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**A HISTORY OF MÄNAGÄSHA-AMBA ST.
MARY MONASTERY: 1916-2003**

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Key to Transliteration System

I. The seven sounds of the Ethiopic alphabet are represented as follows:

1st Order	በ	Bä
2nd Order	ቡ	Bu
3rd Order	ቢ	Bi
4th Order	ባ	B
5th Order	ቤ	Bé
6th Order	ብ	Be
7th Order	ቦ	Bo

II. Palatalized Sounds are represented as follows:

ሸ	Šä
ቸ	Čä
ጸ	Ňä
ጸ	Jä
ጸ	Zhä

III. Glottalized sounds are represented as follows:

ቀ	Qä
ጠ	Tä
ጮ	Cä
ጸ/ፀ	Sä
ጸ	Pä

IV. For words having the sound of sixth alphabet at the end, it is not necessary to add the repretng letters of the sound.

Example:	ጠጭህር	Mämher
	ብድር	Béddir
	ሀገር	Hagär

V. Afaan Oromo Vowels

In Afaan Oromo there are short and long Vowles

Short.	Long.	Example.	English meaning.
a	aa	gaara	mountain
e	ee	heera	constitution
i	ii	diimaa	red
o	oo	rooba	rain

Vi. Afaan Oromo Consonants.

In Afaan Oromo , the whole letters used in English language as consonants and they are stressed (germinated) by doubling similar consonants. There are consonants from combination of two different consonants. These are ch, dh, ny, ph, and sh.

Oromo	Symbol	Example	English meaning
Ch	Č	Bilaacha	Butterfly
Dh		Daadhi	Local drink
Ny	ň	Nyaara	eyelide
Sh	Š	Sharafa	foreign exchange
Ph	p	Buphaa	egg

Vii. Consecutive vowels are usually separated by apostrophe:

Example:	እስራኤል	Esra'el
	በአል	Bä'al

Viii. Stressed Sounds are usually represented by doubling the consonant.

	ገባር	Gabbar
	ከበደ ተሰማ	Käbbädä Täsämma
	እቁብ	Eqqub
	ቆላ	Qolla
General Example:	ወይዘሮ	wäyzäro
	ጨርጨር	Cärcär
	ዳኛ	Daña
	ደቦ	Däbo
	ኸንገገርገር	Zhengurgur

Aknowlegdements

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to God, for his luxurious Love. My appreciation and thanks next go to my advisors: Buruk Wolde-Michael (Ass.Prof) and Kassa Lij Melkam (MA) for their professional support and constructive criticism and valuable advice and for their being at my disposal throughout the year. I am greatly indebted to my advisors for their support and guidance, which were vital throughout the preparation of this research. Their criticisms and comments helped me to reassess the work from different perspectives.

My thanks also go to the informants for their relevant information during the interview such as culture and tourism officers of Wolmera Woreda, Menagesha- Kolobo town experts, priests, deacons and administers of the monastery and for those who helped me while I was preparing this thesis. Particularly, I want to present my gratitude to my leading informant Qasis Taye Mekuriya, Mämeher Mandefro Sisay, Bahtawi Woldä Cheroqos Woldä Yohanes and Ato Lamma Beyyecha for their genuine and productive information.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude and sincere appreciation to my families, my mother W/ro Assegdech Bezabih, all my beloved brothers speccially, Bekele Hailemariam and my sisters. I would further like to extend my thanks to my lovely children Kidan and Kal Abay for their patience while I was departing from them for consecutive five summers. My right hand man, Ketema Moti, deserves special thanks for his take care and treatment of my families'health voluntarily.My collique, Geletaw Teshome needs special thanks for his collaboration during the editining of this research work.

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Abstract

The prime focus of this research is exploring the History of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery from 1916 to 2003. The Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary was founded during the reign of Empress Zewditu (1916-1930). The year 1916 was marked as the establishment year of the Monastery, while the year 2003 is regarded as a turning point in the history of the monastery. In 2003, the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary had got financial support from the Aid and Development Organization of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church which reinstated the declined monastery through this financial and morale support.

The other reason was that some Orthodox believers from abroad and within Ethiopia had organized and allocated associational budget to rehabilitate Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. In the same year, the Wolmera Woreda Agricultural office had restored the farming land of the monastery which was taken over by the Derg with the purpose of covering the land with Sedar trees.

The monastery was one of the few places in Ethiopia which served as an asylum until the removal of the monarchical regime. It had not only served as an asylum for secluded life but also as a refugee place for the needy at times of economic crises and also foreign aggression. The monastery served as unifying force of patriots in the struggle against the Fascist occupation. It had various means of income ranging from land taxation, shopping, crafts and public donations. It was also a famous center of traditional church educations in the region producing not only church men but also the many bureaucrats and judges in the secular government of Ethiopia.

Preface

Even though, so many scholars have made attempts to conduct research concerning various aspects of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, yet several historical sites and issues remained untouched: - including churches found in Western Shoa. The Monastery of Menagesha Amba St.Mary is also one among these requiring indepth historical investigations. Hence, this research tries to reconstruct the history of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery since its foundation i.e 1916 to 2003. The main reason for the selection of the topic was its richness in primary sources, historicals buildings, and sacredness, harmoniousness of the existing community and monastic objects that are found in the Monastery.

The researcher had an interest to deal with the history of his country so that he is grateful to those who gave him historical clues. These factors inspired him to conduct the topic that deals with a History of Mänagäsha Amba St Mary Monastery; 1916 -2003. The year 1916 was the time when Empress Zewditu founded the Monastery. The year 2003 was the year when the Organization of Aid and development of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church mobilized to solve the monastery's financial problem. Due to the lack of income, clergies were left the monastery to other areas, but now, the monastery could retain its ministers. The other reason was that the aid offered to the monastery by several faithful Orthodox fellows in the same year.The monastery had also restored its land which was snatched by the government for tree plantation.

This study of the monastery's history will make a partial contribution to a further research on the churches in the Western Shoa region, which has played special role in the general makeup of the region. Therefore, it should be considered as one of the Monastery that has much to contribute for the study of Ethiopian history. It was this issue that initiated the researcher to take the subject and write on it.

This research work has four parts.The first chapter contains the introduction part that deals with three issues .The first is the introduction and development of monasticism in the world in general and in Ethiopia in particular. The second issue is a brief demonstration about the geographical settings as well as the background of the area under study.The third theme is concerned with the introduction of Christianity to Western Shoa region.

The second chapter broadly deals with when, how and who constructed the first church of the monastery. An attempt was also made to discuss briefly the impacts of the Italian attacks in relation to the monastery.

The third chapter focuses on the administrative system of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery in the Context of Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the traditional Church education of the monastery. The researcher also tried to discuss briefly some achievements of the monastery in the post 1941 period. The fourth chapter deals with sources of income and treasures of MASMM and other developments and major problems of the monastery come across and the summary.

The reconstruction of the history of the monastery is made possible by employing both primary and secondary sources. More or less, the most important sources of this work are primary sources, which consisted almost entirely of oral information. With regard to the former, the researcher made use of archive materials. As most of the informants are church officials and clergies, they may exaggerate events and to avoid this, the researcher attempted to cross check the information obtained from them through some relevant written documents. Concerning the calendar, years mentioned in the research are calculated based up on the European calendar.

The researcher encountered several problems while he was conducting the study. The first problem was getting archival sources. This is due to two reasons. The first was the documents were burnt during Imam Ahmad and Italian invasion and by the irresponsible Monastic administrators. The second reason was the damage that came from the pests like mice, rats and hermits and some clergies were also stolen some important objects from the monastery.

The researcher made an intensive effort to access to the monastery's archival centers. However, the clergies did not allow him to do research at the beginning, because they are in a suspicious about church treasures that will be lost. But, Märigeta Mandefiro Sisay, the vice head of the monastery and Qäsis Taye Mekurya paved the closed gate for him and he got their willingness to have an access to the Monastery's Museum. Above all, the outbreak of the Pandemic Covid-19 made things very complicated which dis communicated the researcher from his informants. The researcher also conducted Wolmera Woreda culture and tourism office and

Menagesha Kolobo Municipal office which easily received the official letter of the History department.

In addition to this, the researcher went to Gishen and Addis Alem Mary to check if the three old churches had some similar or common history. But, at Gishen, no one allowed him to conduct any interview because of the fear of the pandemic Covid -19. The researcher also visited national Archive center, Wolde Meskel Tariku Memorial research centers and EOC Archival centers. He wasted most of his time in the Institute of Ethiopian Studies (IES) in Addis Ababa University.

Lastly, the researcher cannot possibly close by summing this research as completed one rather he wish that it will use as spring board for further researchers.

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Acronyms

EOTC: Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church

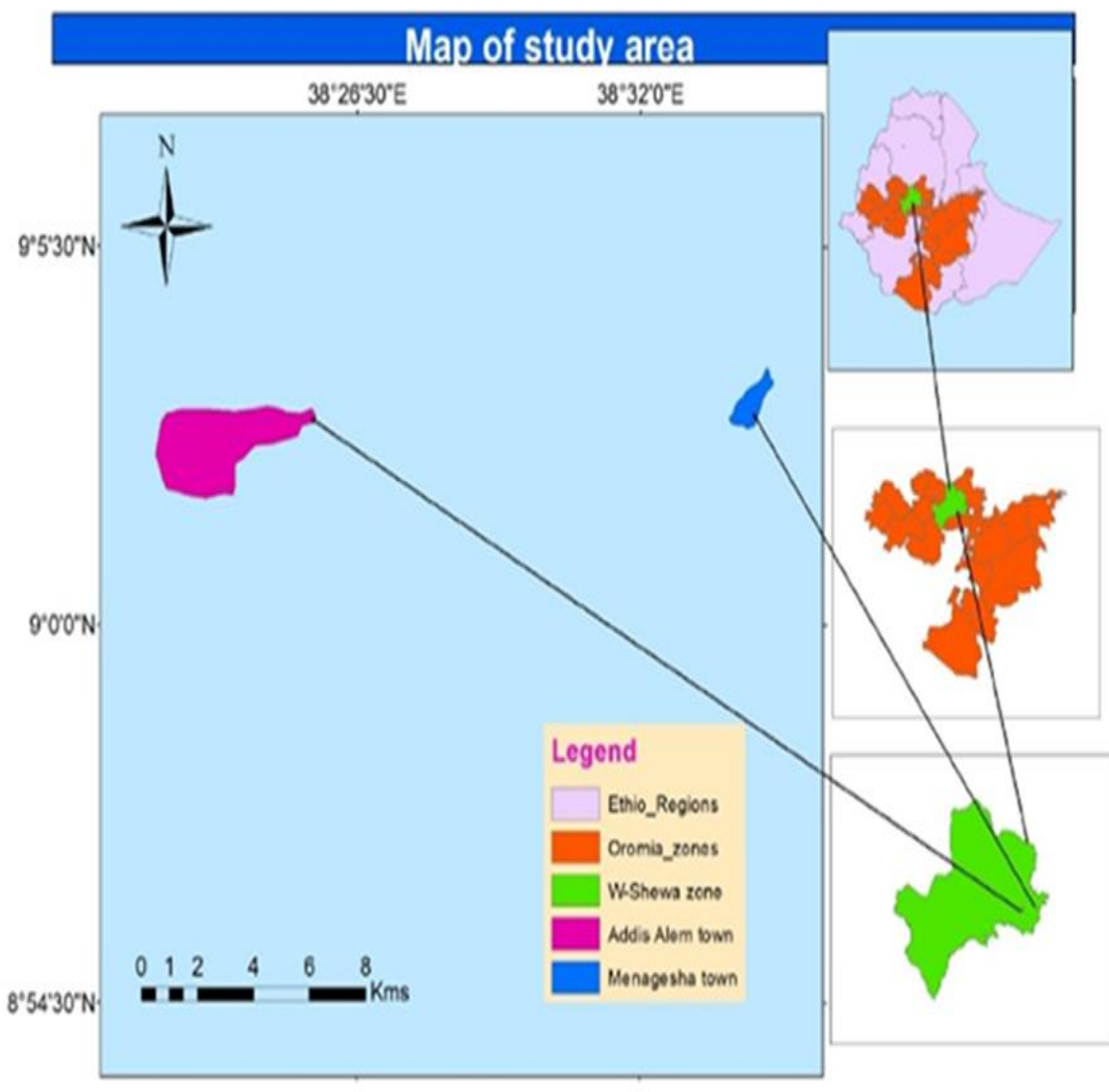
EOC: Ethiopian Orthodox Church

IES: Institute of Ethiopian Studies

MASMM: Mänagäsha Amba Saint Mary Monastery

MAM: Mänagäsha Amba Mary

Fig.1. Map of the Study Area



Description:- The White colour represents Ethiopian region, the Rose represents Oromia regional state, the Blue one shows the Western Shoa, and the Green one represents Managesha Town.

Source: Mikiyas Genanaw 2010 E.C.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Scholars who worked on the history of monasticism referred that people were joined monasteries since the early centuries of Christianity.¹ Religiously devoted people who pursued to attain the will and law of God had conducted the seclude life from the rest of the secular world.²

The hagiographies of saints revealed that the first Christians were driven to join deserts to escape the persecution conducted by Roman Emperors where some of them were hunted and burnt. Early Christians believed that deserts were safest places to communion with God.³

Christian tradition recounted that Christian hermits were inspired to practice a seclude life from secular world. In the history of monasticism, the most remarkable hermit was the Egyptian saint Anthony in the fourth century A.D. Antony was the most credited one for the first well organized monastic life in the cave of Egyptian desert around the coast of Red Sea.⁴

Scholar Blazewicz illustrated that monasticism had been emerged in Ethiopia in the fifth century A.D through the meticulous efforts of Syrian and Greek Saints. The arrival of the Nine Saints to *Aksumite* Empire, hastened the practice of monastic life in Ethiopia. According to the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition, the nine saints played the role of establishing *Däbrä Damo* monastery and the translation of the holy Bible from Greek to Ethiopian language.⁵

The development of monasticism was continued during the reign of king Caleb in the Sixth century A.D. Christian monasticism had reached to the hilly areas of Lasta, the Western bank of Lake Tana, Angot and the kingdom of Nubia.⁶ Surprisingly, the act of monasticism in Ethiopia was excelled during the time of Zagwe dynasty of twelfth to thirteenth centuries. Ethiopian tradition witnessed

¹Krzysztof Priot BLAZEWICZ, *Ethiopian Monasticism, Institute of Oriental Studies*. (Warsaw University; Poland, 1999), p.32.

²Buruk Wolde Michael, *The History of the monastery of Dabra Seyon Maryam in Lake Zeway to 1991*, (Bahir Dar, 2002), p.1.

³Robert Jones, *Monks and Monasteries. A brief History of Monasteries*. (Georgia, 2009), p.10.

⁴Rogers B.Beck and Linda Black. *World History; patterns of Interaction*. (McDougal Littell, 2009), p.170.

⁵Robert, p. 37.

⁶Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527*(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p.30.

that Zagwe ruler, *Yimirha Kristos*, who was ordained as priest before his coronation could be the best example of monastic development in Zagwe period.⁷

The reign of *Yekuno Amlak* was the period when the process of monasticism was more revived. During the time of Yekuno Amlak's restoration process, Christian monasticism was referred as the year of the Holy Covenant.⁸ Ethiopian Orthodox tradition recounts that Saint *Tekle Haymanot*, in the thirteenth century A.D, brought monasticism to Shewa. Tekle Haymanot coupled with monks founded monasteries in south of the Shewan territory which was most probably led by the shift of the seat of royal court from Lasta to Shoa.⁹ It is believed that Monasteries were established on the Ziquala Mountain, in Shoa by an Orthodox monk, *Abba Gäbrä Mänfäs Kiddus*.¹⁰

Most probably, it was in the thirteenth century A.D that indigenous monasticism had been flourished in Ethiopian, particularly, western Shoa region. Earlier to the thirteenth century, monasteries and their communities were mostly form northern Ethiopia. However, in the thirteenth century, monasteries were began to established and inhabited by the surrounding communities. As to Scholastic works of Buruk, during the evangelical movement of *Takla Haymanot* and other devoted fellows, the culture of monastic life had been planted in the central Shoan region in the 13th c A.D¹¹ amongst of which Mänagäsha *Amba St. Mary* Monastery was one of them.

1.1. Geographical Setting of Mänagäsha Kolobo

Mänagäsha by its other name Kolobo is located in Oromia Regional State, Special Zone of Surrounding Finfine and Wolmera Woreda about nineteen kmrs West of Addis Ababa. Starting from 2014, Mänagäsha has been known by the name of Kolobo.¹² The word Kolobo refers to an Oromo father who was a *Qallu* (spiritual leader) that came to the area under study from Bishoftou (*Debre Zeit*) and settled there. His name denoted shade or shelter of his clan (*Tullema*). As to the document found from the office of the Town's municipality, Kolobo was inhabited by *Barfata* and *Badi* Oromo group of *Tullema* clans. The town is well known especially after the establishment of

⁷BLAZEWICZ,p.38.

⁸*Ibid.*39.

⁹Tadesse Tamrat,p.112.

¹⁰BLAZEWICZ, p.39.

¹¹Buruk ,p.1.

¹²Informants: Ato Dejene Dibaba and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and *Garaw Medhanealem* church which are five and kilo meters away from the town.¹³

As to informants, the name *Kolobo* was more utilized during the period of Italian occupation by a clan leader named “*Kolobo*”. As to informants, it was from this man’s name that the town was named after.¹⁴ The town is under Wolmera Woreda being bordered in the East by Burayu, in the West by Holeta and in the North and South by Wolmera and Sebeta Woredas respectively. The total area of the Woreda is 3526.6 hectare.¹⁵

The town of *Kolobo* surrounded by rivers except on the southern side. Among the mountains in the area, Mänagäsha (formerly called *Egdu* which meant protector) and *Wachächa* are historically significant. According to informants, the Oromo called mount Mänagäsha as *Tullu Egduu* and it was Oromo ritual and cultural site before it lost that status in the mid-nineteenth century, after it came under *Menelik*’s conquest.¹⁶ Mount *Wachächa* was also important for it was used by *Menelik* II as a stepping stone in the expansion to the surrounding Oromo and subsequential establishment of his capital at *Entoto* in 1881.¹⁷

The town is mostly known for three things; the first one is Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and *Garaw Medhanealem* monastery. Secondly, Mänagäsha Suba Forest which is one of the oldest forests in Africa which is established by Emperor *Zära Yaqob* and located 42 kms West of Addis Ababa and thirdly by its flower investment.¹⁸ *Kolobo Woreda* has three Kebeles. The total population of the three Kebeles is about 40378 (20693 Men and 19685 Women). *Kolobo Woreda* is the home of different ethnic groups. Such as Oromo, Amhara, Gurage, Wolayta, Tigre and others, among these, in the Woreda, Oromo and Amhara are the two largest ethnic groups.¹⁹

¹³Managasha Kolobo Municipality profile, 2021 File No. 7.

¹⁴ Infromants: W/ro Chali Feyisa and and Ato Alemu Gemmeda.

¹⁵ Zewdu Tadesse, “*Menagesha Kolobo: A Micro Geographic Study*” (Hayla Selasie I University: Addis Ababa, 1968), p.4. and Managasha Kolobo Muncpal Document File No.3.2018.

