941), whose task was to identify individuals who were patriots and to give them a certificate for their participation and to give land and rewards for patriots upon presenting testimony about their role and duties during the five years of Italian occupation.<sup>403</sup>

However, the process was very difficult, full of corruption and it required a large amount of money.<sup>404</sup> However, the Emperor did not remember and rewarded many patriots in

<sup>397</sup> Ahmed Hassen, “A Historical Survey of Ethnic Relations in Yefat and Temuga Northern Shewa (1889 – 1974),” (MA Thesis for Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1994), p.87; Informants: Tefera Letibelu, Teklesilase Kebede.

<sup>398</sup> Dämisé Wäldamanuél, *Bä amistu Yä Ṭälat Wärära Zämän Teglačäwun Iskämäčäräšaw Asmäskräw Médalyačäwun Yäwäsädu Arbäñoč, Sedätäñočna Yä Wusṭ Arbäñoč*, IES, MS, No. 366, p. pp.53-131.

<sup>399</sup> Informants: Näbyu, Šähaynäše Wärqé, Tämtem.

<sup>400</sup> Ṭilahum Zäläqä. “Asdänaqi Yätor Méda Tarik Yä Ityopia Woṭat Arbäñoč”, (1928-1929 E. C), IES, Ms, No.3182.

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>402</sup> Petition of patriots to Emperor Haile Sellasie about the patriotic reward, NALA.Folder No. 17.1.3.File No. 41.01.

<sup>403</sup> Tamrat, p.80.

<sup>404</sup> IES, MS, No. 3182, p.168.

Märhabété. The patriot of Märhabété was ignored to be a member of troops for the nation. Nearly all fighters became poor farmers. My informants conclude that the people of Märhabété Awurajja were also neglected by social services like education, health centers, and others.<sup>405</sup>

**Table -4: Patriots of Märhabété were receive reward after independence<sup>406</sup>**

No	Names Of Patriots	Title	Area/Homeland	Numbers and types of medal Rewarded		
				<i>Yä Qidus Giorgis Medal</i>	<i>Yä Qedamawi Hailesilas é Medal</i>	<i>Yä Ṭor Méda Medal</i>
1	Hailé Šänqute	<i>Lej</i>	Märhabété,Kora	2	-	-
2	Laqáč Mäket	-	Märhabété	5	-	-
3	Mamité Adamu	-	Märhabété	1	4	-
4	Mamité Täsäma	<i>Emet</i>	Märhabété	1	4	
5	Meleké Čufa	<i>balambara s</i>	Märhabété	1	4	
7	Qošāntinos Hailämäläkot	<i>Lej</i>	Märhabété	2	1	2
8	Täšomä Šänqute	<i>Däjazmač</i>	Märhabété	2	2	1
9	Abäbä Šänqute	<i>Fitawrari</i>	Märhabété	2	2	1
10	Kebresilasé Adära	<i>Däjazmač</i>	Märhabété	2	2	1
11	Šähayu Enqusilasé	<i>Fitawrari</i>	Märhabété	2	2	1

**Source:** Dämisé Wäldamanuél, *Bä amistu Yä Ṭalat Wärära Zämän Tiglačäwn Asmäskräw Médaliačäwn Yäwäsädu Arbäñoč, Sedätäñočna Yä Wuş Arbäñoč*, IES, MS, No.366, pp.53-131.

<sup>405</sup> Informants: Tafäsä, Täntem, Almaz, Šähayenäše.

<sup>406</sup> Dämisé Wäldamanuél, *Bä amistu Yä Ṭalat Wärära Zämän Tiglačäwn Asmäskräw Médaliačäwn Yäwäsädu Arbäñoč, Sedätäñočna Yä Wuş Arbäñoč*, IES, MS, No.366, pp.53-131



## CONCLUSION

Märhabété is one of the 24 rural *Wäräda* of North Šäwa zone in Amhara Regional State. The former Märhabété *Awurajja* was one of the eleven *awrajjas in Šäwa täqlay gizat* (General Governorate) of Ethiopia. The territory of the former Märhabété *awurajja* was included the present day the six *Wärädas*. These were Lay Bét, Tač Bét, Midda, Därra, Wärämo Wajitu, and Bita-Billo. Besides the roles in internal affairs, the people were active in defending the country from foreign invasion from time immemorial. In the series of wars of the nineteenth century against foreign aggressors such as Britain, Egypt, Mahdist Sudan, and Italy the people of the region had invaluable contributions and paid a heavy sacrifice. They were also among the pioneers by marching to the north to block the Italian invading army. Although the battle of Adwa had thwarted a long year effort of the Italian colonial ambition over Ethiopia for some time, the Italians under Benito Mussolini decided to avenge the battle of Adwa and reestablish the idea of colonized Ethiopia. In 1935, the Italians crossed the boundaries and attacked Ethiopia from two directions; north and south. The Ethiopians from all regions tried to give a swift response though there was an internal contradiction between the nobilities and the emperor. However, unfortunately, the Italians who used the latest and modern weapons and the new invention, mustard gas crushed the Ethiopian resistance and established a great Italian East Africa Empire that included Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Italian Somaliland. They divided the empire into various divisions to control the rebellions and create a peaceful empire. On the contrary, however, they could not administer the new empire peacefully as they wished. They faced the countrywide patriotic resistance; especially in the Amhara governorate (Bägemed, Gojjam, and Šäwa), it was heavier.

Märhabété, as part of Šäwa province, Occupied between on 22 October 1936, was one of the regions that challenged the enemy from the very beginning to the liberation. After they occupied it, they set up military garrisons at Ergebot, Dobba Kollaš, Zoma, Fétra, and Rämāšet. Roads were also constructed in the region for quick military mobility. The Italians applied a divide and rule policy towards the Märhabété people by supporting a historically antagonized group of Muslims and local *balabats*. Thus, they won a considerable number of people especially the Muslims and *balabats* who were highly fascinated by the Italians' gifts and positions.

The people of Märhabété fought the enemy from the very beginning to the final whistle of the liberation. The patriots fought many bloodiest military engagements with the Italians in their respective domains. The battles of Ergebot, Dobba, Därra, Qebéna, Jämma, Midda Wärämo, Zärät, Adäre, and Rämäšit were some of the bloodiest battles.

The resistance in the region like other parts of the country region lacked comprehensiveness and unity as well as leadership especially in the first year of the occupation because of the desertion and collaboration of the nobilities who governed the region before the invasion. Gradually however the gap was somewhat filled by some influential men from the lowly background. *Grazmač* Täshomä Šänqut, Häilē Šänqut, Abäbä Šänqut, Yenäsu Šänqut, Ṭelahun Šänqut, *Lej* Fäläkä Ejegayähu, *Däjazmač* Gäläta Qorčo, *Däjazmač* Kebräsilasé Adära, Wärqé Bāyänä, and Zäwudé Asfaw Were the prominent leaders in Märhabété.

During the resistance period, women had played a significant role. On various battlefields, the women had participated as equal as their counterparts had men. In the absence of modern medication, they treated the wounded fighters. The women also outperform during the famine days of the resistance movement. Even though all patriot leaders' wives had a role, the prominent women in the resistance were Kābādāč Seyum, Laqāč Mäket, and Asälāfāč Kebräsilasé. In the five-year struggle, the patriotic resistance movement faced problems such as desertion and collaboration, shortage of firearms, famine, the influence of the *bandas* and the *askaris*, absence of modern means of communications and transportations. Above all the problem of the unity among the patriot leaders and lack of national sentiments in the people very much challenged the patriotic resistance movement. As a solution, the patriots used various strategies to survive themselves. Attacking the enemy convoys and military camps to collect logistics was one tactic. They ate wild animals, fruits, and roots for the problem of famine. Organizing a secret group that could gather intelligence about the condition of the enemy was another strategy.

In 1940, Benito Mussolini allied with Adolf Hitler. This led to the British military intervention in Ethiopia. Emperor Haile Selassè was sent to his country shortly after the incident. Upon his arrival at Khartoum, he carried out a propaganda activity followed by a military operation. Encouraged by the coming back of the emperor and the British support, the patriots of Märhabété fought the enemy in determination and dislodged the Italians from several camps. However, they could not clear out the Italians from all parts of the regions while the emperor entered Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941.

The five-year Italian occupation had left many legacies in Märhabété. The wholesale destruction through aerial bombardment and sprayed gas, the expansion of prostitution and banditry, and the destruction of properties that belonged to the natives were some of the negative effects of the Italian rule. On the other hand, the occupation brought positive changes in the region such as the development of infrastructures, mainly roads and the emergence of towns, and the establishment of the ancient brave patriotic association in Šäwa.

For the liberation of Ethiopia, the patriots and peoples of Märhabété played a great role. Besides this, emperor Haylä-Selassé also promised a lot for the Ethiopian patriots. Although the patriotic struggle was ended in late November 1941, by liberation of Gonder the Ethiopian imperial government had made little attempt, to give recognition and rewards to all patriots, rather he gave land, power, and the house was given for the exiled groups and *Bandas*. The emperor considered exile as the main actor of change as they had observed the civilized external world. *Bandas* also became beneficial; their close relation with Italians was considered by the Emperor as technologically advanced and transformed. The Emperor did not remember and rewarded many patriots in Märhabété. Some Patriots of Märhabété were received reward from the emperors after independence were *Lej Hailé Šänqute*, *Laqäč Mäket*, *Mamité Adamu*, *Emet Mamité Täsäma*, *Balambaras Meleké Čufa*, *Lej Qoštänčinos Hailämäläkot*, *Dejazmac Täšomä Šänqute*, *Fitawurari Abäbä Šänqute*, *Dejazmach Kebresilasé Adära* and *Fitawurari Šähayu Enqusilasé*. Although, nearly all fighters of the country became poor farmers. The people of Märhabété *Awurajja* were also neglected by social services like education, health centers, and others.

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## LISTS OF INFORMANTS

No	Names Of Informants	Sex	Age	Title	Date Of Interviewee	Place Interviewee	Remark
1.	Abäbä Gäberu			<i>Ato</i>	07/04/2020.	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma.	A pensioner has a good narration about the genocide committed by fascists in <i>Amäšäña Washa</i> on the people of Menz and Märhäbété.
2.	Ababu Wäldäyäs	M	86	<i>Qes</i>	13/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He is a priest now. He can narrate the historical background and history of the resistance in Märhäbété.
3.	Abärä Täšomä	M	60	<i>Mäm eher</i>	10/04/2021	Wayu, Dänäba	Teacher, He can narrate the period.
4.	Abära Bäyänä	M	84	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He has a good ability to narrate the period chronologically and his parents were patriots.
5.	Addis Täšomä,	M	65	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Morätna Jirru, Enäwari	Pensioner, He can narrate the period.
6.	Almaz Gäläta Korečo	F	75	<i>Wäye</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété,	She is the daughter of

				<i>zäro</i>		Aläm Kätäma.	<i>Däjazmač</i> Gäläta Qorčo, has a good ability to narrate the period chronologically
7.	Ameha Abära	M	70	<i>Ato</i>	14/08/2020	Midda Wärämo	Accountant in Aläm Kätäma. He can narrate the period.
8.	Asäläfäč Seyum	F	74	<i>Wäye zäro</i>	15/05/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	She has a good ability to narrate the period chronologically and her parents were patriots.
9.	Asçänaqi Aqnaw,	M	89	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Grét	He had a good ability to narrate the period.
10.	Ašagré Kerämté	M	95	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma,	He did not participate in the various battlefields between the Italians and the patriots but he can narrate the fascist emasculation in Märhäbété people and list the person emasculated by the fascist order.
11.	Ashiné Ayälä	M	85	<i>Qés</i>	14/05/ 2020	Märhäbété, (Zoma)	He is one of the knowledgeable clerics in Märhäbété, he can narrate the fascist emasculation order in Märhäbété people and list the person

							emasculated by fascist order.
12.	Asnaqä Nigatu.	M	67	<i>Ato</i>	10/08/2021	Fétra	Teacher, He can narrate the period.
13.	Astawosegn Gebregiyorgis	M	80	<i>Ato</i>	12/08/2020	Märhäbété, Ofna	A Peasant, He can narrate the period.
14.	Awulačäw Gäbrämariam,	M	71	<i>Ato</i>	17/07/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He was not a patriot but he has enough knowledge about the major themes of the resistance.
15.	Bäkälä Gošu,	M	75	<i>Mäm her</i>	17/07/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He was not a patriot but he has enough knowledge about the major themes of the resistance.
16.	Bälayhun Mäkuriya,	M	69	<i>Ato</i>	17/07/2020	Märhäbété, Embesam	Peasants can narrate the period.
17.	Bälayhun Tämtē,	M	70	<i>Ato</i>	07/04/ 2020.	Märhäbété, (Zoma)	Peasant, knowledgeable about all events of the war
18.	Berhanu Lebsäwärk	M	89	<i>Ato</i>	07/04/ 2020	Märhäbété, Aläm- Kätäma	He is the son of patriot but he can narrate the history of the Italo-Ethiopian war
19.	Dälälän Wäldäyäs,	M	75	<i>Ato</i>	07/04/ 2020.	Märhäbété, (Gärän),	He was not a patriot but he can narrate the history of the Italo-Ethiopian war.

20.	Daniél Bäkälä	M	50	<i>Qés</i>	14/05/ 2020	Märhäbété,, Zoma	He can narrate the history of the Italo-Ethiopian war <i>Däjazmač</i> Täšhomä Šänqute.
21.	Daniél Amdä	M	69	<i>Ato</i>	07/04/ 2020.	Märhäbété, Aläm- Kätäma	He provided information about the major battlefields in the region
22.	Däräsä Hailämariam	M	80	<i>Märi géta</i>	05/09/2012	Zoma	Peasant is knowledgeable of telling the historical makeup of the resistance
23.	Dästa Täklü	M	75	<i>Ato</i>	22/06/2021	North Šäwa Däbrä Bärhan	He was the patriot's son. Now he was Accountant in ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association in North Šäwa
24.	Denqnäh Kerämté	M	94	<i>Ato</i>	22/06/2021	North Šäwa Däbrä Bärhan	He was the patriot's son. He engaged in various military clashes. Now he was Vice of the ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association in Šäwa.

25.	Goräms Kassayä	M	69	<i>Ato</i>	17/07/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	He is enriched memorizing past events
26.	Hailu Balçut,	M	75	<i>Ato</i>	17/07/2020	North Šäwa Däbrä Bärhan	He can narrate events effectively and purposefully.
27.	Kasahun Mäkonen	M	75	<i>Qes</i>	17/07/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	He is the known person who memorizes the period within relation in a different way.
28.	Keflé Mola,	M	80	<i>Ato</i>	21/06/2020	Märhäbété, Bärkato	He can narrate events effectively and purposefully
29.	Lämma Gäbru	M	85	<i>Ato</i>	21/06/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm- Kätäma	He is a pensioner, the most knowledgeable about the period and he narrates the Italian rule in the region.
30.	Magéça Damäna,	M	87	<i>Ato</i>	10/05/ 2020	Märhäbété, Aläm- Kätäma	He is efficient in telling the story of the period with an effective time sequence.
31.	Mamuše Täkätäläw	M	60	<i>Ato</i>	21/06/2020	Märhäbété, Däläma	He is a son of a patriot. He knows some battlefields.
32.	Mäqdäs Gäbré.	F	75	<i>Woiz ero</i>	6/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm	She is the son of inner patriot <i>Baša</i> Gäberé

						Kätäma	Kälel and has the ability to remember what her family told her, especially the patriotic struggles.
33.	Mulugéta Wäldäşadik	M	95	<i>Balambaras</i>	17/07/2021	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He is a son of a patriot. He knows some battlefields and episodes of the resistance in northern Şäwa and Märhäbété.
34.	Näbiyu Tadäsä Täsfayä	M	65	<i>Mercnants</i>	14/05/2020	Addis Ababa,Piasa	He provided information about the major battlefields in the region.
35.	Negusé Ayälä,	M	70		14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	Peasant is enriched with memorizing past events.
36.	Şähäyenäşe Wärké	F	80	Wäye zäro	14/05/2021	Addis Ababa	The Daughter Of Patriot Worked Beyene. She is enriched with memorizing past events.
37.	Samuél Wändé.	M	65	<i>Ato</i>	05/08/2020	Zoma	Peasants are enriched with memorizing past events.
38.	Sentayähu Zäwudé,	M	67	<i>Ato</i>	05/08/2020	Aläm	



						Kätäma	He can narrate events effectively and purposefully
39.	Seṣotaw Zämädkun	M	90	<i>Ato</i>	17/07/2020	Märhabété, Embesam	He is knowledgeable and understands Italian rule.
40.	Täçanä Aqnaw,	M	85	<i>Ato</i>	13/03/2020	Märhabété, Koso Tärähna	He is knowledgeable enough to narrate the period of the invasion.
41.	Tafäsä Wäldätsadeq,	M	85	<i>Ato</i>	13/03/2020	Märhabété, (Zoma)	He is knowledgeable enough to narrate the period of the invasion.
42.	Tägäñe Bäkälä,	M	67	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhabété, Däläma	He is a farmer as well as the son of a patriot and is knowledgeable about the situation in the past resistance movement
43.	Tämäsäläw Sälämon, ,	M	57	<i>Mäm eher</i>	14/05/2020	Märhabété, Dänäba	He provided information about the major battlefields in the region
44.	Tämtme Wändmagägn	M	96	<i>Ato</i>	07/04/ 2020	Märhabété, (Zoma),	He is one of the knowledgeable people in Märhabété, He knew deeply about the

							territory of former Märhabété <i>awuraja</i> and the patriotic resistance in the region.
45.	Täfera Lätibälu	M	70	<i>Ato</i>	22/06/2020	North Šäwa, Däbrä Berhan	He is a Secretary of the ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association in North Šäwa as well as the son of a patriot and he is knowledgeable about the national anthem of the ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association.
46.	Täkläselasé Käbädä	M	85	<i>Ato</i>	22/06/2021	North Šäwa, Däbrä Berhan	He is a representative of ancient brave Ethiopian patriots in North Šäwa as well as the son of a patriot and he is knowledgeable about the founding members of the ancient brave Ethiopian patriotic association in North Šäwa.
47.	Terunäš Aqñaw,	F	90	<i>Wäye zäro</i>	08/07/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm-Kätäma	She is knowledgeable enough to narrate the period of the invasion.
48.	Täšomä Dägif,	M	70	<i>Qés</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	A priest is a known person who memorizes

							the period in different ways.
49.	Taşomä Wäldäyäs.	M	75	<i>Ato</i>	13/05/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	He is a Peasant, knowledgeable to tell the historical makeup of the resistance.
50.	Wagayä Mamo,	M	75	<i>Mäm eher</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm- Kätäma	He can remember what his family told him, especially about the patriotic struggles.
51.	Wändafraše Ayälä	M	80	<i>Qes</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Zoma	He is one of the knowledgeable clerics in Märhabété, He knew deeply about the territory of former Märhabété <i>awuraja</i> and the patriotic resistance in the region.
52.	Wändimsiša Mamuyä	M	75	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhäbété, Aläm Kätäma	He is Pensioner, his ability to narrate the period.
53.	Wändmagāñ Bälgu,	M	78	<i>Ato</i>	14/05/2020	Märhabété, Zoma	He is a Peasant, knowledgeable to narrate the legacy of the fascist invasion in the region.
54.	Yimāñušaäl Wäldäşdeq	F	98	<i>Wäye zäro</i>	07/04/2020	Märhabété, Zoma	She is the son of a patriot and is

							knowledgeable about the situation in the past resistance movement
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**APPENDIX-2-**