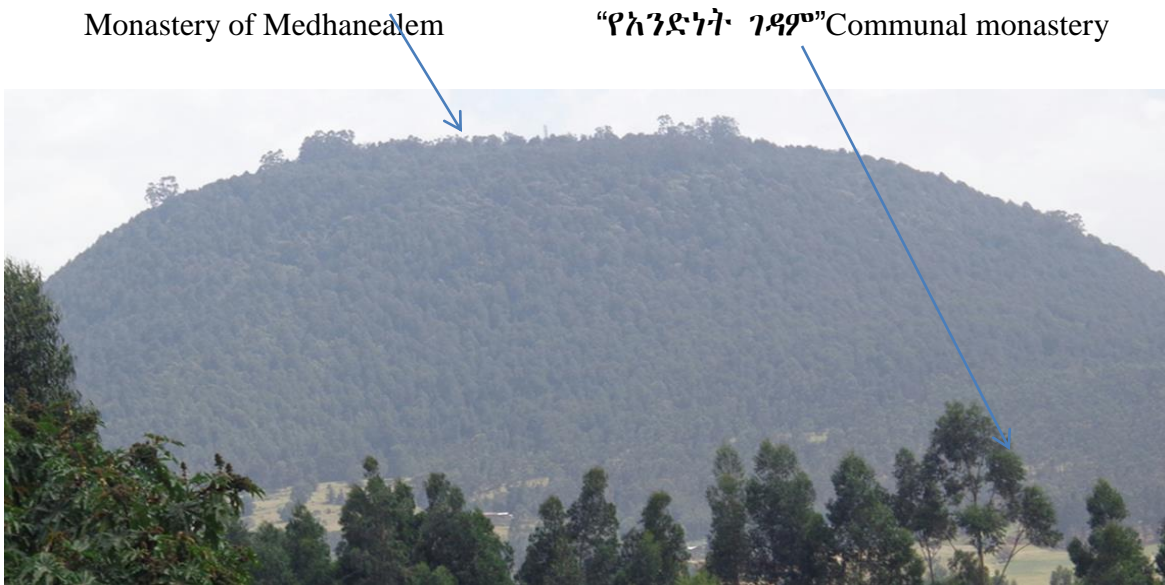
¹⁶Informats: Alamu Gammada and Ato Bekele Hundie.

¹⁷Bahiru Zawde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1974*, (Addis Ababa University Press, Addis Ababa 1991),p.65. and Richard Greenfield, *Ethiopia, A New Political History*, (Pall Mall Press, London 1965),p.72.

¹⁸Informant: Eticha Gemmechu and Ato Tsegaye Tola.

¹⁹Managasha Kolobo Muncpal Document File No.3.

Fig1: Mount Mänagäsha (*Tullu Egdu in Afan Oromo*), a place where the upper and lower monasteries are found.



Source: Photo by researcher, 2013 E.C)

The scholastic work of Pal Singh analyzed that the soil and *Mänagäsha* is generally clayey and is red to reddish-brown and black in color which-have a high degree of economic advantage of pottery (clay) soil.²⁰ The researcher had visited the people who engaged in the pottery making activities in the footy areas of the Mänagäsha Mountain. Most of the people who relied on pottery making activities are the Wolytas who arrived to the region at various times by empress *Zewditu* for labor purposes.²¹

As the documents from the town municipality office indicates, the town has more than four religious beliefs by which many of the inhabitants are followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. In line with this, there are six Orthodox Christian Churches, three mosques and five protestant churches in the town.²²

The agro climatic zone of the city is *Woina Dega* (Semi highland) climatic condition which is about 85% and *Dega* (highland) 15%. The Average temperature of the study area is between 18⁰c with

²⁰Chandra Pal Singh. *Land Utilization in the Shoa Province of Ethiopia* (Faculty of Arts), in the University of London (London, 1970),P.52.

²¹Informants: Ato Alamu Debele and Alamu H/Mariam.

²²Informants: Ato Dejene Dibaba and Qesä Gäbäz Girma Hailu.

annual rain fall of 1040-1100 mm.²³ Due to variation in altitudes among other things, the mountainous part of the region experiences cooler temperature.²⁴ The altitude of the town is between 2500-3000 mm above sea level.²⁵ The population of the town is engaged in trade, farming, animal husbandry, private and government employees among others.²⁶

Mänagäsha *Kolobo* is rich with red and black soil which is very suitable for the production of crops like wheat, barley, teff, bean, pea and vegetables used for trade and home consumptions. Plus to this, the people who are lived in 02 and 03 Kebeles produce vegetables such as Potato, onion and cabbage at a larger extent both in winter and summer seasons. These vegetables have easy access to one of the largest market of Addis Ababa's vegetable market center in *Markato* and, *Atkilt tera* (formerly *Piazza* but now at *Lafto*).²⁷

Mänagäsha, provided the essential supplies like water reservoir from *Malka-Fudha* river, food supplies (cereals and vegetables), and construction and fuel materials to the capital city, Addis Ababa. Mänagäsha, as a neighboring town to the capital, has got various merits over other towns in the country. It is apparent that the economic advantage out weight the others; there are many reasons for these positions. The resourcefulness of the region in natural endowments like firewood, eucalyptus tree, vegetables and conducive whether condition for residential purpose takes the leading portion whereas the nearness of the town enables it to have regular bus services which attracts very huge projects engage in flower production, mixed farming and other industries and factories in water extraction brought hundreds of thousands of employees and public services to the area.²⁸

As explained above, the whole plateau around Mänagäsha was covered with cedar trees , which was said that more and more trees were needed for the construction of palaces, churches and residential. Scholars affirmed that the forest at Mänagäsha had been planted most probably by Emperor *ZäraYakob* who had been ordered his subjects to bring Tid-tree seeds from Wof Washa literary the

²³Mänagäsha Kolobo Municipality profile. File No. 13, 2021.

²⁴F.Von Breinback, *Mänagäsha State Forest*” *Ethiopian Forestry*, Review Vol. III. and VI. (Addis Ababa, 1962, 1978, 1990), pp.20,42,78.

²⁵“ *Report on Survey of the Awash River Basin*”.Vol. I. FAO/UN Special Fund (Rome, 1965), p.25.

²⁶ Informants: Ato Eticha Gemmechu and Ato Lemma Beyyechea.

²⁷ Informants: Ato Eticha Gemmechu and Ato Tsegaye Tola.

²⁸ Zewdu Tadesse, “*Mänagäsha Kolobo: A Micro Geographic Study*” (Hayla Selasie I University: Addis Ababa, 1968), p.4. and Mänagäsha Kolobo Town Administration, File No.3.

cave of birds located south of *Däbrä Sina* and planted at Menagesha Forest experts estimated the age of the oldest tree to be between 250 and 300 years old.²⁹

The dense and oldest forest on the *Mänagäsha* and *Wächächa* Mountain served as a potential source of construction material for the royal palace of Emperor Menelik II. The emperor ordered his loyal minister, Ras Mekonen to organize the forest of the region as well as its effective utilization. The then officials were made to guard the forest reserve.³⁰ However, as the demand for construction of churches and palaces, royal house increased, the court established a saw mill at Suba National park (*Mänagäsha* National). Unfortunately, with the expansion of urbanization towards the region, the dense forest of Suba national Park has been found in a dangerous position. Informants sadly stated their grievances that the dense and historical forest of *Mänagäsha* has been destroying by illegal cutters at an alarming rate for personal and temporarily reason³¹

The need for construction and fuel accounted the greatest share and the ever increase number of the population forced the area to lose its proudest forest for cultivation. Thirdly, the expansion of Burayu town towards *Mänagäsha* mountain area, invited the thieves to deforest for timber sell. As a result of deforestation, the precious wild life and the hermits who have been lived in the forest are forced to abandon to another area like *Däbrä Lebanos* and *Gishen*.³²

1.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MANAGASHA

The etymology of the name *Mänagäsha* is derived its origin from the Amharic version “መንገሻ or መናገሻ to refer coronation hill for the kings from the late 14thc to 16thc.³³ According to the statement from the Hagiography of Abba Elyas, King Dawit was believed to be the first crowned ruler of the Ethiopian region at the mountain of *Mänagäsha* The monastery of *Mänagäsha* *Amba* St. Mary has notable relic called *Gadle* (hagiography) of Abba Elyas, which was most probably written by certain monastic community, referred that a holy man (*Tsadiqu Elyas*). Abba Elyas was the most influential monk who lived and rested in the monastery.³⁴

²⁹ Russ. G. *Estimate of Ethiopian Forests Service* (Addis Ababa, 1947, 1974), pp.17, 108.

³⁰ Kolobo Town Municipality Office Archive (KTMOA).File number 07, 2008 E.C.

³¹ *Mänagäsha* Kolobo Town Administration, File No.3.1999.

³² Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Ato Lamma Beyyecha.

³³ *Gadla Abba Elyas and Nega Tessema “A Trip to Mänagäsha”* University College of Addis Ababa Ethnological Society Bulletin No.4.1955, p.4.

³⁴ Commemoration of the Hundred Years of *Mänagäsha* *Amba* Maryam Monastery and the hagiography of Abba Elyas.

The Monastic communities usually referred the hagiography of *Abba Elyas* (*Tsadiqu Elias* or holy Elias) about the history of Mänagäsha *Amba* St. Mary. *Abba* Elias was a devoted religious person who lived in Mänagäsha Mountain. According to his hagiography, he was sacred and educated person. Because of this quality, King *Zära Yaqob* thought to appoint him as a religious leader of his territory.³⁵ When *Abba* Elias heard about King *Zära Yaqob*'s intention of making him the religious head of his kingdom, he flew to the forest of Mänagäsha and lived there isolating himself from the secular world. On one day, the king came to Mänagäsha and saw *Abba* Elias carrying a fire wood, thus the king sent his ministers to bring *Abba* Elias back but once more, he left suddenly from King *Zära Yaqob* and made his residential in *Ashekla Gädam* (Small monastery) which is located in Suba forest area.³⁶

A booklet found from the monastery's museum proved that twin kings called *Atsebeha* and *Abreha* had been accustomed to visit the monastery at Mänagäsha Mountain. It added that these saint kings established their temporal seat at the height of Yerer. Further, the leaflet showed that *Atsebeha* retained to rule over Shoa while *Abreha* returned to Tigray.³⁷ However, Mikael Muehlbauer argued that the hagiography of the twin kings was deliberately fabricated by 19th century Tigrean elites to maintain Political supremacy over Shoa.³⁸ However, the monastic tradition believed that the two Aksumite kings had been visited and they ruled over the region under study.³⁹ In addition to this, *Mameher Haile Selasise Alemayehu*'s work told that *Atsebeha* had been governed over Shoa for undefined period of time.⁴⁰ Despite the above arguments, the researcher didn't accept these traditions that the Tigrean kings were ruled over Shoa.

Breternitz and Pankhurst justified the tradition of EOTC that Mänagäsha Mountain was blessed by the true cross of Jesus Christ while it was brought from Jerusalem to Gishen Mary. Because of this tradition, kings of Medieval Ethiopia had come to the place traditionally referred to as *Amba*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Informants: Qomos Aba Moges; The Church Document Which is Printed in *Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary*. 2008-2009 E.C.

³⁷ *Abba Eliya and Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery 'Come and Let celebrate the Hundredth Years of Zewditu Menelik's Church, Menagesha Amba St. Mary'*

³⁸Mikael Muehlbauer, *An Italian Renaissance face on a "New Eritrea"*; The 1939 Restoration of the Church of *Abreha* and *Atsebeha*(Colombia University,2019),p.319. The name *Abreha* refers to the sixth-century Aksumite governor of Arabia. Two Aksumite brother kings were also mentioned in a fourth-century letter to Constantine.

³⁹*Abba Eliya and Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery 'Come and Let celebrate the Hundredth Years of Zewditu Menelik's Church, Menagesha Amba St. Mary'*

⁴⁰ መምህር ሃይለ ሥላሴ አለማይሁ. ታሪክ ነገስት አብርሃ ወ አጽብሐ. (አዲስ አበባ 1989).ገጽ.26::

Negest, which means homes/place of kings or coronation. The mountain was believed to be place of coronation.⁴¹ Sources indicated that in the early 14thc, king Dawit (r.1380-1413) was responsible for the shift of the Christian kingdom from the northern Ethiopia to the south that is present-day Central and Western Shoa.⁴²

According to scholastic views, Shoa had a relative peace and stability in the second half of 18th century. Most probably, this stability might have made Shoa to be visited by medieval kings.⁴³ Shoa, particularly, the study area was endowed with natural resources like dense forests which had been served as source of construction material for palaces, royal houses and fire woods.⁴⁴

According to Orthodox Church traditions, the name Mänagäsha was given to the area since the time of king Dawit and Zärya Yakob. The church tradition also attested that this name is given to the area because the sealed cross that is believed to had come from Egypt during the reign of *Zära Yakob* was placed at Menagesha before it was later taken to Gishen Mary.⁴⁵

Further, the establishments of different churches in the area including St. Mark (1886), *Amba Mary* (1916) and the Holy Trinity (1949) are all attributed to this name and the believe according to the same tradition that the long survived church before the 16th century had been either destroyed by Imam Ahmed or disappeared by miracle when the enemy was attempting to burn it.⁴⁶

During the reign of Emperor Menelik II, changed the name of Kolobo to the name Mänagäsha. After the name was changed, Empress Zewditu built Mänagäsha *Amba St. Mary* on the *Tullu Eegdu* and she appointed her Cabinet with the leader of the Orthodox Church. The name Mänagäsha then gradually adapted not only to the Mountain but also to one of the Awraja in Shoa province particularly after 1950s.⁴⁷

⁴¹Harwig Breternitz and Richard Pankhurst, "*Barara, the royal city of 15th and early 16th century (Ethiopia): Medieval and other early settlements between Wächächa Range and Mt Yerer: results from a recent survey*," *Annales d' Ethiopie* 24 (2009), 209-249.

⁴² *Journal of Ethiopian Study* Vol. XVI. No.4. Addis (Ababa University, 1983),p. 25 and A Hundred Years Commemoration of the History of Mänagäsha *Amba St. Mary Monastery* A magazine founded in the Museum of the Monastery,2008, p.16. `

⁴³Täfära Dägufé, *The Centenary of Ethiopian Minutes* (Addis Ababa, 2006), p. 22.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷Informants: Ato Ajeme Debele and Zewdu Tadesse p.75.

As to some of my informants, these terminological variations might have been emanated from two factors. The first one was the war of Imam Ahmad which had exhausted the Christian empire for the reason that the Christian kingdom retreated to the Lake Tana region from central Shoa. The war of Adal and Christian kingdom of 16thc made the Oromo population movement and expansion too easy to take control of vast lands of central Shoa. This historical phenomenon directly touched the area under discussion. The term Mänagäsha (coronation/appointment Mountain) was slowly but surely changed to *Tullu Egdu* (Protective Mountain) after the arrival of the Oromos in the region.⁴⁸

As a matter of time, others argued that the expanding force of Menelik II to Western Shoa firmly mobilized to replace local names by the Christian tradition. Before Menelik's arrival, it was called by the Oromo as *Tullu Egdu*. According to the Tulama tradition mount *Egdu* is considered as one of the sacred mountains of the *Oromo-Saddeettan Tulluu Waaqaa* (the eight mounts of God). Whereas, the Macha Oromo called it the Mountain of *Tullu Tulama*. As mentioned above, the name Mänagäsha gradually replaced Egdu. According to some of my informants, the Oromo currently called the church as Maaramii Eegduu (Mary the protector) whereas others call it Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary.⁴⁹ According to the hagiography or Gädlä Abba Elias which is found in the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary mentioned the names of the ten medieval kings of Ethiopia who came to the area so as to get the blessings from the hermits of the monastery.⁵⁰ The statement found from the hagiography of Abba Elyas reads as:

“... የኢትዮጵያ ነገስታት፣ መሳፍንት፣ መኳንንት ከጎጃም ከበጌ ምድር ከቡልጋ ወቶ መናገሻ ይፈልሱ ነበር። የመናገሻ ተራራ በመድሀኒታችን መስቀል መባረኩን ሰምተዋልና፤ ይህንን ተራራ የረገጠ መንግስቱ ይጸናል፤ ከዘሩ ግዛት አይወጣም ።”⁵¹

The medieval kings, princesses and rulers emigrated from Begemidir, Gojam and Bulga to Mänagäsha. They heard that the mountain had been blessed by the true cross of our savior, Jesus. The one, who touched the mountain on his foot, would rule for a life, the throne would not be taken from his descendent line. On the same page of the Gädle of Abba Elias, the following ten medieval

⁴⁸Informants: Ato Ajeme Debele and Ato Lamma Beyyecha.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰Gadle Aba Eliyas and Informants: Qessä Gäbäz Girma Hailu.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

kings were listed.⁵² These kings had been crowned on the mountain of Mänagäsha and they visited the area many times .The researcher might have not elaborate the role and deeds of all the listed kings due to inaccessibility to the hagiography of Aba Eliyas.

Table 1. List of Kings who were crowned at Mänagäsha Amba St. Monastery

1.	Atse Dawit	30	From 1365 to 1395
2.	Atse Yishak	15	From 1399 to 1414
3.	Atse Zara Yaqob	34	From 1426 to 1460
4.	Atse Be'ede Maryam	10	From 1460 to 1470
5.	Atse Melake Seged	16	From 1470 to 1486
6.	Atse Na'od	14	From 1486 to 1500
7.	Atse Libne Dingel	32	From 1500 to 1532
8.	Atse Gelawdios	19	From 1532 to 1551
9.	Atse Minas	4	From 1551 to 1555
10.	Atse Ze Dingel	6	From 1570 to 1576

Source: the Church magazine of the 100 Years Anniversary.

The document which was printed in the 100 years' anniversary of the Mänagäsha *Andenet Gädam* or communal monasteries showed these medieval Ethiopian kings had visited Mänagäsha Mountain and the monasteries found in it.⁵³ According to the monastic document, king Dawit got the half part of the cross of our savior Jesus Christ as gift from the Egyptian Patriarch.⁵⁴ However, according to the archives, King Dawit died in Senar (Khartoum) being affected by the epidemic, malaria. Thereafter, his son, King Yeshaq had made a journey to bring his father's coffin, the cross and other relics to his country. As to the document, unfortunately, king Yeshaq also died in Gojjam due to Malaria.⁵⁵

⁵²The Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C pp. 9, 15 and Zemen magazine, 2000, p.5.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴*Ibid*, p.14.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

Note: A Small book, 'the 100 years' anniversary of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery's'' was compiled in 2008-09 by an organized anniversary committee. It is more of taken from the Gadle Abba Elias and from other monastic sources. The researcher tired to crosscheck this material historical wise.It is almost relevant with the history of the monastery which is supported by key informants.

Prospectively, the second son of king Dawit, ZäraYacob (Emperor ZäraYacob) followed the footstep of his predecessors and brought the true Cross to the central Shoan region. As to the monastic reference, *Zära Yacob* was informed by the Angle to search a cross like (crossway) place and keep the cross there. Emperor *Zära Yacob* had made firm attempt to find the indicated site in Ethiopia but, he couldn't find. Finally, he arrived in Mänagäsha Mountain and kept it for seven months on Mänagäsha *Garaw* Monastery (upper monastery).⁵⁶

Furthermore, Emperor Zära Yacob had remarkable contribution in the history of Mänagäsha for his great effort to plant the Suba National Park some three kilo meters south west of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.⁵⁷ The same monastic document synthesized that Emperor Lebene Dengle had great attachment to the Mänagäsha Mountain as he visited the Yerer and *Wächächa* area before his defeat at Shimbra Koure by the forces of Imam Ahmad.⁵⁸

According to Breternitz and Pankhurst, *Barara*, the royal city of 15thc and early 16thc (Ethiopia) clarified that King Naod had rebuilt the destroyed Church, Ledeta, at the Mänagäsha Mountain. This document enlarged further that the burnt church and the site was the seat of unspecified Abune of the Orthodox Church, where artifacts of the claimed Abune were uncovered within a box in the destroyed area. According to this document, the site of the seat of the Abun and the palace were believed to be at *Wächächa*, near to Mänagäsha Mountain at specific place Seday or *Amba Nägäst* which implies home of kings.⁵⁹ About the emergence of the town of Mänagäsha, written sources have the same opinion with oral information. Bahru recounted that Mänagäsha was once served as a political center for the medieval kings. However, it seemed difficult to give a precise date for the origin of the town.⁶⁰

The town was also remembered by the name *Mišig* to mean fortress. The name *Mišig* was recent than Mänagäsha Kollobo. It was believed that the Ethiopian patriots dug several ditches in the southeast and northwest of the town to fight the Fascist. Notable informants testified that the town

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp.14-16 and informants Qasis Taye Mekurya.

⁵⁷ Russ. G. *Estimate of Ethiopian Forests Service* (Addis Ababa, 1947, 1974), pp.17, 108.

⁵⁸ The Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C pp. 15- 16.

⁵⁹ Breternitz and Pankhurst, *Barara, the royal city of 15thc and early 16thc (Ethiopia)* (___ 2011), pp.21-22.

⁶⁰ Bahru, *Modern*, p.68.

of Mänagäsha had served for the Italians as temporal camp in the struggle with Ethiopian patriots in the western side of Addis Ababa.⁶¹

It was apparent that Mänagäsha was the passage between the capital city and the western Ethiopia regions for the fascist. The Addis Ababa Wellega road passes through Mänagäsha town. For this reason, the Italians had monitored the area sensitively. In 1941, at the evacuation of fascist force from western Ethiopia, the Ethiopian patriots ambushed the Fascists at a place which is called Mychew (*Tinishua Mychew* or small Mychew, to narrate the place with that of the 1936 battle of Emperor Hailesele in the northern front) located about two kilometers from Mänagäsha where 3000-3500 Italian troops were believed to had been killed by the offensive of the patriots led by *Däjjazmach Käbädä Bizunnäs*.⁶²

Numerous sources and traditions have almost similar views that central Shoa was inhabited by different group of people before the second half of sixteenth century. Due to the effort of Christian highland kingdom of Medieval period, Western Shoa including Mänagäsha and its surroundings were inhabited by the different group of people. According to Tadesse Tamirat's account, most probably, the Amhara people were believed to be settled in central Shoa before the arrival of the Oromo population to the region since the second half of the sixteenth century.⁶³

The earliest record of tradition of Christian settlement in the region of Western Shoa asserted that there was a distinct Amara population occupied the areas of upper basin of Muger and Jama Rivers. The tradition seemed to go back to the first half of the ninth century.⁶⁴ Furthermore, some traditions stated that the Amharas came to Western Shoa region following the evangelization program during the time of *Täklähaymanot*.⁶⁵ Various studies on the issue, showed that King Dawit's transferring of the royal court to Entoto facilitated the way for the Amhara people to inhabit in central and western Shoa.⁶⁶

⁶¹Informant: Ato Teshome Assefa and Ato Alemu Hailemariam.

⁶²ታቦር ዋሚ: የኦሮሞ ማንነትና ታሪክ (Tabor Wami, *Oromo Identity and its History* (Addis Ababa: 2013), p.624.

⁶³Tadesse Tamrat, p.112.

⁶⁴ Abbink. J. "A Biography on Christianity in Ethiopia", (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2003). p.1; and Informant: Ketsela Tadesse

⁶⁵Tadesse, p.39.

⁶⁶ Mahetämä Sillassé Wäldä Mäsqäl, *Zekrä Nägär* (Addis Ababa, 1970).p.66.

According to some accounts, the Oromo had reached to Western Shoa (Mänagäsha region) and occupied the western part of Shoan plateau. Those who came further north were the Mecha and Tullama whose descendants at present inhabited the region around Addis Ababa and Ambo respectively. This is best explained in the works of Herbert S. Lewis as:

*Even though the Mecha Oromo occupied the territory west of the present day Addis Ababa from the Blue Nile in the North to the Gojab River as well as on the south and west ward to the Diddessa River; they were divided into many groups having no political unit. According to Oromo folk reconstruction History, however, they were all descendent from one son of Mecha of a man called Rayya. Rayya is said to have also sired the ancestors of the Tullama and Wollo Oromo who live to the east and north of the Mecha.*⁶⁷

Bahru, narrated that the center of Christian kingdom which primarily was in medieval Amhara around Lake Hayq gradually moved towards the areas of Menz, Tagulet, and Bulga and finally to the areas of Entoto, Mänagäsha Yerer, Wächächa, Furi and Zuquala.⁶⁸

The researcher tried to cross check oral information with historical phenomenon about the people of the study area. Elders of the Kolobo town testified that the area had been inhabited by the Tulama Oromo of different clans, mainly *Bärfätaa* and *Badi* clans. As to those elders, other subclans like *Wärrä-Yadate*, *Galaan*, *Wärrä- Qoriichoo Guyyee*, *Wärrä- Girazzmach Xaasoo Gosayyee*, *Wärrä - Sorrii Tulluu* and *Wärrä Gadaa Yadatee* were lived around this area. It was after the mid-nineteenth century that different ethnic groups came and settled in the area. Oral and written sources testify that the later population settlement of the area is connected with religious and economic activities mainly the Orthodox Church services, the forest protection and clay works.⁶⁹

As to oral and written sources scrutinized, during that period, fearing the intensive cutting of trees, Emperor Menelik II passed orders prohibiting the cutting of Kolobo trees without permission. He also established reserve forest on the western slope of *Egdu* and *Wächächa* mountains and assigned guards to protect the forest. Furthermore, with the establishment of different Orthodox churches, including *Qidus* (saint) Mark church (1887), Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary (1916) and Holy Savior in 1956, a number of church men, their relatives and followers came and settled in the area. The two

⁶⁷Herbert S. Lewis. A' *Galla Monarchy'* (Manassha Wisconsin, 1968), p.25.

⁶⁸Bahru, *Ethiopia and the Horn*, p.59.

⁶⁹Informants: Ato Ajama Dabale, Ato Alamu Gammada and Ato Alamu H/Maram.

groups who were assigned as forest guards and those who came in connection to church services permanently settled and many of the land owners during the imperial era were descendants of these settlers.⁷⁰

The *Wolayita* people came to the area as labourers in the construction of the churches mainly during the reign of Empress Zawditu. Most of them later engaged in clay works. Others such as the Gurages are also said to have come and settled in pursuit of some labour works and other economic activities. Informants told the researcher that Empress Zewditu brought additional Wolytas to Mänagäsha to provide manual labor for the construction of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery and the Trinity.⁷¹ Some Wolytas purposely settled by the government during the reign of Empress Zewditu to ensure regular supply of pottery to the royal court. Menagesha was chosen for their settlement because the soil in the vicinity of the church was suitable for pottery works.⁷² As a result, there developed a strong connection between the Wolytas and the area they settled where it is named as *Wolitas Säfär* (Wolyta quarter).

The Gurages were late comers to Mänagäsha. They were mainly attracted by the economic potential of the area. According to the local Gurage tradition, they were brought by Empress Zewditu to Mänagäsha for cutting, loading and unloading of eucalyptus tree to the capital from the Woächächa forest to Mänagäsha and they remained as the most dominant merchants and vegetable producers. Today, the Gurage represented a small but conspicuous minority within the study area where they engaged in retail shops as merchants in the towns and periodic markets.⁷³

Menelik's attempt to move his capital from Addis Ababa (Finfinne) to Addis Alem (Ejere) was also connected to Kolobo. In the early 1880s, when the capital encountered acute wood shortage, Menelik aimed at shifting his capital to Addis Alam. Menelik's main desire in taking this measure was to come close to a well-wooded region nearer the forest around Kolobo.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* and Richard Pankhurst, *History of Ethiopian Towns, From the Mid-19th century to 1935*, (Franz Steiner Wiesbaden Stuttgart 1985)p.210 and Zawdu Tadesse 1968,pp.3-4.

⁷¹ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Mägabi Kinfe Tadesse.

⁷² Informants: Mämeher Mokonnen Gebreyesus.

⁷³ Mänagäsha Kolobo Town Administration, File No.3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* and Richard Pankhurst, *History of Ethiopian Towns, From the Mid-19th century to 1935*, (Franz Steiner Wiesbaden Stuttgart 1985)p.210 and Zawdu Tadesse 1968,pp.3-4.

1.3. THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE WESTERN SHOA REGION

As to the church tradition, Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia prior to 4th Century (here after C) A.D. However, according to written documents, Christianity was introduced to Ethiopia during the Aksumite era in the first half of 4th C (330 A.D) during the reign of king Ezana by a man called Freminatos or Abba Salama. Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahido* Church (here after EOTC) is one of the oriental Orthodox Christian Churches in the world. *Tewahido* is a Geez word to mean being one. As to the religious perspective, Ethiopian history has been highly entwined with the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (here after EOC). The coming of the Nine Saints had also contributed for the expansion of Christianity in Ethiopia and helped to build churches and monasteries in different parts of the Ethiopia.⁷⁵

Early Christianity came to the Western Shoa region through different directions. Though no archived materials are found in the region, some local traditions manifested that Christianity was introduced from Amhara Saint through *Däbrä Libanos* and *Däbrä Birhan* and later reached to the present day Entoto. The Medieval kings of Ethiopia were kept on reshuffling their seat to *Wächächa*, present day Menagesha area.⁷⁶

The evangelization of the Ethiopian region followed very closely the expansion of the Christian state. The fourteenth century, which was marked by the maximum expansion of the kingdom, was also the period when the Ethiopian Church exerted its pressures most on the pagan peoples in the area. The Shoan plateau, which had increasingly come to be the most important theatre for the military activities of the Christian army, also assumed a key position as the centre for propagating Christian teaching among the conquered peoples. It is apparent that the presence of isolated Christian families in Shoa preceded the establishment of effective Christian political control of the area. These early Christian immigrants in Shoa apparently lived in a pagan country, under pagan chiefs. Despite the tendency in the hagiographical traditions to give them a long clerical background

⁷⁵ Sergaw HableSelasie. *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History* (Addis Ababa: Hayla Selasie I University, 1972), p.100.

⁷⁶Bahru Zewdie. *A History of Modern Ethiopia (1855-1974)* Addis Ababa University Press, 1972), p.68, and Informant: Abba Moges Hailemariam.

they were probably mostly lay Christians who were anxious to maintain peaceful co-existence with their pagan neighbours.⁷⁷

Saint Tekle-Haymanot lived for about 29 years after he established Däbrä-Asbo monastery. The last three decades of his life were most fruitful years during which he created an effective centre of Christian propoganda in Shoa. Almost all the future leaders of the church there and in the newly conquered areas further south and in Gojjam derived their origin from Tekle-Haymanot's new community of Däbrä-Asbo. He revived the religious consciousness of his fellow Christians and raised the relative degree of Christian learning among them. Once he had started the process many of his early disciples seem to have followed his example in establishing their own communities even before his death. By the time he died the position of the Church in the districts of Eetata and Grarya, and in the whole of the Shoan plateau, was very secure.⁷⁸

Furthermore, other local traditions strengthened that the Amhara came from the medieval Amhara province, specifically '*Téqur-Meret*' (Black soil), the present day Amhara Saint; hence they say that "አማራ ታቦት በራሱ ቃጭል በጥርሱ ይዞ ከጥቁር መሬት መ ጣ" which meant The Amhara came from *Tequr Meret* (Black-Soil) with an altar on his head and a bell in his teeth.⁷⁹ According to the account Futuh al- Habesha, in the course of sixteenth century, Christian highland kingdom had been invaded by Muslim forces led by Imam Ahmad. Imam Ahmad had destroyed churches and monasteries in Ethiopia, and looted the survived ones; people were persecuted and converted to Islam.⁸⁰

Bahru Zewdie recounted that in the course of the late of nineteenth century, the whole situation in the Western Shoa region was completely changed. The incorporation process of Emperor Menelik II had brought the population of the region once again under the stiff influence of

⁷⁷Budge, E.A, W, .1928. A History of Ethiopia, Nubia and Abyssinia. Vol.II, London. The Life of Takla Haymanot, pp. 28-32.

⁷⁸Tadesse,p.335.

⁷⁹Habtamu Mengiste, *A History of the Monastery of Martula Mariyam* (C.1500-1974) (Addis Ababa University, 1998), p.2.

⁸⁰Futūḥ al - Ḥabaša: *The Conquest of Abyssinia*, [16th century]. Edited and translated by Paul Stenhouse. Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2003), pp.166-7.

Christianity.⁸¹ According to informants, Menelik II had ordered the incorporated population to be baptized and embrace, Christianity.⁸²

According to sources, Emperor Menelik II was identifiable for his firm stand for the Orthodox Christianity. Menelik, even before his coronation with the alignment of Yohannes IV, he had made the Muslims and the Oromo to embrace Orthodox Christianity. Emperor Menelik II once dictated the incorporated regions as:

*...we are your apostles, although our religion, the Orthodox faith was almost made extinct by Mohammad Gagn, you will know that our is a Christian country. Hence fourth, therefore, let all of you Oromo and Muslims accept Christ and be baptized, if you become Christians and start to do a good work, you will be masters of this earth and will also go to paradise later.*⁸³

It is apparent that Emperor Menelik II had wider initiation and great desire to put into effect a policy of spreading the orthodox faith so that he built churches and renovated the ruined ones in various parts of his empire. Lappeso prissily expressed the words of emperor Menelik by which he ordered his people in the proclamation of 1900 as:

ስማ ስማ ያገሬ ሰዉ ጌታችን ሃይላችንና ረዳታችን ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ ለሀገራችን ለመንግስታችን ሰላምና ዕረፍት ሰጥቶን ይህን ያህል ቀን አኖረን አስገዛን።እኛም ይህን ሁሉ አስበን መረዳት ይገባናል። እኔ ራሴ የከተማዬን ዘበኞች ይገገኝ ከከተማ ያሉትን አብያተ ክርስቲያናት እሰራለሁ አድሳለሁ። ሹማምንትም ባለጉልበትም በያጥቢያህ ያለዉ መቅቶስ ቤተክርስቲያኑ የፈረሰዉን በመቃረቢያ ለተቀመጠዉ ታቦት ሁሉ ቤተክርስቲያን ስራ።ወታደርም ባላገርም ጉልበት ያለህ እርዳ።አናጢም ባለሀበት ለቤተክርስቲያኑ ስራ እርዳ። የሃይማኖት መሰረቱ የቤተክርስቲያን ምልክቱ ቤተክርስቲያን መስራት ነዉ። ለጉልበትህ ለገንዘብህ ሰስተህ ቤተክርስቲያን አልሰራም ብለህ የወሰለትክ ሰዉ በሰማይ ይፈረድብሃል። በምድርም ሹመትህን ገንዘብህን ታጣለህ። :⁸⁴

⁸¹ Bahru, *Modern Ethiopia*, p.61.
⁸² Informant: Qomos Aba Moges Hailemariam Qasis Taye Mekuriya..
⁸³ Markneh Alemayehu, "Freedom of religion under the charter of Transitional Government of Ethiopia" (BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Law, 1994), p.30.
⁸⁴ Lappeso G.Dilebo, *Ya Iteypoeya ya gabbar sera'atenna Jemmer Kappitalizim 1900-1966, Huletegn Etim* (The Gabbar System of Ethiopia and beginning Capitalism 1908-1974, Vol.II) (Addis Ababa, 1991), p.101.

Listen listen my country people, our Lord, power and helper Jesus Christ gave our country and government peace and rest; we lived and governed this much. We must think and understand these all. I myself along with my town custodians build churches and renovate. Chiefs, enthusiasts, build churches, temple for the arks sat in your vicinity. You soldiers, countryside men who have power help the building of churches. You Carpenter help the work of building churches from where you are. The base of religion, the symbol of Christianity is expressed by building churches. In case, you felt greedy of your money, power and failed to build churches and found idle, you will be judged in heaven. Earthly, you will lose your position and money

CHAPTER II

2. THE HISTORY OF MÄNAGÄSHA AMBA ST. MARY MONASTERY

2. 1.The Early History of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery

The reference about religious activity in Western Shoa region is found in the Orthodox book recounting the life of *Abba Eliyas* (hagiography of Eliyas). According to the passage from this account, the first Orthodox Church, Ledeta was built in Mänagäsha Amba by King *Zära Yakob*. As to the clergies, Ledeta was located on the left side of today's main church. Although the shape of this church was not known; as to my informants, the church might have had a round shape like other ancient Christian Churches of Ethiopia. In line with this, they believed that the initial church was hidden by the power of God.⁸⁵ However; the researcher cross checked the oral tradition with written accounts that the church might have been completely destroyed by the forces of Imam Ahmad in 1535. David Bauxon, an English man who visited the same area, described the following:

Taking another hardly visible track through thick vegetation, I come up an old man in rugged clothes walking slowly towards me. He was must take a back when caught of me for there are few visitors to this hill-top. However, having got over his first surprise; he agreed willingly to show me around. He told me that he was one of four old hermits who lived on this hill-top. There was also an old woman, a nun who he taken me to see, so, we started on tour of a hill-top plateau. He first showed me a great mound of earth and stone near his hut, and assured me earnestly that it was inhabited though no one had set eyes on those who dwelt once been Christian churches up here, and showed me foundations which might well have been some centuries old. Quite a large population had once lived on a hill and I have seen many foundations of huts, smothered in undergrowth. Since those times, the hill- top dried

⁸⁵Informants: Aba Abraham Mekonen; and Komos Aba Moges and The Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C p.15.

Note: The book called *Gadle Abba Elias* (Hagiography of Elias) is found in the monastery of MASM. The only place where this *Gadle* is found is MASMM. Therefore, the clergy by any means never let anyone to the book, but Qasis Taye, one of my Key informant, read some phrases from the book. I made several attempts to take photo but the clergies were fierce towards this document. It is kept as that of the holy arch in the Maqdes. It is the key book in the monastery. I took some statements from the Geeze which translated by Qasis Taye.

up. I saw a deep well now dry and a hole in the rock which had been a Täbel (Holy Water).⁸⁶

Arab Faquh scrutinized that Imam Ahmad sent one of his loyal soldier named Garad Jaushiwa to the nearby area which was Mänagäsha and the agent looted larger amount of gold, woolen clothes and other precious church properties.⁸⁷ Arab Faquh gave his witness that the church was looted and burnt; the burnt church was so huge; situated at place called *Seday* which was the royal seat of the EOC pope of the time, which was the present day Mänagäsha Mountain.⁸⁸

Fig. 2: The Memorial Church of Hidden (Sewer- ስጭር) Ledeta, which is found on Mänagäsha Mountain,



Source: Photo by Researcher in 2013 E.C.

2.2. The Construction of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery

The EOC has delivered diverse religious service for its followers like teaching the Gospel and spreading Christianity.⁸⁹ Besides the above role, the church also played an important role for the development and conservation of treasures. Most of Ethiopian Emperors had built churches and

⁸⁶ David Bauxon. *Travel in Ethiopia* (London, 1949), p.22.