**Wärädas in Märhabété Awuraja**

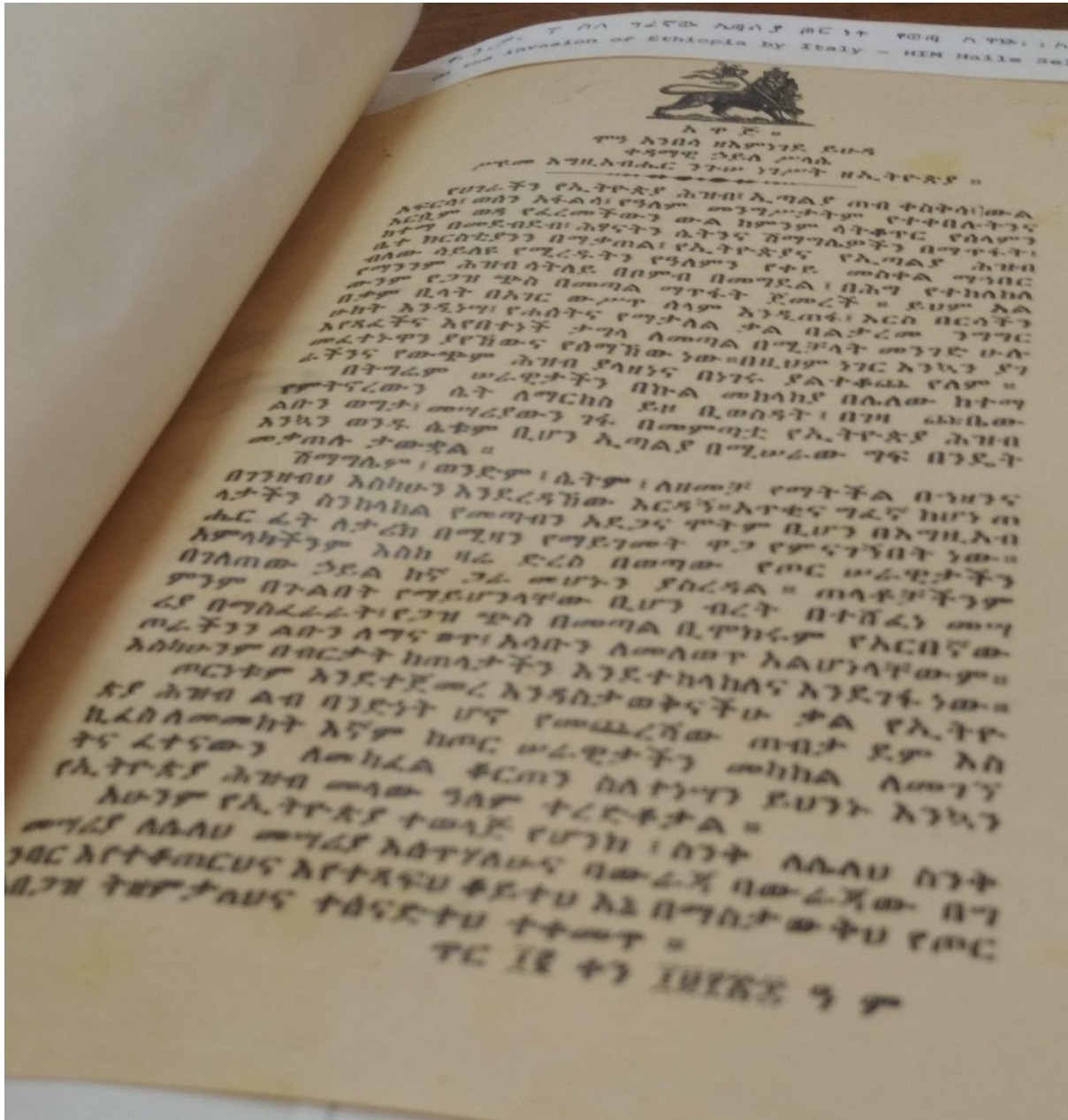
<u>ገጽ 10 / መርሐሰቱ</u>		<u>ገጽ 11 / ገጽ 12</u>	
1 / ለጸ ስጉ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
2 / ግጽ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
3 / ስግ ስግ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
4 / ገጽ ስጉ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
5 / ገጽ ግጽ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
6 / ገጽ		ገጽ 11	ገጽ 12
<u>ገጽ 11 / መገናኛ ገጽ</u>		<u>ገጽ 12 / ገጽ 13</u>	
1 / ገጽ ግጽ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
2 / ገጽ ስጉ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
3 / ገጽ ግጽ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
4 / ገጽ ስጉ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
5 / ገጽ ግጽ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
6 / ገጽ ስጉ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13
7 / ገጽ ግጽ		ገጽ 12	ገጽ 13

Source: Yä Šäwa Keflä Hagär Selä Hagär, NALA .Folder No. 17.1.3.File .No.53.03.



APPENDIX-3-

The official proclamation was declared by Emperor Haile Selassie during the second Italian invasion of Ethiopia.



Source: *Leyu Leyu Nägusawi Awajoch*. IES, MS, No.2557, p.11.

APPENDIX-4-

Emperor Haile Selassè appealed about the Italian invasions of Ethiopia to the League of Nations, in Geneva.

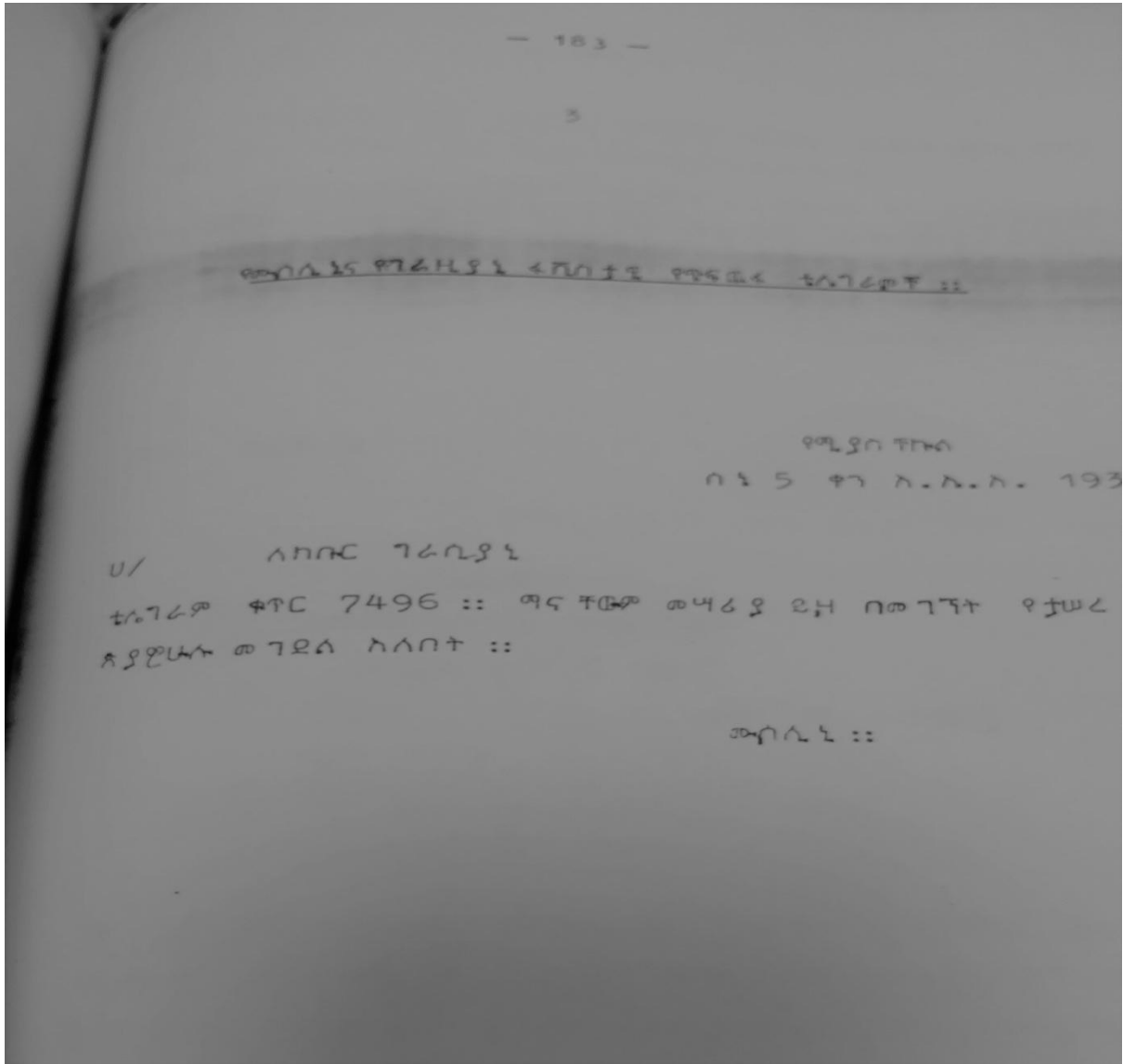
ቁ. ፱፱፡—  
ሰኔ ፳፫፡ ቀን፡ ፱፻፳፯፡ ፡፡ ጣርያዊ፡ ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ቀዳማዊ፡  
ኃይለ ሥላሴ፡ ጄኔቫ፡ ስዓልም፡ መንግሥታት፡ ማኅበር፡ ደስ  
ታወቁት፡ የአቤቱታ፡ ቃል፡፡  
እኔ፡ ቀዳማዊ፡ ኃይለ ሥላሴ፡ የኢትዮጵያ ንጉሠ ነገሥት፡፡  
ዓለሌ፡ ስምንት፡ ወር፡ አምሳይ፡ ሁለት፡ መንግሥታት፡ የዓለምን፡ መንግሥታት፡  
ሕግ፡ የታሰቀ፡ የአጥቂነት፡ ጦርነት፡ በኢትዮጵያ፡ ላይ፡ መደረጉን፡ አረጋግጠው፡ ካሁን  
ወቅ፡ በኋላ፡ ስሕዝቤ፡ ይደረግለታል፡ ብሎ፡ ቃል፡ የገቡ ስትን፡ አርዳታል፡ የሚገባ  
ውንም፡ ትክክለኛ፡ ፍርድ፡ ስመጠየቅ፡ ዛሬ፡ ከዚህ፡ ቀርቤ አስቡ፡፡  
ስለዚህም፡ ስምንት፡ ሁለት፡ መንግሥታት፡ የኢትዮጵያን፡ ሕዝብ፡ አቤቱታ፡  
ለማቅረብ፡ ከንጉሠ ነገሥት፡ የሚበልጥ፡ ሌላ፡ ሰው፡ አይገኝም፡፡  
በዚህ፡ ጉዳይ፡ የአንድ፡ መንግሥት፡ ንጉሠ ነገሥት፡ ወይም፡ ፕሬዚዳንት፡ ሌላ፡  
ቀርቦ፡ ስፍገር፡ ምናልባት፡ ገና፡ ዛሬ፡ መጀመሩ፡ የው፡ ደግሞ፡ የአንድ፡ አገር፡ ሕዝብ፡  
ደህን፡ የመሰሉ፡ ስመጥ፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡ ስሜት፡  
የታየው፡ በአርግጥ፡ ዛሬ፡ ብቻ፡ የው፡ አንድ፡ መንግሥት፡ የሌላውን፡ መንግሥት፡  
አገር፡ በጦርነት፡ አንድ ደውሰውባቸው፡ ገደብን፡ የሆኑትንም፡ የሰው፡ ወገኖቹ፡ ሁ  
ይለኛ፡ በሆነው፡ በጋዝ፡ ተክሎን፡ መርዝ፡ አንድ ደውሰውባቸው፡ ተብሎ፡ በምድር፡  
ካሉ፡ መንግሥቶች፡ ጋራ፡ በተዋዋሰው፡ ውል፡ በክብርና፡ በግልጽ፡ የሰጠውን፡ ቃል  
ኪዳን፡ ተካፈሎ፡ በጨካኝነት፡ መሣሪያ፡ የአንድን፡ ሕዝብ፡ በተርፍ፡ ለማጥ  
ፋት፡ ከዚህ፡ ቀደም፡ የተነሳ፡ ምሳሌ፡ የሆነ፡ መንግሥት፡ አልታየም፡፡  
ስለዚህ በኢትዮጵያ ንጉሠ ነገሥትነት ወጪ ጄኔቫ የመጣሁበት ምክንያት  
ለጦር፡ ሠራዊቱ ሞት መሪ ሆኑ ሌሎች ከተዋጋሁ በኋላ ከብዙ ሺ ዘመናት በፊት  
ጀምሮ የቆመውን ነጻነትን ለመጠበቅ ስለሚታገሉ ስለኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ለመክ  
ካከልና ይህንም ከፍተኛ የተገባኝ ሥራ ለመፈጸም፡ የው፡ እነዚህ የተከተሉት  
ሹ ማምቶቹ፡ ራሳቸውን ያሳዩ ስላቸው ያስቀርባሉ፡ ስላቸው፡ ከሚ ደ ስቅቅ ነገርና በሕዝብ  
ካዲ ከተደረገው ለቀዳሚ የዓለምን መንግሥታት አገዛዥ አብሮ እንዲጠብቅ  
ቸው እስምናሉ፡፡  
በጄኔቫ ለተሰቡት ለብዙ ሚኒስጥሮች ለደብዳቤ ለሕግና ለሌሎች ሕይወ  
ት አካላት ለሆኑት መንግሥታት እንደሚሰጡ በኢትዮጵያ ካዲ የደረሰባችን ዕድ  
ልና በሕዝብ ካዲ የደረሰባችን የጥቅ እደጋ በዝርዝር እሰረዳለሁ፡፡  
የእጣኔ መንግሥት ጦርነት ደደረገው በኢትዮጵያ ወተዳደር ካዲ  
ብቻ እደዳለሁ፡፡ ይህንም ከጦርነት ስፍራ የራቁትን ስላማው ደን ሕዝብ ሹ በ  
ዲንጋጢ ለመግደልና ለራቁትንም ለማጥፋት እደጋ እየጠሉ ወጋቸው፡፡  
ጦርነት፡ እንዳትጀመረ በ፲፱፻፴፩ ዓመት መሠረድኝ (1) የእጣኔ ደ  
አውሮፕካኖች በጦር ሠራዊቱ ካዲ ጋዝ ካንደግደግን ደሰባችን በምሳሌ ጠራባቸው  
ይህም በምሳሌ እጁን አሳታው ስር፡ ምክንያቱም ወተዳደር፡ በግላ ስላው ደቀ

Source: NALA. Folder. No. 63.1. File. No. 37.13.



**APPENDIX-5-**

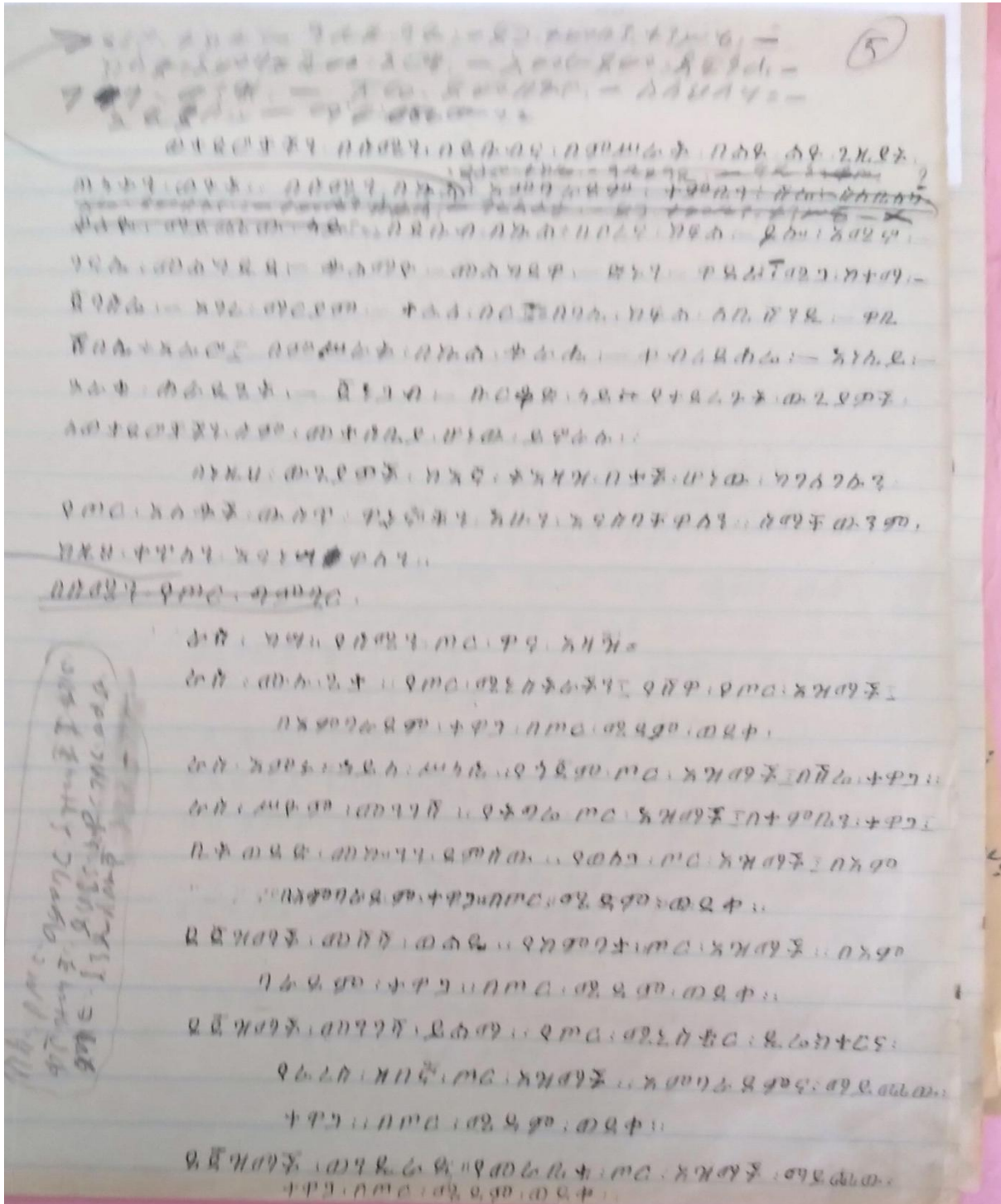
**The Amharic version of Urgent Telegram from Mussolini to Graziani to disarm and kill every People of Ethiopia.**



SOURCE: IES, MS, No. 2555. P, 183.