⁸⁷ Futūḥ al - Ḥabaša: *The Conquest of Abyssinia, [16th century]*. Edited and translated by Paul Stenhouse. Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2003), pp.166-7.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Sergaw Hablesillase, *The Church of Ethiopia, A Panorama of History and Spiritual Life, Publication of the EOC*, (Addis Ababa University, 1970), p.12.

they played a role in the outreaching of Christianity.⁹⁰ Apparently, Emperor Menelik II was busy not only in modernizing the country; but also engaged in the establishing of churches in different parts of his country. As Geertz noted:

...Religion is a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive and long lasting moods and motivations in formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic...⁹¹

In relation to the construction of the church at the Mänagäsha Mountain, there is commonly agreed tradition. Accordingly, following the death of Emperor Menelik in 1913, *Lij Iyasu* assumed power as king of Ethiopia. Due to the fact that Iyasu was a child, Ras *Tesema Nadew* was assigned as his regent or guardian by Emperor Menelik.⁹²

In spite of his age, Lij Iyasu was influential in the Ethiopian politics. However, his inclination and close relationship with the Somalis and Muslims had created resentment among the Shoan nobilities. On the other hand, Iyasu was very much concerned with Empress Zewditu and the support she had among the Shoan Nobilities.⁹³ That is why Empress Zewditu was forced to exile to Fale ቶሌ (Mulo province at Fale Medhanealem, founded at 27 kilo meters north of Menagesha) under the order of the Lij Iyasu. As to informants, Zewditu was managed under the direct supervision of the king.⁹⁴

Unquestionably, after the overthrow of Lij Iyasu in 1916, Zewditu became Empress of Ethiopia at Mänagäsha Amba Mary in the hands of an Egyptians patriarch Abuna Mathewoes in February 4, 1916 and Teferi Mekonen (the future Emperor Haile Silase I) was appointed as her regent.⁹⁵ The hagiography of *Abba Eliyas* and most informants agreed on the point that the Empress received a message through revelation that she would build the Monastery of Menagesha Amba St.Mary.

⁹⁰Binyam Worku, *The History of the Menbere Mengist Qidus Gebreal Church and its Senebete 1897-1992*, (Addis Ababa University press, Addis Ababa. July 1992), p.53.

⁹¹ Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973). pp. 90-91.

⁹² Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay; and The slick of Menagesha church, press in March 27, 2009.E.C.

⁹³Harold G.Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (California and London, 1994), p.114.

⁹⁴Informants: Qomos Aba Moges and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*

Subsequently, she decided to move to the region that she was informed by the angle to begin her duty.⁹⁶

A reference taken from the *Gädle* reveals that the Empress was initiated to go to Mänagäsha to identify the site and on her way; she also laid down the foundation stone on 29, January 1915. According to informants, Zewditu was told by the angle “ዘ ቲ ይእ ቲ ሙና ገ ሻ አ ምባ ሙር ያ ም ሙባ ነ ክብረ ሙሉ ቅዱሳን.⁹⁷”, this is Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary, the respected grave of the saints. Temporarily, many faithful people came from different corners of Ethiopian to rest at Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary.⁹⁸ As to informants who were close to the monastery testified that Empress Zewditu had begun the construction of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Church in 1915 as part of her religious devotion and completed it in May 1916. This church was built on the mountain which is enclosed by Juniper, acacia, yellow wood and other diverse indigenous trees.⁹⁹

Informants asserted that the Empress built this church to commemorate the old church of *Ledeta*. Others argue that she built the church to show her subjects all over Ethiopia that she was the patroness of Christian faith like that of her father.¹⁰⁰ However; the true motive behind the building of churches in Ethiopia is described by Hyatt as:

“Travellers have asserted, perhaps with some exaggeration that there are some churches in Abyssinia than any other parts or Christendom. Often, there are several churches in small villages. To erect a church is an act of Christian petty and who does so is thought to have been forgiving all his sin.”¹⁰¹

Informants and the hagiography of Abba Eliyas stated that the altar of the former Ledeta Maryam was survived from the 1535 Imam’s attack. The hermit called *Abba Wäldä Medihin* had hidden the altar in the cave that is found in the Eastern part of present day Mänagäsha Amba st. Mary Monastery. He had held the altar for long period of time until his death and he transferred it to one

⁹⁶Gädle Abba Eliyas and Menagesha-Amba St. Mariy: and the Hundredth Years Commemoration, 2016.A Tract found in the Museum of the monastery.

⁹⁷Gadle Abba Eliyas (Hagiography of Abba Eliyas) and Informants: Qasis Taye Mekuriya and Abba Estifanos.

⁹⁸Informants: Emahoy Sahelework Amede and Qäsis Yirgalem Moges.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰¹Hyatt. *The Church of Abyssinia* (London, 1928), p.22.

of his disciples.¹⁰² *Qäsis Taye Mekuriya* told the researcher that the Empress had received this altar for her future Mänagäsha Amba st. Mary Monastery.¹⁰³

Most informants credited that the area which is now occupied by the church building was covered with forest. The lower or the bottom of the mountain (3000 meters) was somewhat flat, which priests and local people called Amba. In the Amba, plants like tobacco (Timbaho), *Gesho* (buckthorn) and other various crops were cultivated by Oromo settlers who hold the land from his fore fathers, who came to the region during the seventeenth century. The man called *Gorro Gebissa* was promised by the Empress to give him substitution land at *Lafa* and *Wächächa* areas, south east of the monastery. Empress Zewditu had inaugurated to the surrounding community and to those faithful Christians who were found in different parts of Ethiopia and her kismen to contribute their share in the construction of the Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.¹⁰⁴

Delebrately, the labor force used in the construction work came principally from the Christian living areas such as Christian Gurage lands and *Wolyta* areas. Moreover, the local labor force assisted the architect in the building of the Monastery. The Empress is said to have used the skill of foreign architects particularly the Greeks.¹⁰⁵

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary tradition endorsed that the designer of Menagesha Amba St. Mary Monastery was a Greek architect called Musie Eliyas Emanuel Kaciffes. As to Orthodox account, he had built churches in Addis Ababa during the reign of Emperor Menelik II. The Empress recruited this skilled- foreigner for her construction of the Church. The site that was chosen for the construction was blessed by the true cross of Abune Basleos and other higher clergy and Musie began his work in February 1915.¹⁰⁶

Architectures and building expertise affirmed that this church was constructed from stone, cast iron, cobbles, juniper wood (which came from Suba forest about three kms far from the church in the Southern direction) and sand flogged. The roof was initially covered with grass but later changed to

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Abba Moges Hailemariam.

¹⁰⁴ Informant: Ato Lemma Beyyecha and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

¹⁰⁵ Journal of Ethiopian Study. Vol.XIX No.1 (Addis Ababa, 1983), p.6.

¹⁰⁶ Informant: Mägabi Kinfe Tadesse and Märigeta Mandefro Sisay.

corrugated iron sheet. Amba Mary church has a round shape as it was the ancient Ethiopian church style symbolizes the shape of the earth i.e. round. It has twenty one windows and three doors.¹⁰⁷

Much of the construction materials for the work were obtained from the surrounding areas where they were abundant. No suspicion that Mänagäsha and its surroundings were rich in construction materials, such as trees, grass that were grown like *Sänbälet* and *Sirsira*. These materials were used for covering the roof of the church. Both of the grasses were abundant in the south east of the monastery. The other material used for the construction was tree. The type of trees which they used for the construction of the church building specially the wall, door and windows were *Tid*, *Wanza*, *Tikur Incät* and *Qäräro*. These various construction materials were transported from the resourceful areas of Wächächa and Suba as well as from the neighboring Mänagäsha forests by the labor forces.

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Architecturally, the Church's building had been followed the traditional circular design often used in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The outer circular part of the church is called *Kine Mahlet*, which is reserved for the laymen. Next to this there is circular part called *Kidist* (Holy) to which laymen are prohibited to reach. The third section of the church is the *Mäqdäs* (Holy room) to which no body is allowed to enter except priests and deacons. It is a place where the sacred religious objects including the Tabot (the ark), the Holy books, the dishes and the crosses are kept.¹⁰⁹

It is very paramount to point here that almost all churches and monasteries in the region of West Shoa region in general and Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary in particular had been covered with thatched roofs. The wall of the chambers in the region were made of wood covered with the bricks made up of mud, such kind of church construction in the region is well described by a British consul at Mänagäsha named Cheers Mann, observed the way that the churches were built in the region and puts his impression in his book as:

“...Churches are built in the same way. In fact on the outside of poorest churches exactly resemble the house a bigger or more important one would have mud rock walls with massive. Timber supporting the roof and massive wooden doors. All churches, however, have an inner circular or rectangular wall enclosing the holy of

¹⁰⁷Informants: Qäsis Taye mekuriya and Abba Wolde Cherqos.

¹⁰⁸Informant: Mämher Yirgalem and Qésä Gäbäz Girma Hailu.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

*holies. The highest point of the roof is decorated with a metal Abyssinian cross and when ostrich eggs can be obtained they were stuck around the cross... ”*¹¹⁰

As to informants, after seven months of continuous construction process, it is said that the church's building was finally inaugurated on September 29, 1916, on the day of the commemoration of Amba Mary. *Qomos Abba Moges* narrated that about fifty goats, forty sheep, fifteen oxen were slaughtered for the ceremony. The empress, *Abuna Matheos*, twenty five archbishops and bishops, ministers and other several important personalities were presented on the commemoration. About eight to ten thousand faithful Christians had been attended the ceremony.¹¹¹

As a fact that it was covered with grass, the roof of the Church needed maintenance work which was begun at end of 1917, and the only part of the church that required repairing was the grass covered roof. The grass covered roof, which was in fact common in other local parish churches in West Shoa, is called by the people as *Kifkif- kidan or Kifkifat*. The roof covering (the kidan) of the church was conducted by well experienced individual living in the surrounding area. Informants told me that the cover of the Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery was made by local skilled *Tibebu Mengistu* who came from the North during the expansion of Menelik II. He was notable for his skill of making *Kifkif-Kidan*, made several churches in the Western Shoa in addition to the north.¹¹²

It is doubtless that most churches were covered by grass before the introduction of iron sheet into Ethiopia. The church of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery was not different from this. Usually, its roof was repaired by locally available grass called *Sänbälet*. There were *Qefäs* (land) which were reserved for the purpose of repairing and also wood for renovation. Informants told me that for the maintenance work, the roof of the church required grass as much as 650 people could carry. The people participated in the maintenance work were come from different areas, such as Addis Alem, Becho, Sebeta, Holeta and at times from *Gishen* and *Däbrä Libanoes*. However, the most significant people who contributed more labor in the whole building process were the Wolaytas who come to the area during the incorporation era of Menelik II and by Zewditu.¹¹³

¹¹⁰R.E. Cheers Mann. (_____? 1928), p.53.

¹¹¹ Informants: Qomos Abba Moges and Qäsis Taye.

¹¹²Informants: Mämher Mekonnen Abrham and Qäsis Taye Mekuria.

¹¹³*ibid.*

The collected grass was often deposited for the purpose earlier than a renovation was begun. The participated people in the process carried out their duties monthly (*Wär-Tära*), according to the arrangement made between the committees. The whole people who engaged in the maintenance were divided into five groups under one chief subordinate.¹¹⁴

The *Woreda* (district) *Betä-kihinät* (Woreda church council) reported that a large scale maintenance work was done again in 1950 after emperor Haileselesie I returned home from exile. Haileselesie was occupied to rebuild those ruined churches of his empire. Therefore, the grass covered roof was replaced by corrugated iron sheet. *Lael Maryam* was appointed as the *Mämhir* of the monastery by the order of Abuna Basileos and played an important role in the maintenance of 1950. Informants told me that about 520.75 Ethiopian birr was used for the buying of the iron sheets numbered seventy and for other requirements. The researcher made several attempts to get documents but such crucial documents have been burnt by one abemenet.¹¹⁵

Informants asserted that the most acceptable reason that forced the committees of the monastery and the synod to do such larger scale renovation work was the desire to put an end to the tiresome and difficulties of regular maintenance of the *Kifkif-kidan*. As it has been mentioned earlier, the *kifkif kidan* needed annual maintenance. As a result, the regular maintenance became irksome and difficult specifically in times of crop collection and harvest, when the skilled men who could maintain the grass cover would be pre-occupied.¹¹⁶

Mämher Lael Maryam and other administrative men were supervised and regulated the transporting materials for the construction. This administrative body was the *Säbäka Gubae*. It was who established a new form of committee which had the responsibilities of deciding the amount of money to pay for the purpose of construction.¹¹⁷

It was *Mämher Lael Maryam* who collaborated with the *Säbäka Gubae* appointed an architect in building the church. They employed a carpenter with forty shillings or twenty Ethiopian birr monthly. He completed the change of the thatched roof by corrugated iron sheets within a year on

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Informant: W/ro Ayelech Sahelu and Qasis Taye Mekurya. Ayelech Currently serves in the monastery as an employee. She works in the office of the monastery running the daily selling of various objects that offered by the orthodox fellows. She is the only women to hold office in the history of the MASMM.

¹¹⁶ Informant: Ato Alamu H/mariam and W/ro Sahelua.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

the basis he reached with the *Säbäka Gubae*. At this time, the main part of the church building which was repaired was the grass covered roof.¹¹⁸

Besides the building of the church, there were other buildings in the monastery which were repaired. The eqabet (store) which was once destroyed by the fascist Italian air craft was repaired and covered with iron sheets. These days, it is located east of the church building of the monastery.¹¹⁹ Another important building that renovated was the *Däjjäsälam* literary, Gate of peace', found south east of the church building where the agälgayoch'' or ministers: priests and deacons seat for eating after service. There are numerous buildings in the compound of the monastery. Among those buildings; the tomb of the designer, Musie Eliyas and some inner patriots who did heroic deeds in the patriotic resistance war against the Italians in and around Menagesha. Prominent tombs of patriots, saints, monks, nuns and hermits are observable in the monastery.¹²⁰

It is very crucial to point out that the fence of the monastery (lower Monastery) was built surprisingly from the mixture of egg and limestone. The egg has given the fence unique feature which makes the compound of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery amazing and historical site in the region. It was believed that the absence of modern cement in the time forced the authorities to use the egg as a fixing substance whereas the limestone was used as solid materials. All these object were collected from the surrounding Christian population who supported the construction of the church.¹²¹

There are still several buildings outside the compound of the monastery. Among those, the residential of the Mämher, the diet hall of the monks and nuns; houses of the clergies; the traditional school of *Fidel bet*, *Zemabet*, *Qinebet* are located outside of the main compound of the church. However, the biggest hall which served for general meetings with the communities is now found under repairing. Again, on the eastern and northeastern parts of the monastery, there are many buildings in which feasts and various holy days are celebrated by laity men during the commemoration days of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Informant: Qéssaä Gäbäz Girma Hailu and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekurya and W/ro Sahelua

¹²² The Hundredht Years Commemoration of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.

Fig. 3: Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Church.



Source: Photo by Researcher in 2013 E.C.

2.3. The Consecration of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Church as Monastery

As to Orthodox tradition, there are three main types of churches in Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. These are monastery, Däbir and parish churches. The monastery is traditionally the most paramount since the coming of Christianity to Ethiopia. In the monastery, people lead ascetic and celibate lives.¹²³ According to Alemayehu Moges, there are different kinds of monasteries in Ethiopia. The one is that established for the monks only. In Mänagäsha, the upper monastery is allowed only for the male to which women are not allowed to enter, where hermits constituted the largest number, monks came next and nuns are mostly found in the lower monastery.¹²⁴

Unlike the upper monastery, there is another type of monastery which both men and women live together in the lower monastery. Here the Mämher is usually unmarried priest. One of the main features of this type of monastery is that it is more dependent on its founder. Such monasteries are provided their necessities by their founders. In case of MASMM, empress Zewditu (Askale Maryam, in her christen name) founded it, allocated land for farming and arable, assigned the mamher, donated her chairs, clothes, ornaments, visited it every three months, followed up its functions and accommodated the community with its daily food and was also acted as the patronage of the entire monastic life system¹²⁵

¹²³ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Qäsis Yirgalem Moges.

¹²⁴ Alemayehu Moges, "Traditional Church Education" B.A, (Hayla Selasie I University, 1971),pp.910.

¹²⁵ Informants: Qasis Taye Mekuriya, Abba Abraham Mekonen and Emahoy Sahle Work Amede.

From the very beginning, Zewditu had been initiated to established nunnastic monastery by which the lower monastery was only allowed to women by the empress. This gender marginalization of the empress haowever created discofort to the community. Because, females were not allowed to reach the Garaw or upper male monastery even for salute eventhough there were male clergies in the lower one who gave liturgical services. However, later on, for the sake of management and convinieny, this was rearranged by one mämher and brought monks and nuns under one compound. According to Qäsis Taye and Abba Abrham’s justification, most probably it was this problem that forced the then Mämher and the community to violate Zewditu’s former rule and was consecrated as a monastery on its commemoration date, September 29, 1952.¹²⁶ Mamher Mogess Haile Mariam attested that up until its commemoration (1952), it was served as females’ ritual sites but fully accredited as monastery in 1952.¹²⁷

2.4. The Monastery during the Italian Occupation

It is apparent that the humiliated Italians at the battle of Adowa came back after long years of preparation to embark against Ethiopia. As a result, the Italians expanded towards the interior parts of Ethiopia from different directions. In their expansion, the Italian soldiers succeeded in the defeating of the ill-armed and ill-organized Ethiopian army.¹²⁸

In spite of their defeat, Ethiopian patriots particularly, the Shoans made several ambush battles against the fascist Italian troops in central and Western Shoa region, particularly in present day Mänagäsha. This was because there were many veterans of Menelik II and patriots in the region. Just following the defeat of the northern front, the Italians rushed to the interior and controlled the areas of Addis Ababa; hence, they were able to establish their armed garrison at different towns and along the main roads.¹²⁹

Having established their camps at different towns, the Italians made frequent campaigns in different directions. The monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary is found in one of the region into which the Italians made frequent campaigns in their few years stay in one of their garrison at Addis Ababa

¹²⁶Informants: Qasis Taye and Abba Abrham.

¹²⁷Informants: Mameher Abba Moge Haile Mariam.

¹²⁸ Bahru, *Modern Ethiopia*, pp.150-155. and see also Richard Pankhurst; *The Ethiopian Patriot. The Long struggle 1936-1940*.p.63.

¹²⁹Informant: Ato Teshome Assefa Tefera and Tesfaye Tekalign.

plus Addis Aläm and *Misig* that served as a trench.¹³⁰ Due to its land forms, the monastery served as a center for the liberation movement partly because of its location in a very irksome to which descending /ascending was extremely difficult for the Italian troops. It was from such areas that the Ethiopian patriots challenged the invasion of fascist Italy.¹³¹

Unfortunately, like other churches in Ethiopian region, the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary did not face large scale damage by the Italians. It is said that several attempts were made to burn the church as a whole because; the Italian suspected that Ethiopian guerrilla fighters dug trenches around Mänagäsha Mountain. By suspecting such situations, Italians bombarded the eqabet (store) and some part of the church building.¹³²

Local peoples and relevant documents found in the monastery's museum revealed that the Italians had been informed that *Dejjazmach Balch Safo* might have been stationed on *Wächächa* Mountain (Southwest of Addis Ababa). For that reason, the Italian helicopters flew several times around and over the monastery believing that it was *Wächächa*. Unfortunately, there was congregation of people in the compound of the monastery to bury a clergy, hence, the helicopters showered bombs on the monastery which claimed the life of one clergy who was inside the church and two women outside the church. Informants assured the researcher that more than two artillery bullets are found in the wall of the monastery. Five hundred years old tree that had been survived from the bombardments of the fascist helicopter is still found in the compound of the monastery with the remarkable injuries on its head to bottom part is erected on the eastern part of the building.¹³³

Western Shoa was the home of the famous resistance fighters in the region at that time. Besides Ras *Abebe Aregay* and *Shewreged Gedile*, *Dajjazmach Kebede Bizunesh* was one of such heroic fighter who put up a strong resistance against the Italians at a place called 'Mychew', west of Mänagäsha. *Kebede* is believed to have killed 3000-3500 Italians by closing the line from West Shoa to Addis Ababa at six places by lying big trees in front of the advancing Italian army. *Ato Teshome Assefa*,

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Bahru , Modern, p.68.