**APPENDIX-6-**

**Notable War Leaders of Ethiopia on different fronts during the occupation of Ethiopia.**

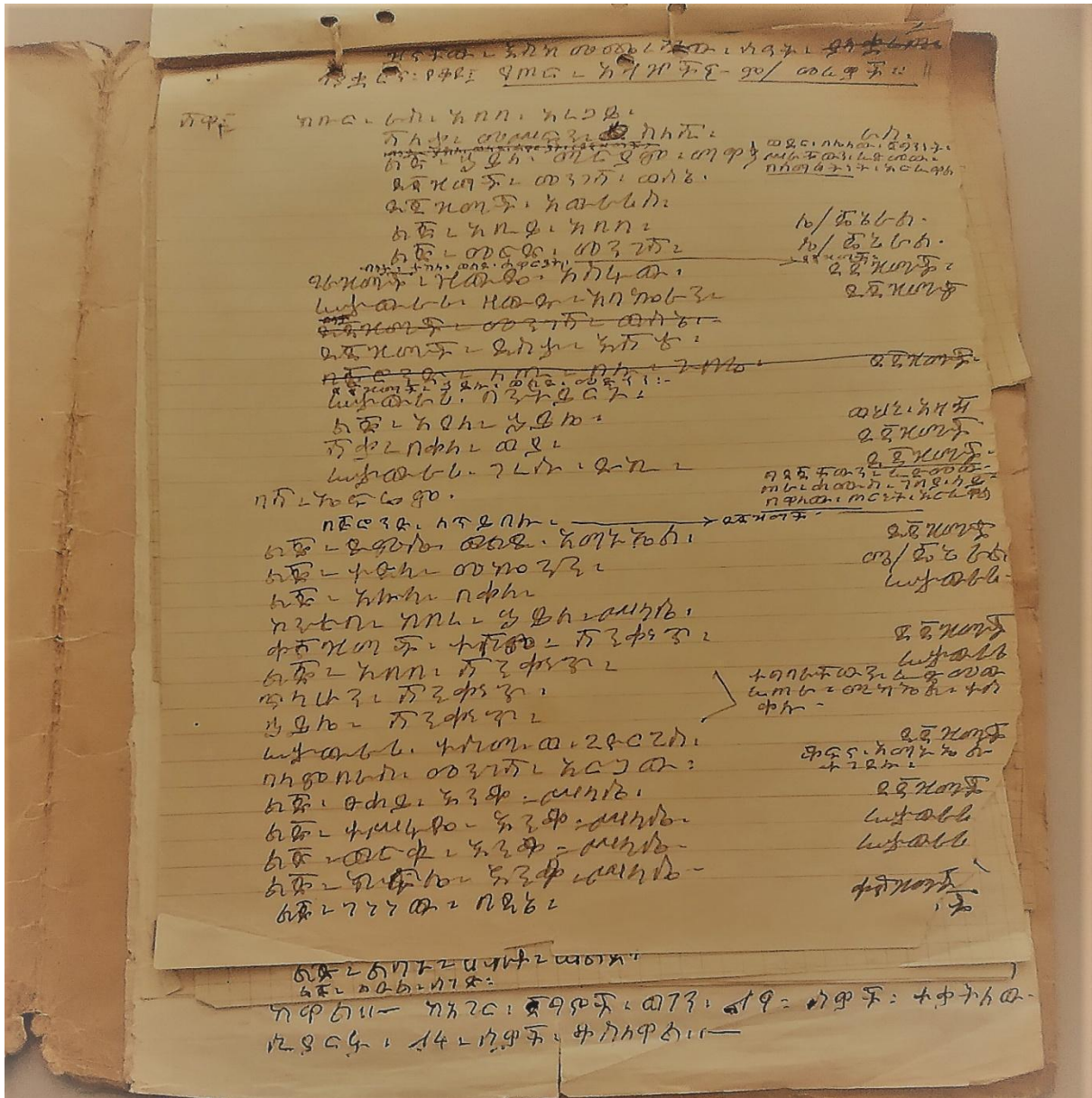


**Source:** Lā Kibur Dājazmač Kābādā Tāsāma Yātāşafu, NALA.Folder.No.62.1.File No.18.18, pp.5-6.



APPENDIX-8-

The patriot leaders of Šāwa their prominence persisted until liberation.

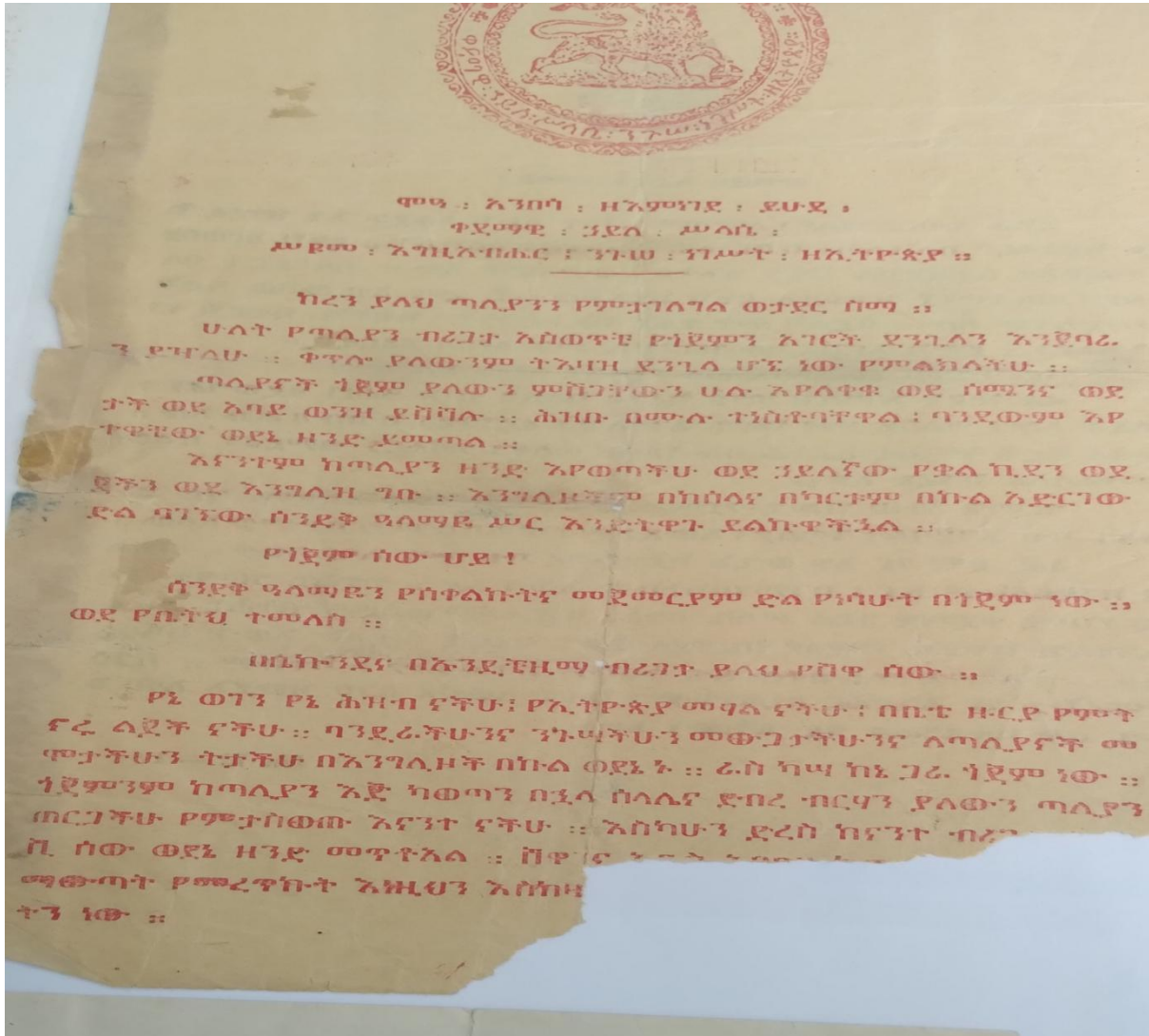


Source: NALA. Folder No.63.1.File No. 47.14.



## APPENDIX-9-

Emperors decree bands of Keren, Gojjam, and Šäwa to support the British Army.



**Source:** “Yä Engliz Mängist Wätadäroč Mälekt Yätor gezé heg, Awaj”. *British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No. 2556, p.8.

**APPENDIX-10-**

**Peoples of Märhabété and Mänz killed by fascist order in *Amäjäna waša*.**

መሳገጃው ክገፋ :	ክገፋ :	መሳገጃው :	ክገፋ :
መሳገጃው መርሐይቅ 15/ጊጉራ : ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :	ክገፋ :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 16/ ከበደ : ተገኝ :	ተገኝ :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 17/ ወረቀት : አዳሁ : ፍቄ :	አዳሁ : ፍቄ :	መሳገጃው :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 18/ ደምቤ : ተሰማ :	ተሰማ :	መሳገጃው :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 19/ ዝነበ : ልገርግ :	ልገርግ :	ክገፋ :	ገሳ፤ :
20/ መርፍ : ውቤ :	ውቤ :	መሳገጃው :	ገሳ፤ :
መርሐ. 21/ አጥፍሏ : አጥፍሏ : መርቅ :	አጥፍሏ : መርቅ :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 22/ ራግጫ : ጫቦር :	ጫቦር :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 23/ ዜማህህ : ጫቦር :	ጫቦር :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :
መር. 24/ ሲሳይ : ዜማህህ :	ዜማህህ :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :
መርሐ. 25/ አውቤ : ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :	ገሳ፤ :

Source: "Yä Däjjazmäč Täšomä Šänkut Yä Hywot Tarik", IES, MS, No. 1000, P.73.



APPENDIX-11-

A letter written by Kābādā Tāsāma to Ras Abābā Arāgay written about the support patriots fought against fascist force in Šāwa.

ይድረስ ፡ ለክቡር ፡ ራስ ፡ አበበ ፡ አረጋይ ፤

ለጤናህ ፡ እጅጉን ፡ እንደምን ፡ ሰንብተሃል ፤ ቸር ፡ ፈጣሪያችን ፡  
ይመስገን ፡ እኔ ፡ ደኅና ፡ ነኝ ፤ እንደምታውቀው ፡ ከግርማዊ ፡ ጃንሆይ ፡  
ጋራ ፡ ተሰድጄ ፡ አያሩሳሌም ፡ ሳለሁ ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ ጽፌልህ ፡ ነበር ። አሁን ፡  
ግን ፡ ይህን ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ የምጽፍልህ ፡ ግርማዊ ፡ ጃንሆይ ፡ ተሰደው ፡ ሲደ  
ክሙብት ፡ የነበረው ፡ ጉዳይ ፡ ስለተፈጸመላቸውና ፡ አገራቸው ፡ ድንበር ፡  
ስለደረሱ ፤ ለኢትዮጵያ ፡ አርበኞች ፡ ሁሉ ፡ የምሥራች ፡ ለመናገርና ፡  
የግርማዊነታቸውን ፡ የአዋጅ ፡ ቃል ፡ ለማናገር ፡ ተልኬ ፡ ስለመጣሁ ፡  
ጉጃም ፡ መሬት ፡ ላይ ፡ ሆኜ ፡ ነው ። በጉጃም ፡ ጠቅላይ ፡ ግዛት ፡ ካሉ ፡  
አርበኞች ፡ ጋራ ፡ እየተገናኘን ፡ የሚጉድለውን ፡ መሣሪያና ፡ ገንዘብ ፡  
እንዲረዱ ፡ ተችሏል ። ይህንንም ፡ እርዳታ ፡ የሚያደርጉ ፡ የእንግሊዝ ፡  
መንግሥት ፡ የጦር ፡ አለቆች ፡ ከእኔ ፡ ጋራ ፡ መጥተው ፡ ጉጃም ፡ መሬት ፡  
ገብተዋል ፤ ወደ ፡ እናንተም ፡ ለመዝለቅ ፡ አስበን ፡ የመንገዱን ፡ አኳኋን ፡  
ለመመርመር ፡ ስንል ፡ ነውና ፡ የቆየነው ፡ ማንኛውንም ፡ አኳኋን ፡ አጥር  
ተህ ፡ ጸፍልኝ ።

ግርማዊ ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ነገሥታችንም ፡ በድንገተኛ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ በአርበኞቻ  
ቸው ፡ መሐከል ፡ ሊገኙ ፡ ተወስኗል ። ለጊዜውም ፡ አሁን ፡ ያልመጡበት ፡  
ምክንያት ፡ መሣሪያውንና ፡ ገንዘቡን ፡ ወደ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ለማስገባት ፡  
ብቻ ፡ ሲሉ ፡ ነው ። ይህ ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ መድረሱንና ፡ በቶሎ ፡ መገናኛ ፡ መኖ  
ሩን ፡ ባውቅ ፡ የግርማዊ ፡ ጃንሆይ ፡ ማኅተም ፡ እንዲደርስህ ፡ ስለማምን ፡  
እልክልሁለሁ ።

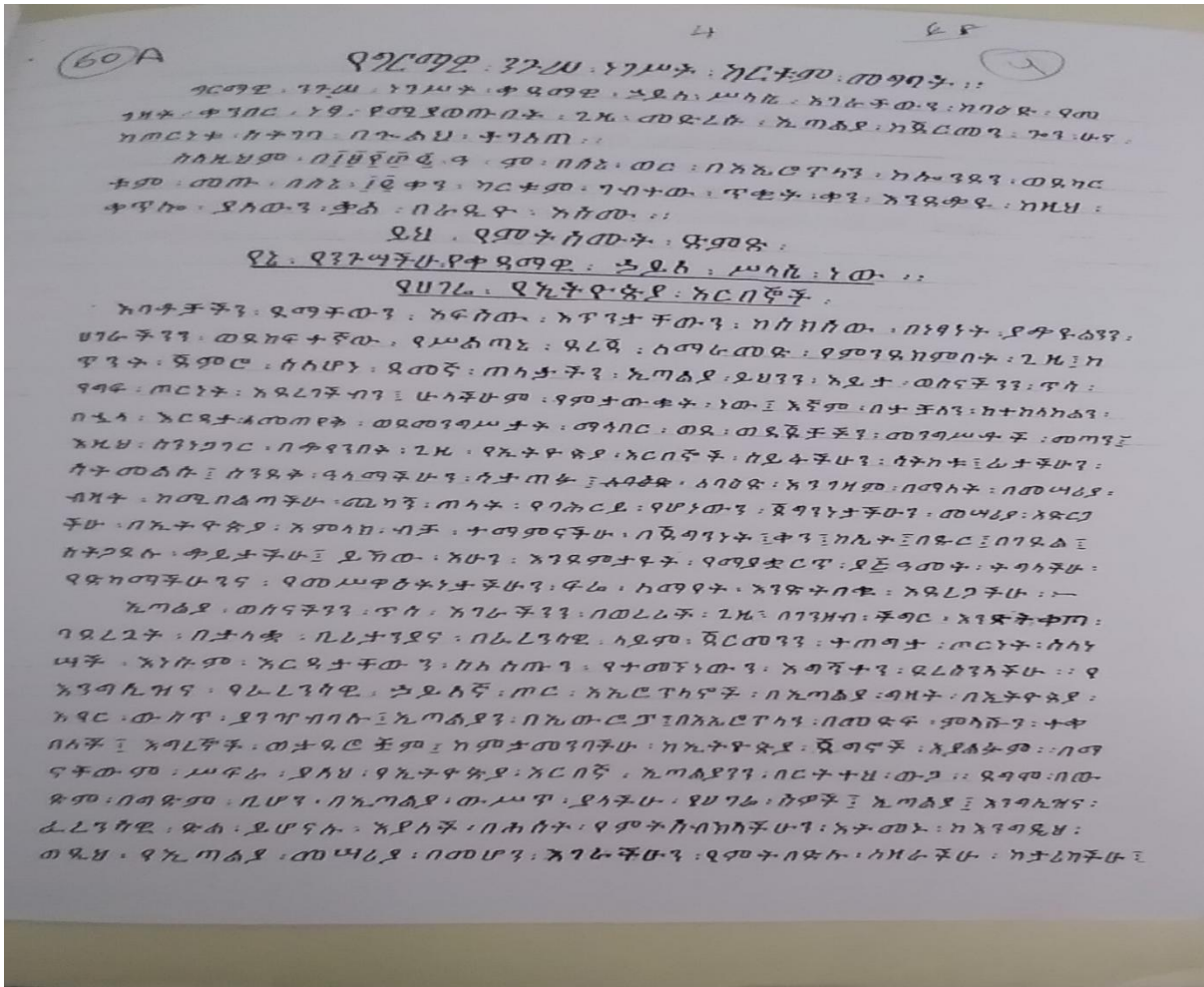
አሁን ፡ ግን ፡ ያላኩልህ ፡ በመንገድ ፡ ላይ ፡ ያለውን ፡ ሁናቴ ፡ አጥ  
ርቼ ፡ ባለማወቁ ፡ ነው ። በሸዋ ፡ ክፍል ፡ ያሉትን ፡ አርበኞች ፡ ለጊዜው ፡  
በብዙ ፡ አጥርቼ ፡ ስለማላውቃቸው ፡ ቃሉን ፡ ጽፌ ፡ የስም ፡ ማግቢያ ፡  
ቦታ ፡ ትቼ ፡ እየፈረምኩ ፡ ልኬልሁለሁና ፡ ለምታውቀው ፡ አርበኛ ፡ ሁሉ ፡  
ስሙን ፡ እየሞላህ ፡ እንድትልክልኝ ፡ እለምንሀለሁ ። በሸዋ ፡ ክፍል ፡  
ያለውን ፡ የጠላት ፡ ኃይልና ፡ ምሽግ ፡ ያለበትን ፡ አገር ፡ በዝርዝር ፡ ብት  
ጽፍልኝ ፡ የአይሮፕላን ፡ አደጋ ፡ እንዲያገኛቸው ፡ ለማድረግ ፡ ይቻላል ።  
እንደዚሁም ፡ የኛ ፡ አርበኞች ፡ ያሉበትን ፡ አገርና ፡ ብርታታቸውንም ፡  
በጠቅላላው ፡ የሕዝቡንም ፡ ሐሳብ ፡ እንድትጽፍልኝ ፤ የመሣሪያና ፡ የገን  
ዘብ ፡ እርዳታ ፡ ለማግኘት ፡ እንዲቻል ፡ ከጉጃም ፡ የምትገናኙበትን ፡ በር ፡  
ለመክፈት ፡ አጥብቀህ ፡ አስብበት ። የመንገዱን ፡ ደኅንነት ፡ በላክናቸው ፡  
መላክተኞች ፡ አጥርቼ ፡ ሳውቀው ፡ እኔ ፡ ራሴ ፡ ወይም ፡ ሌላ ፡ ሠራተኛ ፡  
በቅርብ ፡ ቀን ፡ በመሐከላችሁ ፡ ይገኛል ። በባህርዩ ፡ ሞት ፡ በመንግሥቱ ፡  
ኅልፈት ፡ የሌለበት ፡ አምላክ ፡ በሕይወት ፡ ለመገናኘት ፡ ያብቃን ።