¹³² Informants: Ato Lemma Beyyecha and Dejene Dibaba.

¹³³ A Hundred Years commemoration of Mänagäsha Amba Maryam Monastery, 2008, p.9.

former servant of Kebede told me that the dead bodies of the Italian troops stayed unburied for two weeks until the emperor and his British entourages came and saw it.¹³⁴

These fighters fought the Italians systematically and surprisingly and worked with various remarkable Yäwst arbännoch (inner patriots) like Shewareged Gedle at Addis Alem¹³⁵ and *Chali Feyisa* at Mänagäsha Kollobo.¹³⁶ Moreover, *mämher Läel Mariyam* and *mämeher Mekuyira* who were serving in this capacity during the Italian occupation played an important role in providing food and water to the displaced peasant population. They were also to have been ministering to the spiritual needs of the civilian population as well as the resistance fighters in the area. The monks and nuns were also said to have pray to God for the displaced people.¹³⁷ The following poem was composed by peasant population who had been in trouble during the Italian occupation.

እናንተ ገዳማት እዘኑ በጸና

ስቃይ በእኛ ዘመን ተፈጽሟልና ::¹³⁸

You monasteries are very sorrow; suffering happened in our era. The Italians deliberately destroyed and plundered churches for the following reasons. It has been pointed out that the aged long intimacy between churches and state was well understood by the Italians. They also knew that church and monastery were spiritual centers of Ethiopian patriotism and identity.¹³⁹ The Italians also recognized that the Ethiopian state was principally supported by the Ethiopian Orthodox church. In this connection, the pioneers of the resistance movement were believed to have incited the mass of the population against the occupying force around the church and monasteries.¹⁴⁰

As to the elders from the studing area demonstrated, the Fascist forces led by some bandas (double-agent) had been looted Mänagäsha *Markos* Church and Addis Alem Mary Church *Gimja Bet* (store houses). As to informants; the Italians had not only looted but also burnt those precious relics. This was deliberately done to trash Ethiopian history.¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ Informants: W/ro Assegedech Bezzabih Nigussie and Abba Wolde Georgis Abeje.

¹³⁵ Informants: W/ro Chali Feyisa and Ato Teshome Assefa.

¹³⁶ Informants: W/ro Assegedech Bezzabih Nigussie and W/ro Chali Feyisa.

¹³⁷ Informants: Mägabi Kinfe Tadesse and and Abba Moges.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Liqä Lisanat.

¹⁴⁰ Getu Ambaye, p.51.

¹⁴¹ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Abba Moges.

2.5. The Managasha Amba St. Mary Monastery Post Liberation Period

In Ethiopian history, the year 1941 was known for two major developments: the first one was the evacuation of the fascist force from the country; the second one is the restoration of Ethiopian imperial power.¹⁴²

Following the Italian evacuation, the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary is said to have shown certain developments. The unification of the two separated places of the residence of the monks and nuns within the monastery was the first development. The nuns lived in the North West direction from the church building. Their place of residence is now traditionally called by local community as *Yäsetoch Gädam* (women's monastery)¹⁴³

On the other hand, to the south of the church building, now both nuns and monks lived together in an area where congested grass-covered and corrugated roof houses are found. The two places of residence before unification were separated by dense forest and by the hill. The possible reason which my informants gave me for the unification of the two places of residences was the shortage of income from the surrounding peasants' population and the confiscation of the land by the Darg government.¹⁴⁴

As part of this development, another place of residence for both monks and nuns come into existence in the western part of the monastery, lower part of the monastery. The new residence is said to have been established by one of the monks in the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary. The name of the monk who took the initiation was *Abba Täklä Tsadik* and gradually many monks and nuns come to live together with him. This newly established place of residence is traditionally known as lower monastery.¹⁴⁵

Though, the majority of nuns and monks lived in a place of residence found near the church building which informants call it lower monastery and minority live in the upper monastery, both were subject to one administration. The monasteries have been administering by single mämher formed his seat in the lower monastery where all available religious objects including the altar are

¹⁴² Donald Crummey, *Land and Society in the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia from the thirteenth to twentieth century*, (Chicago, 2000), p. 237.

¹⁴³ Informant: Mämeher Mekonen Gäbra Yasus.

¹⁴⁴ Informants: Qasis Taye and Yirgalem Moges.

¹⁴⁵ Informants: Abba Woldechirkos and Ato Lemma Beyyecha.

found. Relatively, the lower monastery is available with water supply, transportation and has some other facilities like flour mill and shops.¹⁴⁶

Emperor Haile Selassie I aligned with Echege Gabra Giorgis (Abune Basleos) determined to renovate the church of Zewditu made of grass roof and replaced it by corrugated sheet in 1950. Lael Maryam was appointed as the Mämhir of the monastery by the order of Echege Gabra Giorgis and played an important role in the maintenance of 1950. Informants told me that about 520.75 Ethiopian birr was used for the buying of the iron sheets numbered seventy and for other requirements. The researcher made several attempts to get documents but such crucial documents have been burnt by one abemenet, most probably, Mämher Gäbrä Yäsus Mekonnen.¹⁴⁷

Emperor Haile Selassie I also built a church in 1960 and currently it served as a Mekdes for Garaw Medhanealem. The new Medhanealem church is constructed with the shape of Noah's ship in a modern architectural style from 2003 to 2007 E.C by the help of believers by contributing money and free labor. The main holidays of the church are March 27, October 27 and May 1.¹⁴⁸

2.6. The Monastery of MASM during the Derge Regime

The religious landscape has changed significantly in the second half of the twentieth century. The Derg military regime that overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1974 rapidly instituted a secular order that officially ended nearly two millennia of political intimacy between the state and the EOTC, which lost its economic privileges and much of its property. The main objective of the Ethiopian Government since it came to power in 1975 has been to increase the production of crops for both domestic consumption and export. Consequently, a number of plans and programs have been made and implemented to bring about such development in Ethiopian agriculture.¹⁴⁹

In May 1975, the regime shifted to a more aggressive accusation of religious belief, abolished the monarchy and proclaimed a Marxist-Leninist state. It termed religion as a reactionary force,

¹⁴⁶ Informants: Qomos Abba Moges Hailemariam.

¹⁴⁷ Informant: W/ro Ayelech Sahelu and Qasis Taye Mekurya. Ayelech currently serves in the monastery as an employee. She works in the office of the monastery running the daily selling of various objects that are offered by the orthodox fellows. She is the only woman to hold office in the history of the MASMM.

¹⁴⁸ Informants: Abba Abram Mekonen and Liqa Lisana Wolde Michael.

¹⁴⁹ Belete, A., Dillon, J.L. and Anderson, F.M. Development of agriculture in Ethiopia since the 1975 land reform. Agric. Econ. (Amsterdam, 1991), pp.159-175.

suppressed public manifestations of belief and subjected all religious groups to varying degrees of state-led persecution.¹⁵⁰

Andargachew Tiruneh has stated that the Derge government had nationalized private lands which considered as rist-gult by the proclamation of 1975. The Monastery of MASM was one of the victims of the proclamation by which it lost thirteen gašas of land.¹⁵¹

According to that legislation, all rural land was declared the collective property of the Ethiopian people. All privately owned rural land was to be distributed to people who were willing to cultivate their holdings personally. The intention of the legislation, as far as regards holdings in rist areas, was to transform them directly into co-operatives, although in reality, they were also redistributed like privately owned land. Under the new legislation, the rights of the individual over his plot of land consisted of cultivating it personally.¹⁵²

Another significant changes which Mānagāsha Amba St. Mary Monastery under went in the post-1974 was the decrease in the number of monks and nuns. Informants told me that this was partly because of the fact that some of the monks and nuns were displaced from the monastery as the land and taxation were snatched by Derge government.¹⁵³

Students of MASMM traditional school were also compelled to cease their school and some of them joined other monasteries and churches in Dabra Libanoes and Gishen Maryam. Abba Abraham Mekonen witnessed that the school was almost closed because of the lack of supplies and the anti-religious education views of Derge cadres. Even sometimes the cadres frequently came to the monastery for hunting the students for the national military service. Hence, students were dropped their studying and the school it self was under strict supervision of the office of Derg Cadres from Managasha Awuraja, centered at Holeta.¹⁵⁴

It seemed that the monastery of Mānagāsha Amba St. Mary was negatively affected by the 1974 revolution in various aspects. Most significantly, the revolution altered the ways by which the

¹⁵⁰ Jörg Haustein and Terje Østebø, "EPRDF's revolutionary democracy and religious plurality: Islam and Christianity in post-Derg Ethiopia", *Journal of East African Studies*, vol. 5, no. 4 (2011), pp. 756-76

¹⁵¹ Andargachew, p.163.

¹⁵² "Comrade Chairman Reassures that he would make all Sacrifices for the Revolution and for the Integrity of Ethiopia", *Addis Zemen*. No. 292, August 28, 1979.

¹⁵³ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Qäsis Yirgalem Moges.

¹⁵⁴ Informants: Ato Teshome Assefa and Ato Tsegaye Tolla.

monastery raised its revenue. The revolution nationalized almost all lands of the monastery except a quarter Gaša that occupied now by the monastery. Subsequently, the monastery was declined following the 1974 revolution up until 2003, when the new appointed mämher and the EOC Aid and Development organization tried to revive the monastery's income through various ways.¹⁵⁵

The new land policy introduced by the Derg government encouraged peasants who lived in the monastery's gult to increasingly challenge the authority of the monastery in many ways. One of such ways was to refuse to respect the old regulation including tax payment to the monastery. As a result; the monastery lost the different dues which it used to collect from the peasants in the area under its control.¹⁵⁶

The problem which the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary faced following 1974 revolution was the establishment of a new church under the monastery's jurisdiction. The establishments of new churches within the monastery's jurisdiction in 1980s affected the monastery in many ways. First, it reduced the income of the monastery because some part of the income shared to the new churches. Second, the inhabitants who could have given different religious services to the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary went to the newly constructed church.¹⁵⁷

Informants told me that the main reason for the establishments of such new churches was the request made by the inhabitants in the North West side of the monastery, town area. It is said that the inhabitants requested the local officials at the Awraja and Woreda level to demise from the monastery's gult holding to establish new churches. Secondly, they complained including the distance which took more than three hours on foot to go up the hill. Thirdly, the inhabitants also raised the difficulty of carrying food and drink to the priests during commemorative service to go to the hill in times of annual feasts and other relegations rites like *Qurban and Täskar* (communion services).¹⁵⁸

As a result, Mänagäsha Kolobo Awraja Betäkihinät (District executive body) allowed to the establishment of new churches in gult held by the monastery and located in the lowland area. As a result, Mänagäsha Kolobo Qidus Georgis church, Bädi Selasie (north of Mänagäsha), Tatek Gäbreal

¹⁵⁵ Informants: Qomos Abba Moges and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

¹⁵⁶ Informants: Qasis Taye Mekurya and Abba Abrham Mekonen.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Informant: Abba Mekonnen Gäbräyäsus and Qomos Abba Moges Hailemariam.

were established in each side of the hill one after the other. These newly built churches are said to have reduced the monastic means of income almost by half.¹⁵⁹

The most significant change which the revolution brought about on the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary was the loss of the right of tribute collection from the inhabitants under its control. Utilizing the revolution as a chance, the inhabitants lived in both the Qolla (Lower area of the hill) and Däga (upper parts of the hill) gult of the monastery refused to pay the different forms of these taxes to the monastery which they used to pay prior to the revolution. As a result of this, the monastery's source of income for the land drastically reduced.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Informants: Ato Teshome Assefa and Ato Tesfaye Tekalign

¹⁶⁰ Informants: Ato Alemu hailemariam and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

CHAPTER III

THE ADMINISTRATION AND TRADITIONAL SCHOOL OF MÄNAGÄSHA –AMBA SAINT MARY MONASTERY

The Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary constitutes 169 monks, 60 nuns, 965 traditional School students, 6 guards which hold more than 1200 visible communities. Out of this number, 120 of them are clergies who give active liturgical services and are payable. There are many people in the monastery such as needy, asylums, orphans, wood choppers and water fetchers who permanently lived in the monastery.¹⁶¹

3.1. THE ADMINISTRATION OF MÄNAGÄSHA AMBA SAINT MARY MONASTERY

The administrator of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and *Garaw Medhanealem* monasteries has been the same person. The administrators had to rule in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church. The administration of monastic communities is quite varied from nonmonastic religious institutions. In monasteries, the whole communities are aparted from any secular issues, so that the abbots must be free from evils practices. Each and every monastic rules are mandatory either by administrators or the communities.¹⁶²

Every monastery has its own administrative system in the Ethiopian Orthodox church context. In the monastery, the main person who carries the administrative task is called *Mämher*. A *Mämher* has preferably to get the *Kumsina* rank. *Kumsina* rank is one of the statuses in Ethiopian Orthodox Church which is one step above priests. The next person of the monastery, below the *Mämher* is called *Afä Mämher*.¹⁶³

According to Article III of rules and regulation of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, Abemnets of the monastery are ordained by the patriarch with monastic title, *Qomos*. The rest hierarchical staff members such as *Gäbäz*, Cashier, secretary and auditor are elected by the *Qomos* or Abe-menet from among the monastic community. However, the Abe-menet chooses the secretary out of the monks on the bases of his knowledge and disciplinary criterion. Members of the

¹⁶¹ Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, File No. III and the Ledger of monastic Activities 1993-present.

¹⁶² Informants: Abba Abrham Mekonen and Qäsis Yirgalem.

¹⁶³ Hailemariam Assefa, *The Addis Ababa Gänatä Iyäsus monastery (1925-1990)*, B.A Thesis. A.A.U, 1990), p.39.

monastery elected their cashier by inserting their vote in the election ballot, anyone that got the winning vote will be appointed by the *Abe -Menet* before the *Gubae* (assembly).¹⁶⁴

The Abe-Menet

The Qomos or the Abe- Menet of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery has the mandate and accountability regarding the monastery's budget and expense of the monastery in line with the consultancy of the office of the patriarch for further decision. The *Abe-menet* acted as the chairperson of the team of selat (ritual). Since its establishment, several abbots had assigned as administrators of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery. The document that is found in the Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery revealed that about twenty two *Abe- Menets* were served as a head of the monastery.¹⁶⁵

The first abbot or administrator of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary monastery was *Abba Gäbrä Giorgis (Abunä Baslewos)*. *Deacon Mersha Alehegn* tells us that Gabre Giorgis was born in Northern shoa region, at the district of *Merhabete* in 1884.He attended early church education in the church of Amelsa Kosso St. Mary church and ordained as deacon by the Egyptian patriarch *Abune Mathewoes* and served there.¹⁶⁶

At the age of 14, he went to *Dabre Libanos* monastery for further grammar and book translation studies .He took celibacy in 1905 at the age of 21 at monastery of *Dabre Libanos*. *Gabra Giorgis* travelled to one of the historical monastery of Mänagäsha in 1909 and presumed his ministry. He had lived on the mountain of Mänagäsha before the establishment of the Church of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary by the Empress. Abe- Menet Gäbrä Giorgis was lived in holiness in the study area before Empress Zewditu had established the church. He was called to the court by empress Zewditu in 1910 by which the empress dictated him to organize monastic community at Mänagäsha¹⁶⁷

The empress had also pronounced him that she had a plan to build St. Mary church at the lower or footy area of Mänagäsha Mountain and she also confirmed him that she would make him head of the established church.He received the request of the Queen and began the organizing of the monastic community. The empress had laid down the basement rock for the church with the

¹⁶⁴የገዳም መተዳደሪያ ደንብ(Rules and regulation of Mänagäsha Amba, manuscript found at MAMM)

¹⁶⁵147The church document which is printed in Amba Mary 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C, pp.9 and 25.

¹⁶⁶ ዲ.ዮቅን መርኻ ስሰክኝ. 1997. ዜና ጳጳሳት ኢትዮጵያዊያን. ሰዲስ ስበባ. ገጽ 41::

¹⁶⁷ ዲ.ዮቅን መርኻ ስሰክኝ.43::

spiritual leadership of Mamhere Gabre Giorgis, which used it as initial point to find the monastery.¹⁶⁸ *Abba Gabra Giorgis* was appointed as the head of the Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, in 1923 by Empree Zewditu Menelik.¹⁶⁹

Mameher *Gabra Giorgis* had high organizing ability by which he brought the monastery to the focus of the palace. He coordinated the community and performed for the well beingness of the monastery and different developments. These tangible acts of the *Mamher* pleased and amazed emperor Haileselasie I. In 1959, emperor Haileselasie convinced *Abba Gabra Giorgis* to be the Patriarch of EOC. In the same year, *Abba Gabra Giorgis* was ordained as the first Patriarch of Ethiopian Orthodox Church.¹⁷⁰

The document which was printed in the monastery showed that *Aba Gäbrä Giorgis (Abunä Baslewos)* was mentioned that he had begun the monastic traditional school in the Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary. He was responsible for his initiation to lay the liturgical education.¹⁷¹

Eventhough, the researcher lacked archives regarding the sequential orders of the abbots; there are names of certain limited administrators who had played transformative deeds. Among whom, *Abba Gäbrä Silasie* was the well known and remarkable administrator of these monasteries. He played a great role in the management of their heritages. For instance, before he came to this position, the church of *Garaw Medhanealem* was narrow and couldn't manage large number of believers during prayer time; as a result, the basement complex of the new church was constructed during his time by organizing the believers. But, before him, let alone driving a car, even walking on foot to monastery was really difficult.¹⁷²

Abba Gäbrä Silasie had coordinated the believers and dwellers of the district which enabled him to manage the construction of a gravel road that connects the lower monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary with the main road, which covers about 3km. In addition to this, he also started to implement the idea that after priests finished the mass singing; they have to put the objects including vellum manuscripts and other prayer materials to the store room or *Eqa Bet* instead of leaving the

¹⁶⁸ ዲያቆን መርሻ አለከኝ.43::

¹⁶⁹ ዜና ባስልዮስ ሊቀ ጳጳስ ትንሳዔ ዘጉባኤ :አዲስ አበባ 1950.7ጽ 9::

¹⁷⁰ _____.1956.ዓ.ም:: የመጀመሪያዉ የኢትዮጵያ ፓትሪያርክ:: አዲስ አበባ ብርሃንና ሰላም ማተሚያ ቤት::7ጽ 47::

¹⁷¹ Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem monastery bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.p.10.

¹⁷² Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekurya and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

parchment equipment inside the main church to protect them from theft. This idea was later on implemented completely by *Qomos Abba Moges Hailemariam*.¹⁷³

Currently, the monastery has been administering by Qomos Abba Moges. He has been serving the monastery since June 8, 2012. Besides; he was the administrator of the church of St. George which is located around the main street of Kolobo town which was built in 2002 and its ark was in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery for 70 years. Qomos Aba Moges has played an important role to protect and conserve heritage collections of the monastery by constructing a museum in 2014 in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. In favor of proper placement of the collections, he arranged modest window shelves and made those heritages to be registered by culture and tourism office. He has also a plan to widen the display area of the museum to get a better disposition of heritages and modernize it.¹⁷⁴

In communal monastic life, the entire daily routine activities like workings, praying and eatings are performing together. It is sure that there is no private property. In the monastic community, it is strictly prohibited to stay sluggish without praying and working. It is also forbidden leaving the monastery for short periods or for permanent without the knowledge and permission of the abbot.¹⁷⁵

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery is *Yä-andinat Gädam* (Communal Monastery), implies a communal Monastery that monks and nuns of the upper and lower monastery live harmoniously. The EOTC has its own administrative hierarchical system. In these cases, monasteries are run by an *Abe-menet* (father of monastery or abbot) and convents are guided by *Eme-Menet* (mother of convents). The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Holy Synod has rules and regulations by which communal monasteries are administered.¹⁷⁶

As the monastic administrative system implies, the top administrative structure of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery is the *Abe-Menet*. The office of Abe-menet is appointed by the provincial patriarch after the members of the Monastery gave him votes.¹⁷⁷ The *Mämher* is the

¹⁷³ Informants: Qomos Abba Moges H/Mariam.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. Informant: Mämeher Yirgalem Moges.

¹⁷⁵ Berhanu Gäbrä Michael, *The Church of Ethiopia Past and Present*, (Addis Ababa; Commercial Printing Enterprise, 1997), p.25.

¹⁷⁶ Asmamaw Kassa and Zerayehu Seme, *Ye-Betä Kristian Astedaderawi Mewakiri, The structure of Church Administration* (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Enterprise, 1966. E.C), p.50.

¹⁷⁷ Yä Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Gädam Astedaderawi Dämb, File No.23.

superior of the monastery. At Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, he is the teacher as well as a principal person of the monastery. This person has the authority over the clergy and the monks.¹⁷⁸ The leading informants told the researcher that members of the monastery has the culture of discussing together which is known as *Gubae*, an assembly of all monks and nuns have the right to elect their administrators and other office functionaries. The personal qualification of the proposed monk in the traditional clerical learning and his devotion are very important substances to be elected.¹⁷⁹

There are also other personalities who shared different types of duties in the monastery. These include the *Gäbäz*, *Eqabet Täbaqi* (store keeper), a clerk and a *Liqä Ardait* who is responsible for providing of wood, water and some other required objects for the monastery. In the Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, the above posts were mostly held by the Monks and Nuns. In addition to the above mentioned titles, there are a number of others that serve at Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, some of these church titles are listed below.¹⁸⁰

Afä Mämher

The other important position is *Afä Mämher*. He serves as the mouth (representative) of the *mämher* where the *mämher* is not available. He performs for the *mämher* in regular matters, enforcing disciplines, working with complaints and putting down disputes.¹⁸¹

Gäbäz

The other ecclesiastical official of the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery is *Qésä Gäbäz*. He is responsible for financial account and the treasures of the monastery. In this position, there are two officials, such as *Yä-wust* (inner *Gäbäz*) and *Yä-wuçe Qésä Gäbäz* (outer *Gäbäz*). The inner *gäbäzs* has direct contact to the treasure of the monastery that is placed in the store house and also he had major responsibility than the second one. In addition to this, he is an official who has the key of the monastic store house.

The *Wuçe* (outer *gäbäz* was/is an official who had a responsibility to follow up the works of *yäwust gäbäz* and control the treasures of the monastery found outside the store house in the monastery and

¹⁷⁸ The Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem monastery bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.

¹⁷⁹ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and W/ro Sahelua.

¹⁸⁰ Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay Qäsis Taye Mekuriya.

¹⁸¹ Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay and Abba Moges.

others. The inner and the outer *Qésä gäbäzes* had concurrent power to allow the exist and entrance of treasures from the monastic store house.

The *Gäbäz* was/is the second responsible and second top administrator of the *Qefafs*. These *Qefafs* were located in the former Mänagäsha Awraja of Shoa sub-region in Bacho,-kore, Lafa, Barfeta, and Wochächa areas. He was responsible for the safe guarding the *Qefafs* from the encroachment adjoin warada administrators and mislenes and also protecting these lands under their control. But in the secular affairs of the monastery, he is the top official. He is charged with the materials of the monastic establishment. He plans and supervises the maintenance of the existing buildings and the construction of a new one. He looks after vessels vestments etc. and also the supply of bread, wine for the Eucharist. Since the secular administrators are changed every three years, it appears difficult to cite several of the famous *Gäbäz* and their contributions.¹⁸²

The appointment was performed by the clergymen and some other didnitarries under the leadership of the *mämher*. The period of service of the *Gäbäzes* was not limited unless they became disobedient under the rule of the monastery or unless they misuse the property of the monastery. It is very difficult to exactly give the period of service of these *gabazes*.¹⁸³ The following were some of the *Qésä Gäbäzes* of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery.

- 1) *Qésä Gäbäz Gabra Maryam*
- 2) *Qésä Gäbäz Endrias Wolda Michael*
- 3) *Qésä Gäbäz Zewdie Molla*
- 4) *Qésä Gäbäz Girma Hailu*
- 5) *Qésä Gäbäz Habtamu*

Among these *Qésä Gäbäzes*, *Qésä Gäbäz Gäbrä Maryam*, and *Qésä Gäbäz Girma Hailu* are believed to have played great role in their own respective periods. To list some their role, when empress Zewditu wanted to see the processional cross of Menagesha Amba St. Mary for a moment

¹⁸² *Ibid*; Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Komos Aba Moges H/Mariam.

¹⁸³ Informants: Mämher Abba Moges Hailemariam and Qäsis Taye Mekuria.

to instruct a black smith to produce similar cross, the original cross was sent by Qésä gäbäz Gabra Maryam to the empress and he brought it back to its place with a great care.

The Mägabi

The office of the *Mägabi* like the *Gäbäz* carried the administrative and judicial function in the *Qefäfs* (properties of the monastery). He had additional responsibilities which distinguished him from the rest of the dignitaries on secular matters. He had to ensure that the monks and nuns were provided with the proper diet of daily food, *Mäqunän* (share) at the right time. He had a female assistance under the title *Emämnet*. The *Emämnet* was selected from among the members of the nunnancy.¹⁸⁴

Aläqa

The highest office in the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary is possessed by the *Aläqa*. This title can be used for the senior priest of the monastery and for any learned ecclesiastic in connotation; it is believed that he is superior to *mämher*. Where there are both a *mämher* and *Aläqa*, then the *Mämher* would be the scholastic head directing studies, and in normal administration of the monastic communities as concerning disciplines etc while the *Aläqa* is the head of the clergy. He would arrange the priests, deacons and the *Däbtäras* in their respective duties. He would also be senior of monastic services and holidays. The present *Aläqa* is *Taye Mekuriya* who stayed in the monastery for more than 45 years.¹⁸⁵

The Märigeta

As to church tradition, good church education was a primary criterion to be a *Märigeta*. A well versed clerk was elected and appointed as a *Märigeta* by the member of the union. After his appointment, his name is communicated to the public. His main responsibility was to hear and resolve disputes that may arise among the communities. He was also responsible for the arrangement of the members of the *Märibet* (leading house) during such memorial feasts as *Täskar*. His other task was distribution of *Yätärsun gänzäb* (money from memorial services) or *Yäfitat Gänzäb* (money from religious services to the dead) to the member of the *Märibet*. Above all, the *Märigeta* was responsible for ordering the member of the *Yäšum šer Bet* (promotion and demotion house) and *Yämäri Bet* (ruling house) for proper conduct of the religious services, but his power

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*; Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Komos Aba Moges H/Mariam.

¹⁸⁵ Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem monastery bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.

most of the time confined in the services of the *Qené Mahlet* (service given at night) during various memorial feasts.¹⁸⁶

The *Däbetära* is an accountable clergy who serve as a cantor (leading of the singing in the monastery). He serves as bridge between the clergy and the laity men. He is not ordained; but he has important position in the monastery. His important task is to chant psalm and hymns; most of the church learning confined to them.

The Liqä-Abäw

The principal responsibility of the Liqä-Abaw was to hold the office of the *Gäbäz* and the *magabi* in the times of disagreement. In such times, he assumes the post of all of them under his control temporarily until peace was restored or until the next election was held to fill the vacant office. He had also the power to solve some minor cases in the absence of the four judges.¹⁸⁷

The *Liqä Abaw* was elected from among the *mäzämran (däbtäras)* or cantors with the approval of the *gabaz* and was directly answerable to the *gäbäz*. He had the right to appoint two assistants who were in turn answerable to him. He was an executive official who used to enforce any order come from the *gäbäz*. He used to do this with the help of his two assistants.¹⁸⁸

Sämon Azaž

Similarly, the *Sämon Azaž*, which meant regulator of the weekly programs, was appointed by the *mämher* from among the monks. His responsibility is to ensure the proper conduct of the service by ordering the monks to serve according to their weekly turn (*Sämon*). His authority is confined to the *Kidestä Kidusan* (Holy of Holies).¹⁸⁹

Abba (Father), in fact it is not a rank or an office but simply a courtesy title given to bishops, superiors of monastic communities etc. It is only used with the personal following name. Recently, Abba Henok holds the post of Abba in the upper monastery under the supervision of *Mämher*. The

¹⁸⁶ Informants: Abba Birhane Meskel and W/ro Sahelua

¹⁸⁷ Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay and Qäsä Gäbäz Girma Hailu.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*; Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Komos Aba Moges H/Mariam.

presentday *Abba* (father) of the lower monastery is *Abba Wolde Chergos Wolde Yohannes* who is responsible for the museum of the monastery.¹⁹⁰

The *Se''el Täbaqi* (keeper of monastic pictures) is appointed by the *Gäbaz* and answerable to him. His task is to keep the wellbeing and cleanness of the mural painting from mice, birds and other pests. The *Se''el Täbaqi* is always a young deacon who is also responsible for opening and closing of the doors and windows of the church. Above all, he has to be very loyal and confirmed by the communities. He takes the responsibilities of administering of painting and other decorating in the church.¹⁹¹

The *Agafari* was an official of low status. He acted as an inter -mediary between the dignitaries and petitioners. In addition to this, he is a man of security during the annual celebration of the saints' day, holding spear and shield. He was appointed by the *Gäbäz*.¹⁹²

3.2. OTHER FUNCTIONARIES OF MÄNAGÄSHA AMBA ST. MARY MONASTERY

Though their numbers are insignificant, there are other functionaries who hold the lower level of the hierarchy included the *Eqabet Täbaqi*, the *Aqabi* or *Aqabit* and *Zäbännöch* (guards). In the past, the *eqabet Täbaqi* was preferred to be handicapped person. This was because he would not go further from the church area as he liked. He was expected to be permanently on duty. He was appointed from among the monks. Above all; purity is valued more than any criterion. Besides this, honesty is highly needed. His task is to keep and regulated the exist and safe entry of liturgical books and other objects on time.¹⁹³

As to monastic tradition, in the past, the *Aqabis* of the monastery were monks. But this day, nuns are employed for the work. But the reason for the change is not quite clear. However, as the researcher observed from the general situation of monastic community, in the earlier, monks were monopolized every activities in the monastery because of the absence of nuns. The other point that would be convincible is that most nuns are not go far away from the monastery area as the monks did. The responsibility of the *Aqabi/Aqabit*, for male and female respectively is grind grains and bake the Eucharistic bread and fetch the holy water. The grain is grinds by stone mill because the

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ Mathewes and Anthonio, *The Monastery of Däbrä Damo*, (Oxford, Vivian Ridler, 1959), p.62.and Informants:, Qäsis Taye.

Eucharistic bread is not allowed to prepare from flour which grinds by scientific mill in the monastic life.¹⁹⁴

Finally, there was another functionary group called *Enčät fälač* or *säbari*, who was responsible for chopping and providing fire wood to the *Aqabi/Aqabit*. He had to be male. This was because the females could not ascend and descend the very irksome hill of Menagesha mountain easily as they liked and their number is also much less than the males. They were also unable to chop or split the logs. The lowest position in the monastery is possessed by the *Zäbännoch* (guards). Currently, there are six guards for the monastery, four are in the lower monastery and two are in the upper monastery. Their main duty is to protect the properties of the monastery.¹⁹⁵

Throughout the foundation of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery as a *Gädam*, several *mämhers* (22) were administered the monastery until presentday. According to local tradition and some archival sources, the following were *mämhers* of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.¹⁹⁶

Table 2. MASMM Administrators. Their numbers were 22 but the researcher couldn't find names and period of two of them due to lack of information

No	Name of Mamehr /Abe-Menet	Administrational Times	Remarks
1	Abba Gäbrä Giorgis or the future Echege/ Abune/ Baseleos	1912-1927EC	He was born in Mida, march 14, 1884. He attended church education and joined Däbrä Libanos monastery at his 14 years. He came to MASMM and served as clergy. Empress Zewditu was headed by him to build the church in 1916. He was the first Mamher of MASMM and the first Ethiopian patriarch. He was recounted for his initiation for establishment of church traditional school at Mänagäsha Amba Mary.
2	Mämher Laeke	1927-1933	He was from <i>Däbrä Sina</i> . He came to the monastery as

¹⁹⁴ Informants: Mägabi Kinfe Tadesse, Liqä Deacon Fikadu Tadesse, W/o Ayelech Sahelu.

¹⁹⁵ Informant: Ato Tesfamichael Bante Yider.

¹⁹⁶ Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem monastery bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C. and Informants Qasis Taye Mekuriya Liqa Mazamiran Liqa Lisanat Wolde Michael.

	Maryam		a monk but seeing his energy, Abune Matheos appointed him as head of the monastery. It was Mämher Laeke Maryam who received monastic land from the government.
3	Abba Belayneh Wolde Yohanes	1933-1934.	He was born in <i>Dabra Berhan</i> (Milki) and he came to Mänagäsha to attend the spritual education under the famous teacher <i>Wolde Egzi</i> . He become the abbot of the the Monastery. He was accompanied <i>Echege Gabra Giorgis</i> to fight the fascist.
4	Mämher Tekle Tsion	Unkown period	He was from Tigray (Axum). Administered the monastery for about two decades until his death. During this period, some unfinished buildings were constructed for the first time; he was begun to count the treasures of the monastery.
5	Mämher Tekle Mänfes Kidus Argaw	1941-1952	He came from Gondar to Mänagäsha Amba area. He was believed to be the <i>Qené</i> teacher of Emperor H/Selasie I. He was credited for his great concern for church education.
6	Mämher Gäbrä Michael	1953-1960	He was from Gondar. Administered the monastery for short period of time.
7	Mämher Kidane Maryam WoldeMaryam	1960-1963 Uncertain period	He was an old monk at MASMM. He came from Bugna. He was appointed by the clergymen and the parish. He became the first appointee of the community. He was built separate compound of the traditional school of the monastery.
8	Mämher Gabra Yasus Gabra Amlak	1963-1966	He was from Jiru. He was teacher of Degwa at the monastery. Later, administered the monastery in the late period of emperor Haileselasie.
9	Mamher Nawaya Selasie	1966-1969	He was amonk at the MASMM. He was from Dabra Libanos. He administered the monastery and maintained some ruins of the church enclosures. He restored the

			estates of the monastery with the help of notable man called Sime Garbi.
10	Mämher GäbräSelasie	1971-1978	He was from Badi Selasie church not far from MASMM. He was head of that church before he came to MASMM. He taught Qene and Zema at MASMM. Later, he administered the monastery for along perid of time until his death.
11	Mämher Harege Woin	1978-1982	He taught all levels of church education in the church. Before he became head of the church, he was marigeta of the church. After some applications of the church, he was appointed by Abune Merqoreos, the then patriarch of EOC as head of the MASMM
12	Mämher Harege Woin	1978-1982	He taught all levels of church education in the church. Before he became head of the church, he was marigeta of the church. After some applications of the church, he was appointed by Abune Merqoreos, the then patriarch of EOC as head of the MASMM
13	Mämher Haile Maryam	1982-1985	He was a teacher of the traditional education of the monastery since 1965 to 1977, when he died. However, deu to the absence of mamher who would become head of the monastery, he administered the monastery in addition to his teaching.
14	Mämher Gäbrä Maryam	1986-1990	He was from Metta Robi, in Western Shoa, In 1986, he was appointed by Abune Paulos and became head of the monastery. During his period, his administration was marred by dissagreemnt. Thus, he was removed by the Abun
15	Mämher HaileMaryam Setegn	1991-1994	He was Yaneta of traditional school and also priest of the monastery and since 1991, he was appointed as head of the monastery.
16	Mämher	1994-1998	He was from Shire Enda Selasie, and headed the

	Gäbrä Yäsus Mekonnen		monastery for five years aggressively.
17	Mamher Birhanu	1998-2001	He was from Deresge region. He led the monastery as Mamher. He was some what transformative leader.
18	Mämher Wolde Tensae	2001-2002	He came from Däbrä Mitimak as priest but due to his energetic leadership skil, he appointed as Mämher in 2001 by Abune Paulos.
19	Mämher Gäbrä Selsie	2002-2004	He was from Bugna and Lasta region. He was brought as marigeta but later chosen by clergy as head of the monastery.
20	Mämher Moges Hailemaryam	2004-present	He was born in Adea Barga area. He came to Mänagäsha to attend his traditional education. He was amonk and appointed as mamher of the Monastery in 2004 and he serves currently.He attended Theology, speak Amharic, Afan Oromo and English languages.He has arranged monastic museum and improved the gravel road to upper monastery.

Sources: The Monastic Magazine.

3.3. The Traditional School of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery

Scholars like Sylvia Pankhurst noted that the origin of the Ethiopian church education coincided with the establishment of the church itself. Traditional church educations are the bases for most Ethiopian modern schools. Until the early twentieth century, it was in the traditional schools that education, mainly reading and writing was given. Primarily, these schools had the aims to teach about Christian religion and literature and to produce bureaucrats both for the spiritual and state machineries.¹⁹⁷ In the Christian highlands of Ethiopia; the church constituted on the main guardian of traditional culture and provided the only school in the land for many centuries.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ Sylvia Pankhurst, Ethiopia. *A cultural History* ;(London: Leighton Strake Book Binding CO.LTD, 1955), p.232.

¹⁹⁸ Haile Gabrael, *“The Ethiopian Orthodox Church school system”* *The church of Ethiopia. A Paranoma of History and spiritual Life* (Addis Ababa; Unted printer, 1970), p.81.

The Monastic schools were basically established to serve the community of believers, to teach their children in Christian principles and literature. Therefore, its basic objective was to instruct children about religious lessons and then prepare them for different functions in the monastery.¹⁹⁹ As to Sylvia Pankhurst, indeed the Church in Ethiopia assured its continuity through its traditional church schools.²⁰⁰

In the earlier periods, students of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery used to attend their education in the monastery compound under a shade of big tree or in the houses of their teachers. Informants told the researcher that such learning teaching process was very difficult since everything was failed up on the shoulder of the students and their teacher or *Yäneta* (teacher). Students were expected to cover their food by begging from the society of the region. The process of collecting such daily food was very tiresome and sometimes exposed them to dangerous situations like biting by dogs and arrested by some brutal peoples. As to my leading informants, the monastery was over crowded by extended number of aged, nuns and monks by whom the monastery could not feed themselves. For that reason, students should have to beg and shared the food to the monastic communities.²⁰¹

Despite these short comings, many students were engulfed and joined the traditional school at Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary. To internalize the learning, students were used several techniques. The most significant method was the rote memorization i.e. they learnt by repeated study rather than understanding meanings. Students were mainly concerned in developing of their power of memory.²⁰² As the researcher critically observed the learning teaching process of the monastic school had various divisions like modern education in spite of differences in content and methods of teaching. The most commonly known divisions of education at Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery were:

The Nebab Bet

The Nebab Bet (Reading Grade) which sometimes called *Fidäl bet* (Letters reading) was the beginning class in the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary traditional school. Here, children

¹⁹⁹ Ephraim Isaac, "Social Structure of the Ethiopian church," Ethiopian Observer XIV, 4, (Addis Ababa, 1971), p. 243.