ኅዳር ፡ ፴ ፡ ቀን ፡ ፲፱፻፴፫ ፡ ዓ ፡ ም ፡  
አዛኝ ፡ ከበደ ፡ ተሰማ ፡

Source: Kābādā Tāsāma, *Yā Tarik Mastawāša*, (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Press, 1962), p.304.

# Appendix-12-

## Declaration of the Emperor to patriots of Ethiopia from Khartoum.

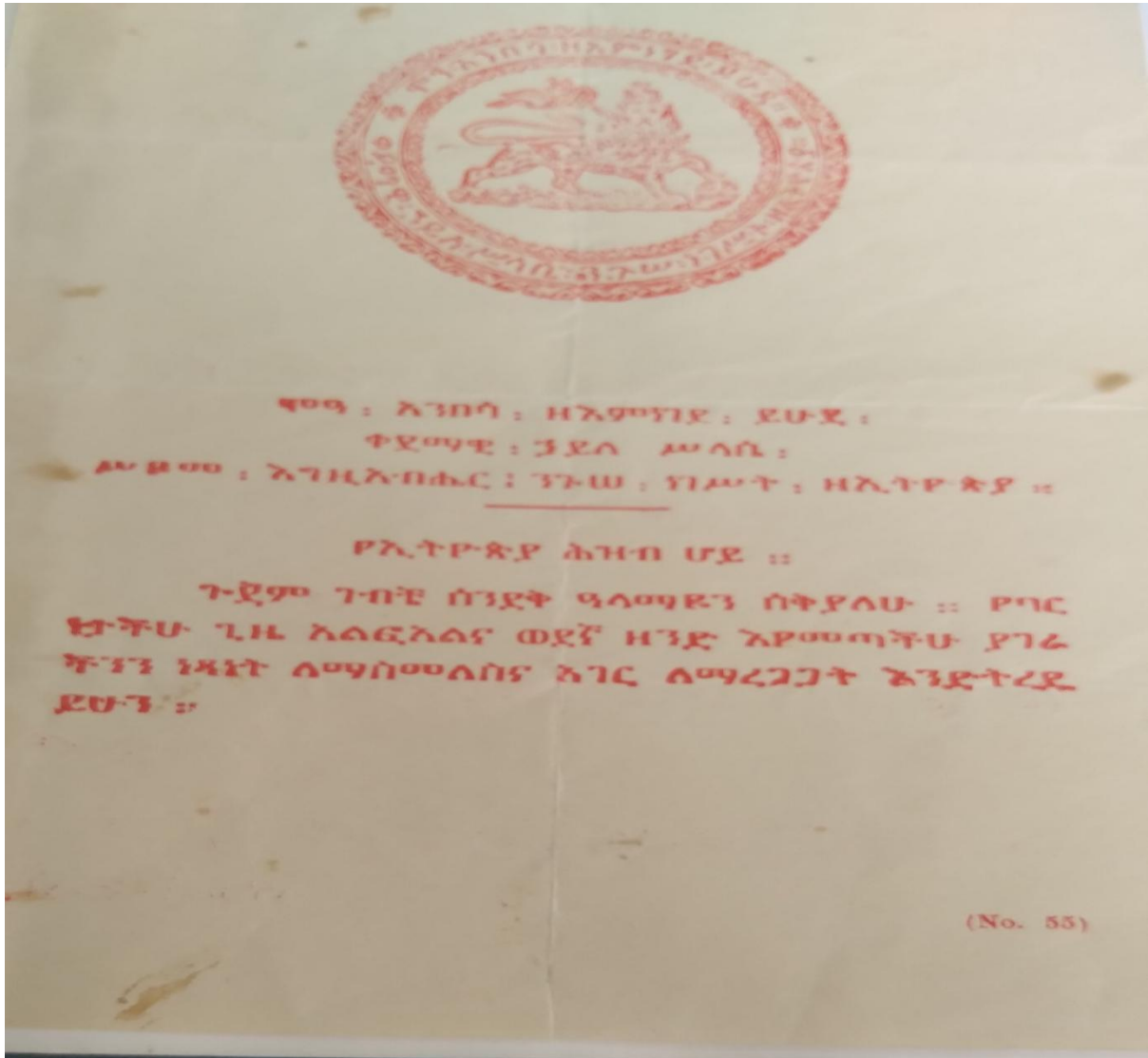


Source: NALA. Folder No. 63.4.File No.34.15.



## APPENDIX-13-

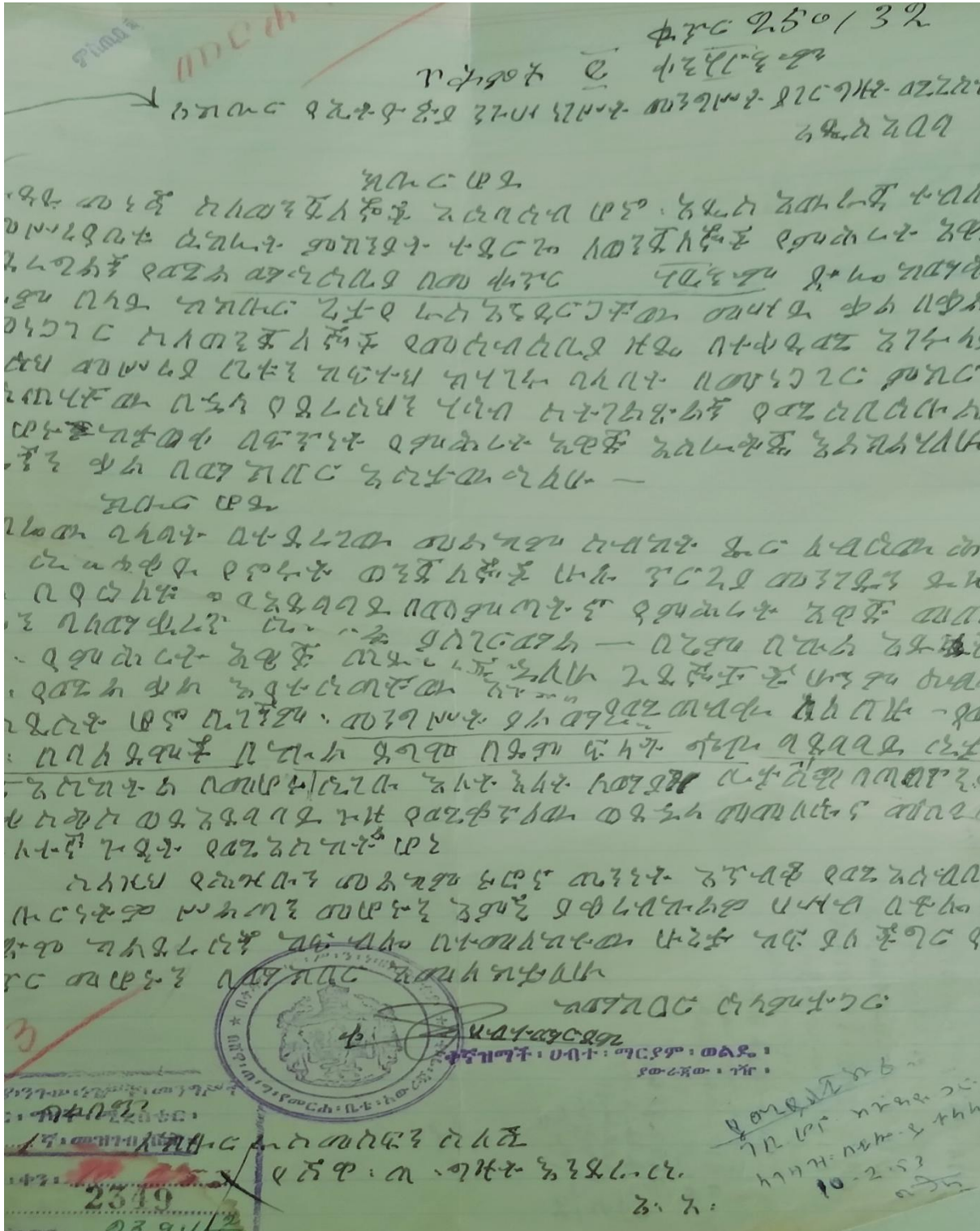
### Emperor's Decree to Ethiopian People about Hoisting's Ethiopian Flag at Gojjam, Omedella.



**Source:** “Yä Engliz Mängest Wätadäroč Mälekt Yätor gize hig, Awaji”. *British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation*. No.1, IES, MS, No. 2556, p.9.

APPENDIX-14

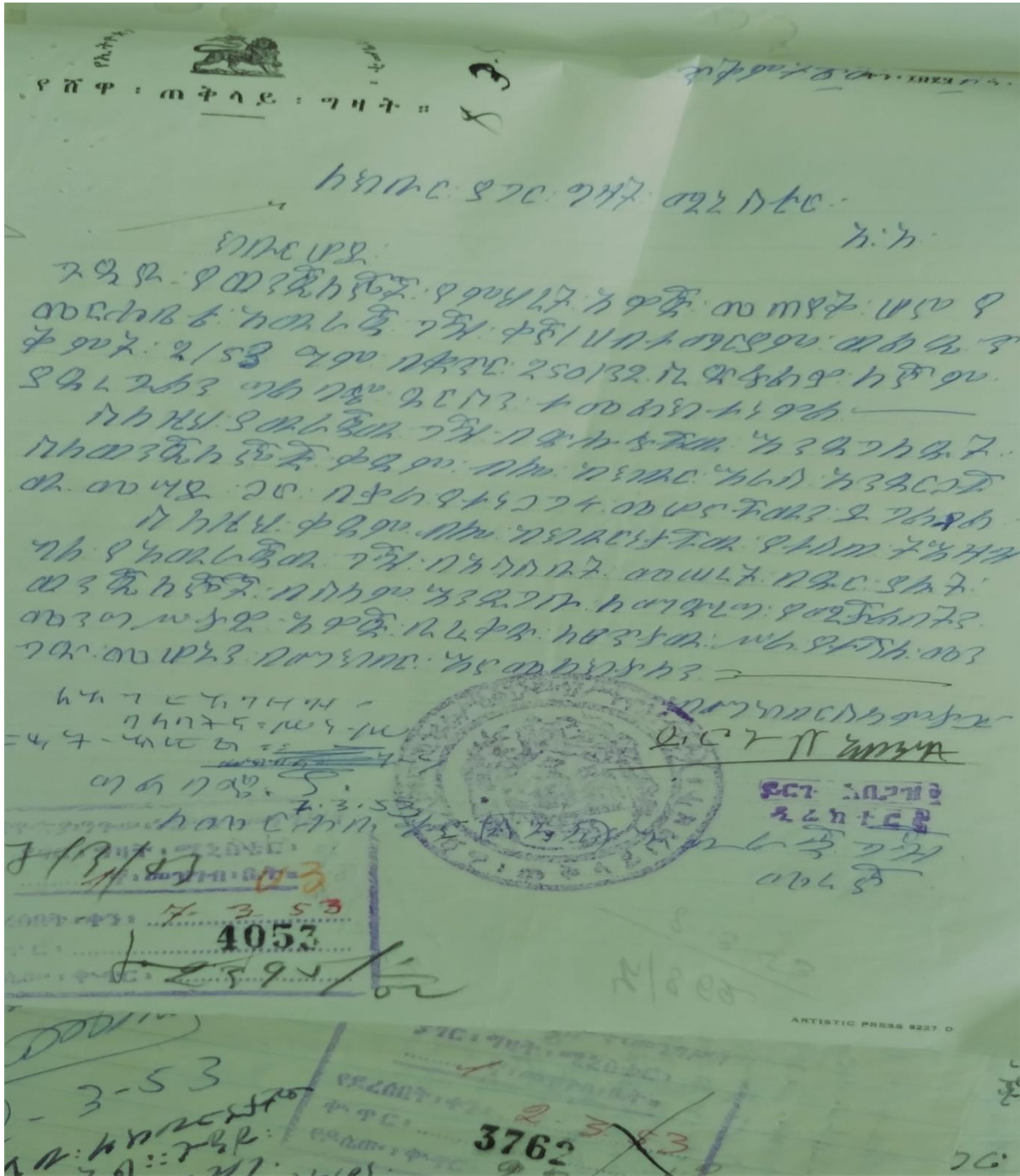
Letters from Provincial Leader of Märhabété to Emperor Haile Selassie about gathering Bandit from the bush.



Source: NALA, Folder. No.17.1.3.File. No.57.02.

**APPENDIX-15-**

Letters from Märhabété awuraja to the ministry of the interior were written about the amnesty of criminals.

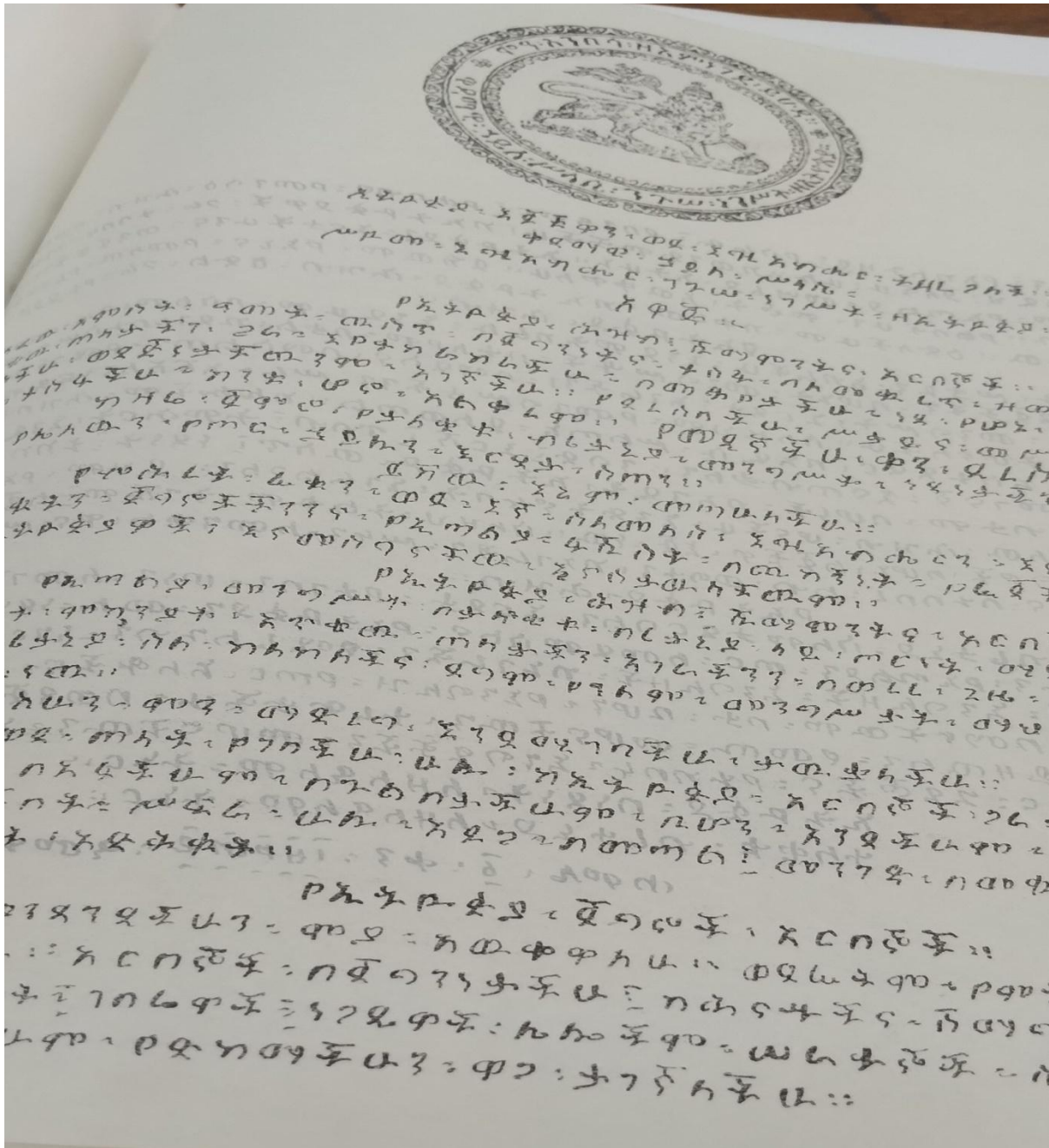


Source: NALA, Folder. No.17.1.3.File No.57.02.



# APPENDIX-16-

## Emperors Declaration about Patriotic Reward



Source: "Yä Engliz Mängest Wätadäroč Mälekt Yäfor gizē hig, Awaji". British Military Jurisdiction Proclamation. No.1, IES, MS, No. 2556, p.11.



## **DECLARATION**

I declared that **A History of Patriotic Resistance in Märhabété Area, 1936-1941** is my work. All the sources that have been used throughout the study are properly quoted and acknowledged by means of footnotes.

\_\_\_\_\_

date\_\_\_\_\_

Tsegaye Genet Ayele