²⁰⁰ Sylvia, p. 232.

²⁰¹ Fred Gorické and Fredrich Heyer, "The Orthodox Church of Ethiopia as a social Institution" International Yearbook for sociology of knowledge and religion band 10 (West Deutscher Verlag, 1979), p. 215.

²⁰² Hermite Gäbrä Mäskel, "Come, Let Work Together", June 1992 (E.C), Informant: Qäsa Gäbäz Girma Hailu.

age of 10 and above began to learn reading. Their most important learning material is *Fidäl* or plate of letter from *Mälktä Yohanes* (message of Apostle John). Each student held his own *Fidäl* and they had also a common *fidäl* from which the *mämher* taught them. They learnt to know all Amharic letters in this class and they continued until they could read the psalm. They spent six months in mastering the psalm which would take more than a year.²⁰³

Zema Bet

As to the informants, the most charming stage in the *abinät* or traditional monastic school is the *Zema Bet* (School of Music), where priests and deacons learned singing and dancing. The *Zema Bet* (Church music) had its own division such as *Digwa* (chanting), *Mesiwaet* (sacrifices), *Qedase* (liturgy), *sä''atat* (night devotion) and *Aquaqam* (spacing). Mastering *Zema* took roughly six to fourteen years. At this level of learning students would be able to master the skill of *Qedase*, *Deguwa*, *Mesiwaet*, *Sä''atat* and *Aquaqam*.²⁰⁴ Informants explained that a number of clergies were produced from the monastery's traditional school that has been served in different positions in Ethiopian Orthodox churches.²⁰⁵ Some notable clergy in the monastery, told the researcher that *Liqa Mäzämeran* (intellect of singers), *Wolde Michael H/Mariam* was the most famous teacher who dealt with the church music.²⁰⁶

Qené Bét

Yäneta (teacher) *Gäbrä Egzihaber Badeg* was the most remarkable teacher at the school of *Mänağäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery* who devotedly taught in *Qené Bét* (Church Grammar). It is the third level and more advanced than the above two and would take two to ten years. Until the learners reached *Qené Bét*, they would highly depend on their rote memorization or learn by heart. But at this stage, they could begin to express what they thought. This level could be regarded as the stage where intellectual skills began.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Halemariam, p.43; Ayemro Wondemagegnehu and Joachim Molotov. *The Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, (Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 1990), p.128.

²⁰⁴ Ali A.Mazuri. *General History of Africa*. Heine Mann: (California, UNESCO, 1993), p.862.

²⁰⁵ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuria and Mämeher Mandefro Sisay.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ ብርሃኑ ገበየ ሐመር መጽሔት ዘ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ስምስተኛ ዓመት ቁጥር 4. ሐምሌ/ነሀሴ 1997 (Birhanu Gobena, Hamer Magazin the Orthodox Tewahido fifth edition No.4. July/august 2005).

Mäšihaf Bet

The last but not the least level of learning in the school is *Mäšihaf*–bet (interpretation level) used to take about thirteen years and above. At this level, students would master the skill of interpretation of books of Old and New Testament. After completion of the above four levels, students would leave the school of the monastery or would be employed there and in place of them new students would be admitted.²⁰⁸

Unfortunately, the Italian invasion had its own influence on the traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St. Monastery. As to informants, when the Italians bombarded the half part of the church and settled in the vicinity, the school was closed and stopped its activity. Some of the students and teachers went to other areas to escape from the persecution. But with the withdrawal of the Italians, the monastery began to call the displaced teachers and the students. Then after, the traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery had resumed its work within a short period of time and continued until these days.²⁰⁹

Due to the fact that the traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery has been declined in the number of students at each level. As to my leading informants, their number is decreased when we go from the first or lowest level to the highest especially from 1991 up to 2003. The numbers were 208,182, 122 and 82 for *Nebab bet*, *Zema bet*, *Qene bet*, and *Mäšihaf bet*. The local informants asserted that the financial problem was the chronic factor for their reduction. The *Zema bet* and *Nebab bet* have the highest number of students about 43 and 38 respectively. Whereas, *Qené-bet* remained only with seven and *Mäšihaf bet* was reached on the verge to have been closed. However, since 2003, their number began to revive at certain rate. As to my informants in 2003, the EOC Synod gave greater attention to this historical school so that allocated annual budget.²¹⁰

Contemporarily, the traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery had continued its task with the support of EOC Synod. As students claimed, this EOC support didn't concern the students. The teachers were paid their salary in cash and the students were left to learn by

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ The Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary and Garaw Medhanealem monastery bilateral document printed in their 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.

²¹⁰ The Ethiopian Orthodox Church/ Edited by Aymro Wondmagegnehu and Jachin Motovn. - Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian Orthodox Mission. 1970. XIX, p.181.

themselves. Accordingly, the students were forced to beg food moving far from the monastery. However, since 2003 onwards, they were supported by one believer Orthodox woman.²¹¹

The church clergies told the researcher that they failed under absolute poverty due to the lack of income. They confirmed that many important māmbers, clergies and students had been left the monastery. But after 2003, they began to return to their former home due to the aid gained from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Commission (Synod) and volunteer Christians since the year 2003 onwards.²¹²

Fig.4. Students of traditional school of Mānagāsha Amba St. Mary Monastery.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.

Earlier, most of the students of this traditional school were came from Gondar, Gojjam, Wollo, North Showa, Muger and sometimes come from the surrounding districts. The *Zema bet* students told me that they came from poor families. Informants testified that the monastery gave priority for those children who had no relatives or whose parents were very poor to feed their children sent them to this school.²¹³

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Informants: Berhane Mekel Abera and Abba Moges.

²¹³ Informant: Māgabi Kinfe Tadesse and Ato Dejene Dibaba.

Fig.5. The grain donated by Orthodox woman **Fig.6. The common food in Monastery, Dabe.**



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013 E.C.

Fig.7. The earlier Traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, which is believed to be built by Abune Baselos, 1921 while he was the Abbot of the monastery (left). The current Traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, (right) built in 2017 by the donation of orthodox believers from America.



Sorce: photo by the researcher, 2013 E.C.

The students had the duty of providing fire wood, water and necessary materials for themselves in the monastery. Sometimes the students would get money by guiding some guests who would come

to the vicinity to visit the upper monastery and in turn they got some money. This is done on their free time.²¹⁴

The students at the monastery were supervised by the *Liqä Amero* (unit leader) who had the responsibility to check if students did not attend school and did not perform their task in the monastery. The *Liqä Amero* used to provide the necessary amount of grain for the students every day from the store of the monastery. He would also see the efficiency of the teachers and the students whenever he found teachers and students' efficiency of the teachers was enough, he used to give them additional grains as remuneration. But, if they failed to accomplish their task, he would tell them their weakness to the *Gäbäz*. The *Gäbäz* would advise them to be good students and teachers by dictating them from the rule of the monastery.²¹⁵

The *Liqä Amero* (intellect) in the monastery could involve creating peace when there might have been arisen disputes among students or between teachers and students. If he failed to settle the conflict, he would inform the *Gäbäz* about the problem. Then, the *Gäbäz* would punish those who misbehaved according to the monastic discipline. The punishments would be conducted in labor work and if the mistake was serious, the *Sebeka- Gubae* (group of selected monks/nuns) looked at and let the guilty to cease the monastery.²¹⁶

In the traditional school of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, teachers came from the monastery of *Däbrä Libanoes, Gishen Maryam, Menz*, but these days teachers began to be employed from among the students of the monastery. In the past teachers obtained payment in land, but since the land confiscated from the monastery by Darge, most teachers suffered from the shortage of income which forced them to leave the monastery which later improved since 2003.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ ሥርዓተ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ("Rules and Regulation of Church," Manuscript found at MAMM.)

²¹⁶ *Informants: Qesa Gabaz Girma Hailu and Abba berhane Meskel.*

²¹⁷ *Informant: Gäbäz Girma Hailu and Abba Birhane Meskel.*

CHAPTER IV

SOURCES OF INCOME OF MÄNAGÄSHA AMBA SAINT MARY MONASTERY

According to Orthodox tradition, in the monastic life, private property is illegal and is condemned. Division of labour is mandatory in the monastery. Some are engaged in prayer, some others work in the farm, shops, and crafts, bakery and the like. Monasteries are not only places of prayer, but also places of work and disciplined life. In the monastery, a meal is taken once in twenty four hours, even a glass of water is not allowed to be taken out of the scheduled time. The aged, the sicked and needy people are taken care of by the monks of the community of monastery.²¹⁸ People who dedicate to monastic life can come to the monastery, however, the number of monks and nuns must not be greater than the capacity of the monastic resources. According to monastic administration, Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery had different kinds of sources of income, such as land grants, market dues, gifts and others.²¹⁹

4. 1. Land and Taxation

Here, the main revenue of the monastery was from its land. The monastery was prosperous in different types of land grants. The land grants were made by empress Zewditu and other dignitaries. The donation of land to the monastery had long history. Land grant promoted the status of the monastery's economy and the functionalities of the monastery.²²⁰ No doubt that Gult system was a key element of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church since the time of pre-Aksumite era up to the pre-1974 Ethiopian Revolution period.²²¹ Apparently, the state as the absolute entity over the land and the king or emperor as donor of lands, gave land as gult to the Orthodox Church. Land grants to the monastery had different features, religiously, the donors expected to get salvation. Most of the income was collected from rural lands which Empress Zewditu gave to the monastery. She allocated lands amounting thirteen Gašas of land for Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery at Wochächa, Lafa district and Bächo area as a source of revenue of the church and for the livelihood of the clergymen as Reste Gult. As to my informant testimony, the empress gave such extended

²¹⁸ Kefyalew Merahi, *Saints and monasteries in Ethiopia*, (Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Press, 2003), p.5.

²¹⁹ Ya Mänagäsha Maryam Gadam Astedadarawi Damb, Art.XIX.

²²⁰ Asnake Ali, "Historical Survey of Social and Economic Conditions in Wollo, 1972-1917" ed., Tadesse Beyene, Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, I (Addis Ababa, 1988), p.267.

²²¹ _____ "የኢትዮጵያ ታሪክ" (*History of Ethiopia*), MA. IES.p.254. and Siegfried Pausewing, *Peasants, Land and Society: A History of Land Reform in Ethiopia* (London, 1973), p.26.

portion of lands to the monastery in 1930 and it was implemented by the assigned officials in the region.²²²

*መስከረም 21/1922 ዓ . ም የመናገሻ አምባ ቅድስት ማርያም ገዳም የቆብ መሬት ሁለተኛበምነና ስርዓት በገዳሚ ለሚኖሩ መከላከት ለከብት፤ ለእርሻ ጥቅም ሚሆን መሬት በስተምስራቅ የወጨጫ ተራራ ፤ በስተደቡብ፤ የሰበታና የዓለምገና አካባቢስተምጭራብ ፤ የቦቾ ኮሬ መለስ የሚገኘውን መሬት ለገዳሚ ኃላፊ ለሆኑት ለመምህር ላዕክ ማርያም ክልለን በስምምነት የሰጠን መሆኑን ድንግል ማርያምን ምስክር አቁመን ፊርማችንን አሳርፈን እንገልጻለን።*²²³

September 29/1930 we allocated land for monks and to those who devoted in the monastic life by giving up all things to spiritual matter in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. This land serves for the monastic community: for grazing and farming. This land bounded in the East by the Wächächa Mountain; in the South it extended up to Sebeta and Alemgena, in the West it reached up to Bächo Korre districts. We the local officials of Mänagäsha Kolobo Awraja by endorsing or approving our signature in the name of our Saint Virgin Mary as awitness.

Trimendiously, land was a fundamental source of income and the basis of power for both secular and religious institutions in agrarian countries like Ethiopia. In Ethiopian history, land had always been considered as the property of the government. On the basis of this issue, the Christian emperors made land grants to secular officials as well as religious institutions. As the Christian kingdom expanded by controlling more land, its wealth and power increased. Administration of such an extensive area, therefore, made possible through the royal grant of vast tracts of land to large number of officials and churchmen.²²⁴

During the imperial era, the church was land owner. Some of the common lands appropriated in the form of qalad was given to the church for its services.²²⁵ This idea was supported by scholar Heyer that the economic support obtained by monasteries in the provinces of feudal Ethiopia was guaranteed by the donation of land in the vicinity of monastery , given mostly by the

²²²Informant: Qésä Gäbäz Girma Hailu. Gaša: A unit of measurement, roughly equivalent to 40 hectares. In MASMM land possession, there was about thirteen gašas, but today the monastery possesses only one gasha. 206

²²³Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery, file No. 012/1970.

²²⁴Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527*(London,O.U, 1972),p.98.

²²⁵Bahru Zewdie, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1955*, (Addis Ababa; Addis Ababa University Press, 2002), P.89.

nobility. Peasants cultivated the land and had to provide the production share to the monastery. The relationship between monks and peasants was good and characterized by mutual interdependence.²²⁶

Among the land grants to the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary, Yäsämon märet or church land was the main grant. This was given to the church in place of salary to the clergy and to other supporters of its daily services.²²⁷ As the documents from Mänagäsha Kolobo town municipality infer, the entire church compound is approximately 2000m².²²⁸ There were one hundred fifty employees who served the church and whose livelihood depended on the land donated by the Empress and a monthly salary of one to ten birr (see Appe.G and H). As to informants, this payment was known by the name of Yä- Chäw Gänzäb, (the currency of salt). Qasis Taye particularized that his father was an employee of the church who had received ten birr as a monthly salary for the whole monastic services.²²⁹

Moreover, according to oral tradition and documents which survived from Italian attacks clearly show that the rist (which entitled the holders to use their land and pass them on to their heirs) and gult (fief) holding right of each individual parish churches and monasteries become more evident during the reign of Empress Zewditu and Emperor Haile selasie I.²³⁰ This was the time when land in the region was divided and given to individual parish churches and monasteries by unit of land measurement. Sources recounted that the division of land was based on the earlier rist and gult holding rights instituted during the Gondarian period.²³¹ According to this new system of land division, inhabitants were grouped into individual parishes what were called *Däbir*, in such a way that would be easier for administration and tax collection.²³²

Land was the most important source of income for the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary in various aspects. One of which was the tribute collected from the inhabitants under its jurisdiction.

²²⁶ Fredrick Heyer, *Some Aspects of Dependence of the Orthodox Church* (Tewahedo Betekristian) on the Feudal Class of Ethiopia. A Short study Delivered by Dr. Fredrick Heyer organized by the Historical Society of Ethiopia, (Addis Ababa, 1979), p.8.

²²⁷ Shiferaw Bekele, *"The Evolution of Land Tenure in the Imperial Era"* ed., Shiferaw Bekele an Economic History of Modern Ethiopia, (Dakar; CODESRIA, 1995), pp.79 and 94.

²²⁸ Qajeelchaa Bulchinsa Mana Qopheessaa Magaalaa Kolobo, (Mänagäsha Kolobo Town Municipality, File No.2(1999-2012)

²²⁹ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Märigeta Mandefro Sisay.

²³⁰ Andargachew Tiruneh, *The Ethiopian Revolution (1974 to 1982)* (London, 1990), p.26.

²³¹ The International Journal of Social Science, Vol.32.No.1 (2015).p.56.

²³² Yägädäm Mätädäriya Dänbi. A manuscript found at the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary.

Essentially, the monastery relied on various dues collected from peasants living in the areas under its control right up to 1974 revolution.²³³

Likewise, the inhabitants within monastic gult were also expected to pay second form of tax called *Yätena* tax or health tax. The monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary collected a total of fifty birr as *Yätena* tax from inhabitants annually. The third form of tax which the inhabitants paid to the monastery was *Asrat* (tithe). The total annual *Asrat* which the monastery collected was estimated to be 247 Ethiopian birr. The land which the monastery had administered was estimated to be thirteen *Gaşas* of land from which it collected about 147 birr per year. The total amount of taxation which the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary used to collect annually in all the three forms was estimated to be birr 444. As it had been indicated earlier, the unit used to measure the gult holding of the monastery was *Kumale* (derived from northern Ethiopia to show the unit of gult holding).²³⁴

Apart from taxation, the monastery collected from its gult which the monks used to produce different crops on the land which the monastery controlled. This was mostly done by digging the hillside of the monastery. Moreover, monks and nuns were rearing animals on the land that belonged to the monastery. However, the gult holding rights of the monastery and the power and authority of *mämher* (chief person in the monastery) were changed following the 1974 revolution.

One of the ways in which the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary was able to get income from land following the revolution was in the form of *Yämäret Timad*. It was a new land arrangement made between the *mämher* of the monastery and the local inhabitants.²³⁵ *Yämäret Timad* was a land agreement made between the tenant farmers and the owners of the land in the process of production. That is in fact a common characteristic of the relationship between the owners of the land and the tenant farmers in general. At the same time monks and nuns also received their share of land which my information called *Yäqob märet* i.e. land of monks and nuns but it soon disappeared.²³⁶

As elders of the study area inferred, the local officials claimed that the surrounding area population increased in which it put pressure on the monastic land possession. Informants also told me that in

²³³Informants: Qésä Gäbäz Girma Hailu and, Qäsis Taye. According to these informants and some archives, the inhabitants of the monastery's gult land were the descendants of Abuna Baseliwos, the Patriarchate of the then EOTC. 217.

²³⁴Yagadam Mätädadäriya Dänbi and Informant: Qäsis Taye.

²³⁵*Ibid.*

²³⁶Informants: Ato Teshome Assefa and Ato Tesfaye Tekalign

the disagreement made between the mämher and the local peasants on *Yamet- Timad* of the monastery created a big problem by extending the border of their farm lands to the monastic land possession. To these and other problems, the local officials and local elders demarcated the border of the monastery land.²³⁷

The local officials and elders tried to define the line of boundary of monastic land by physical land features which exist today. The following manuscript which is extracted from the office of the monastery was believed to have been signed by the official and states the demarcation of the boundary of the monastic land. The document reads: In addition to this introductory, some religious books of the monastery comprise the grants of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery through the words:

ይህ ስረት እንዳይፈርስ : በስልጣን: ጴጥሮስ: ወዳዉሱስ:

ወግዝ: ሰይኑን: አቤ: አነ: ሰላማ :ዳዳስ ዘኢትዮጵያ::²³⁸

So that no one can violate this grant, let him be excommunicated by the power of Peter and Paul, says the patriarch of Ethiopia, *Abuna Sälama*.

As mentioned above, until 1974, the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary had 13 *Gaşas* of land which was granted by empress Zewditu. This land had minumely been produced about 325445 kuntals of teff and other grains yearly. However, the post 1974 was a turning point in the history of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, because, the rest–gult system was ceased as the land of the monastery was nationalized by the Darge government and the monastery was forced to be administered by the Sebaka Gubae (Monastic/Church council)²³⁹

²³⁷ Informants Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Ato Alemu H/Mariam.

²³⁸ Zena Zä-Bétäkristian (History of the Church) found in the Monastic storehouse.

²³⁹ Informants: Qäsis Taye, Ato Alamu H/Mariam and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

Fig.8. The Monastic land currently cultivated by the monastery, near the residents of communal monastery



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.

4.2. *Yämaryam Silät* (Gifts for good deeds)

One of the most important sources of income of the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary was called *Yämaryam Silät* (money offered to the church for their success). The largest amount of offering was given to the church in the main festival of the monastery held on September 21, sometimes 29, on the commemoration day of Saint Mary. In addition to this, on January or Tir 21, Ginbot (may, 1), March and October 27, at the *Garaw Mädhanyalem* (Upper Monastery), many faithful people have come from all neighboring provinces to the monastery for the purposes of

worship. These people used to come with various objects and give money to the monastery in response for their success.²⁴⁰

Märigeta Mandefro and Qäsis Taye told the researcher that on September 21st, on the commemoration day; about 300,000-320,000 Ethiopia birr would be usually rendered to the monastery. Other things being equal, a great deal of objects that are valuable to the monastery, used to be offered annually from the people. *Qäsis Taye* stated that and the researcher had also observed the people who came to the commemoration of Amba Mary would go up to 25,000 laity Christians. This estimation was more or less acceptable on the basis of the busses and other transportation systems that commanded from Addis Ababa transport bureau.²⁴¹

Income from *Fitat* (Commemorative prayer)

In addition to all these, the clergy in the monastery used to obtain some amount of money from what is commonly known as *Fitat* (Commemorative prayer). In Ethiopian Christian culture in general, when a person dies, his families and relatives pay to the Ethiopian Orthodox church such in kind or in cash for services of the commemorative prayer conducted at a church. It is usually performed on 3rd, 7th and 12th days since the death of the person. Moreover, on the 40th day, a big feast is conducted which informants called *Zikir* (food and drinks to remember the dead). A big *Zikir* is prepared by the families and relatives of the dead who is commonly called *Täskar* (praying ceremony for the dead by the priests) where the clergy are especially called for the prayer. Some rich people continue to celebrate annually the *zikir* for many years. Hence, the clergy could get a lot of money and food from their services.²⁴² In spite of this, the income which the clergy could get from such commemorative prayer declined following the establishment of new churches in the nearby areas. The believers who used to come to the monastery attach themselves to the newly established churches.²⁴³

Moreover, currently, different factors like government policies, and other religious teachings also prohibit such feasts and large payment for the dead people memorial. Particularly, in Western Shoa, it is almost on the way of disappearance. The government of Ethiopia, who seized power

²⁴⁰ Informants: Qasis Taye mekuria and Ato Eticha Gemmechu.

²⁴¹ Informants: Marigeta Mandefro and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

²⁴² Informants: Mämeher Yirgalem Moges and Abba Wolde Cherqos.

²⁴³ Informants: mamher Yirgalem Moges and Abba Moges.

since 1991, has been made some changes regarding the Ethiopian Orthodox Church for instance the terminating of such traditional attitude attached with the idea that the dead people would be free from their sins when their relatives prepared feasts in their name particularly, on their immemorial days.²⁴⁴ The government fastens it by introducing in the education policy as it is an extravagancy practices that affects the economic progress of the country.

4.3. Endowments

The income of the monastery is depending heavily on donations by believers. The believers of Orthodox Christians from different parts of the country and abroad stretched their generous hands to the monastery. As to my informants, those believers donated their gifts or grants into two ways. The first group is those who collected the money per month and brought the money and submitted it to the *Säbäka- Gubae* office. The *Sebeka-Gubae* blessed these donators and announced to the public to pray for them at their regular prayer. These donations mostly serve as payment for the monastic clergy as a salary. The salary in the monastery is varied based on experiences and spiritual College graduates.²⁴⁵

The second groups are believers from abroad and within Ethiopia organized an association which is called *Bale Tesfawoch* (believers) and *Yeyerusalem qidusan Maheber* (an association of Holy Jerusalem). They contribute monthly and they assigned their own representative to buy grains and physically submit to the monastic administration. They employed this donation twice a year.²⁴⁶ The researcher observed while they were deploying the grains to the monastery. (See fig.6)

4.4. The Income from the Mill

Most importantly, one of the remarkable achievements in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery was the establishment of Mill with the firm struggle of Mämher Gäbrä Yäsus Gäbrä Amlak in 1965. He had been written series of letters to various high ranking officials informing them the problem of monks and nuns in grinding the grain using traditional stone. It is true that before the introduction of mill to the monastery, the society were used to grind their grains using traditional stones. This was extremely irksome and became more difficult as the size of the monastery's population was growing. To alleviate the problem, Gäbrä Yäsus started writing letters since 1963. Since then, he

²⁴⁴ Informants: Ato Etcha Gemmechu and Ato Lamma Beyyecha.

²⁴⁵ Informants: Marigeta Mandefro Siisay and Abba Moges Hailemariam.

²⁴⁶ Informants: Abba Berhane Meskel and Qäsis yirgalem Moges.

made subsequent requests to the concerned body especially to ETOC AID and Development at various levels.²⁴⁷

As result of his determination, the ETOC Holy Synod Department and inter church Aid Department finally decided in 1965 to set up a mill for the monastery. A timber roofed house was built first for the shelter of the mill. The mill is said to have been setup by a Färänji (White man) whose name was forgotten by the informants. In addition to lessening the problem of the monks and nuns, the mill has become the largest source of income to the monastery.²⁴⁸

As *Qäsis Taye* and *Ato Alamu Hailemariam* demonstrated, the monastery was in a very critical problem starting from the loss of its rest – gult land in 1975. Other clergies are also agreed that the monastery had lost most of valuable ministers due to loss of income of the monastery. Hence, as to informants, the Sebeka-Gubae improved the modern monastic mill in quality and quantity in 1980s. Most of my informants regarding the mill have common views that the newly added mills have relatively solved the problem of the monastery.²⁴⁹ Today, people from nearby kebeles and the monastic community use to grind their grains at the monastery of Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary mill. Mämeher Mandefro Sisay told the researcher that the mill generates 15,000 to 20,000 birr per month.²⁵⁰

Fig.9. The mill of Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary Monastery.



Source: Photo by the researche, 2013 E.C.

²⁴⁷ Informants: Qäsis Taye.

²⁴⁸ “Yägädam Mätädadäriya Dänb”, Informant: Qäsis Taye.

²⁴⁹ Infromants: Qäsis Taye and Ato Alamu Hailemariam.

²⁵⁰ Informants: Mämeher Mandefro Sisay and Mägabi Kinfe.

4.5. The Income from the Shops and Crafts

The researcher made an attempt to infer monastic ledgers that the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary has 169 monks, 60 nuns, 965 students and 6 guards which comprised more than 1200 visible people. Among these community, 120 of them are clergies who give active public services and are payable. However, for the sake of their convenience and the promises he made, the researcher was strictly limited to go very detail regarding the hermits and their life style but he observed their figures from the stastical data of the monastery reached about 124 male in the upper male monastery.²⁵¹

As principle, this bulk of monastic communities are not allowed to seat idly. Based on their background, they have been categorizing into various positions. In this monastery, there are sixty (60) mothers and all are having their own dwellings/houses inside the compound. In addition to this, they participate in different kinds of jobs as weaving, embroidery, tailor and other activities.²⁵² The researcher physically observed cotton–spinning works and tailors by both monks and nuns in the lower monastery.

The first monastic shop engaged in retailing of various spiritual books, crosses of various size, candles, tapers, matches, torches, garments and stationaries. The second shop is involved in selling of consumption goods such as oils, packed foods, spaghettis, coffee, sugar, ointments and flour of various kinds. These monastic shops are serving the community of the monastery and the surrounding rurals as place of purchasing commodities.²⁵³

²⁵¹ A monastic ledger holds list of names and number of hermits in upper monastery. File No.3.1976-2011.

²⁵² ገድለ ሰማእታት (Hagiographies of Saints) A paper manuscript at the MAMM.

²⁵³ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Mämeher Mandefro Sisay.

Fig.10. shops.



Source: photo by the Researcher, 2013.

The Income from the Bakery

In addition to the aboves, the most important source of income of the monastery of Amba St.Mary is the monastic bakery. It was believed to be established around 1990s by orthodox believer who lived abroad. The bakery is operated by young monks who took two to three weeks trainings.It produces about 300 to 500 breads per day weights 20 to 120 grams. The majority of this bread is sold to the community surrounded the monastery. One fourth (quarter) of the product is distributed to the needy and the Orphans.²⁵⁴ The monastic communities are not encouraged to use this yeast baked bread for which it may contradict with rules of monasticism.The monastic communities are restricted to consume *Dabe*(yeastless bread) made by monks in the *tägbar bét*.²⁵⁵ (See fig.22)

As to *Qäsis Teye and Mämeher Mandefro*'s statement, the Empress said to set the rules that could be followed by everyone in this monastery in 1916. As to the rule, the monks shouldn't eat until 3:00 p.m and after fasting hours, the amount of food given for the monks has been very limited. This is actually common for other monasteries as well. They usually eat *Nefro* (frosted maize) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday as well as *Dabe* (pumpkin) on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and

²⁵⁴ ሥርዓተ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ("Rules and Regulation of Church,"Manuscript found at MASMM.)

²⁵⁵ የገዳም መተዳደሪያ ቅንብ (Rules and regulation of Mänagäsha Amba, manuscript found at MASMM)

Sunday.²⁵⁶ In this part, the researcher couldn't find the document which contained the Empress's order.

4. 6. The income from the Museum

Various sources indicated that the former Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary eqabet or store was built from juniper and mud with a roof made up of grass and two towers on its sides for the purpose of security. However, in 1950s, the grass cover was replaced by corrugated sheets by the order of Emperor Haile Selasie I. The store house or the current museum is full of heritages. Thoroughly; these marvelous treasures are not opened to tourists at a deserving status. However, though not many, there are individuals who come to visit this site. If promotion is under way by the culture and tourism office, there is a potential for this area to attract more tourists. But, still individuals who are interested in the history of the area are the ones who come to visits the church. To visit the museum, one foreigner should pay 100 birr and one local/ Ethiopian pays 15 birr. The comings of tourists are not frequent, thus their income from visitors is not confidential.²⁵⁷

According to *Abba Wolde Cherqos*' explanation, the museum generates 12,000 and at rare cases, 20,000 ETB per month. The monastery could generate more money from the heritages by attracting more potential tourists, but the monastic administrators paid no attention to do that. If the monastery heartily mobilizes and advertises the heritages, the chronic societal problems could be alleviated.

Documents from the monastery showed that the new museum of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary was constructed in 2014 with the aim of collecting and displaying various heritages. Prior to this year, *Eqa Bet* (store) is serving as a show room for the heritages of the church. Wolmera Woreda (district) Culture and Tourism office provided expertise support especially during the construction of the museum and when heritages were transferred from *Eqa Bet* to the newly constructed building (museum).²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ Informants: Abba Wolde Cherqos and the receipt of the Monastery.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay and Bahtawi Wolda Cherqos Wolda Yohannes.

Fig.11. The first Eqa bet of Empress Zewditu (1916) and the new museum buildings.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.

Informant *Lamma Beyyecha* and *Abba Wolde Chergos* told the researcher that all heritages collections were inventoried by culture and tourism office. Despite the fact that more than 1350 heritages and 125 different kinds are found inside the museum, the display area is narrow and small. The problem is serious when visitors come to visit the heritages in large numbers. These historical heritages are visited by local visitors like students from different institutions, members of *Mahbere Qidusan* (Association of the orthodox), private and public employees. Even if the monastery is found very near to the capital, the number of tourists visiting the museum is insignificant. The convincing reason for the inadequate external visitors to the monastery is lack of advertisement. Whenever the foreign visitors come to visit, they are expected to pay 100 ET birr per individual. Whereas , Ethiopians are expected to pay 15 birr, 5birr and 2.50 birr for employee, students and children respectively.²⁵⁹

4.2. Treasures in Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary Monastery

Based on their type, the researcher classified the heritage collections of the monastery into three groups; the first groups are manuscripts of papers and vellum, then heritages made up of cast iron and jade heritages and finally raiment's. Targeted informants told the researcher that the priests and the clergy have a responsibility of cleaning and protecting heritage collections in the museum.²⁶⁰ The vellum manuscripts have been too aged since they were brought by Empress Zewditu before

²⁵⁹ Informants: Aba Abraham Mekonen; Ato lemma Beyyecha and Bahtawi Wolda Chergos Wolda Yohannes.

²⁶⁰ Informants: Abba WoldeMariyam Feleke and Abba Berhane Meskel.

and after the construction of the monastery.²⁶¹ The museum of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery is abundantly enriched with diverse heritage collections. To list some of the most significant ones:

On the front shelf of the museum there are metal objects; as sword, shotgun, and cartridge belt made up of leather. Those objects were believed to be used by ancestors during the late 19th century.²⁶² As to informants, some of these appliances were brought from Mekele by Empress Zewditu after the death of her husband to Shaa and she finally donated these materials to the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary. Also there are different kinds of crosses collected from Abuna Baslios, Empress Zewditu, Emperor Menelik II, Fitawrari Habtegiorgis and individuals through donation and gift. It is known that crosses are used in different church ceremonies and these crosses are made up of gold, silver, wood and marble. In the museum, there are crosses of different sizes, mainly three types as Processional (the biggest cross), Hand and Neck crosses. There is also Empress Zewditu's daily prayer picture of St. Mary and silver plated holy water drinking horn.²⁶³

Undoubtedly, the majority of these collections were donated on September 21, 1916; on the day of the annual anniversary of the Monastery. Furthermore, there are different monstrance donated by Empress Zewditu and Abuna Baslios. Abuna Baslios endowed the white gold cross and silver monstrance which were made up of gold, bronze, silver and buffalo horn. Documents from the monastery showed that in the museum, there are also a lot of Censers and staffs made up of silver, bronze, gold and metal. Moreover, there are a bronze small jar served for a holy water's pitcher, settings used as a shelter of Empress Zewditu, casserole and its dipper used for frosted maize and other collections donated by Empress Zewditu in 1916.²⁶⁴

Fig.12. Bronze small jar (served for a holy water's pitcher) and various caps made rhinoceros horn, silver and bronze). The averivated Amharic letters (ዘ.ግፀ) on the jar indicated (ዘወዲቱ ግሥኒስክ) literally to mean Zewditu Menelik which correlated the object with donator.

²⁶¹ Informants: Qomos Aba Moges.

²⁶² Informants: Qomos Aba Moges; and The church document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 years'anniversary. On 2008-2009 E.C.

²⁶³ Informants: Qäsis Yirgalem Moges and Abba Berhane Meskel.

²⁶⁴ Informants: Qomos Aba Moges; and The church document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 years'anniversary. On 2008-2009 E.C.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.

Figure.13. Greek's Gospel, goblet and the big vellum Manuscript of Negere Mary.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.

The above Figure shows the Greek's gospel, goblet and Miracle of Mary (made up of silver). It was given for the Empress by an Ethiopian who lived in Greek whose name was Tibekiyalesh Asfaw. However, Empress Zewditu gave these relics to the monastery of Menagesha Amba St.Mary in 1916.

In addition to this; there are crowns of royal families, which were made up of silver and gold plated and were donated by Empress Zewditu in 1918.²⁶⁵

Fig.14. Crowns of royal families, which were made up of silver and gold plated and were donated by Empress Zewditu in 1918 (left) and crown made at MASMM from wood by monks probably , 1950.



Source: photo by the researcher.

On the other parts of the museum, there are diverse umbrellas which were donated by Empress Zewditu and believers in 1921 after her coronation as Empress. Then she appeared in this church to participate in the festival of Saint Mary and she offered two umbrellas for the glory to God and the rest umbrellas were a donation of individuals.²⁶⁶ On the top of the shelf there are photo frames of Ethiopian patriarchs which have been the religious leader of our country from Abuna Baslios to Abuna Mathias and Merqorewos. In addition to the above relics, there is a Mesob(an object made of decorated grass) which was Empress Zewditu’s gift in 1916 named by “ እንተ ውስጥ ሙና ህቡዕ ” literally mean there is a hidden *Mena*(food) inside it, to serve the church as a provider of *Nefro*[boiled wheat or beans] for the clergies. In this part the —Mesob be a symbol of St. Mary and the *Mena* (food) stand for God.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Informants: Mägabi Aba Fikeregiorgis Melaku and abba Abrham Mekonen.

²⁶⁶ Informants: Bahtawi Wolda Cherqos Wolda Yohannes and Mämher Mandefro Sisa

²⁶⁷ Informants: Mämehar Yirgalem Moges and The church document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 years’anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.

Fig. 15. The Mesob that found in the Museum of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery given in 1916 during the process of the church Construction.



Source: Photo by the researcher, 2013.E.C.

The second category which is found inside this monastery's museum is raiment of royal families and clergymen. However, some are found in good conditions like deacons and clergy men wearing but other collections are being deteriorating and are heaped at the corner in the dark room.

The earliest garments of priests and royal families were made up of silk, cotton and gold. Inside the museum there are diverse gowns of Ras Gugsa Walle and pants of Empress Zewditu. The garments of priests were also donated and endowed by Empress Zewditu, *Abuna Baslios*, *Ras Gugsa Walle* and believers. Whereas, the raiments of the Empress and her husband *Ras Gugsa Walle* were offered by Empress Zewditu from the day of the churches establishment, 1916 to 1918.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁸ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla.

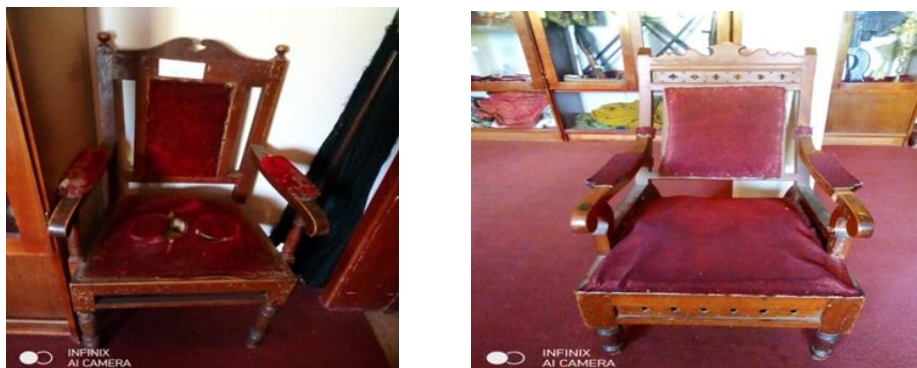
Fig.16. Empress Zewditu and Ras Gugsa's Bridal Gown.



Source: Photo by researcher in 2013 E.C.

The above figure shows the luxurious raiments of the royal families. They are the wedding garments of Empress Zewditu and her husband *Ras Gugsa Walle* (she dressed while she was marrying to her second husband *Ras Gugsa Walle*) in 1909. As to some monastic tailors' expression, those raiments were made up of silver and white gold. Both were endowed by the Empress. In addition to this, there are chairs which belonged to the Empress and accompanied her everywhere she went for her to sit.²⁶⁹

Figure.17. Chairs which were made up of wood and silky endowed by Empress Zewditu in 1916.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013.EC.

²⁶⁹ Informants: Bahtawi Wolda Chergos Wolda Yohannes and Abba Estifanos

In her time, when she came to the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary for the festivity of its adoration of establishment she left the chair there, to serve as a seat for her in every visit she would make.²⁷⁰

One could observe the stamp of Empress Zewditu which was made up of wood and offered by her to the monastery. Her donation and patronage to the Orthodox Christianity made her a wonderful and a religious woman who had a great love for Ethiopia and EOTC, as a result, she did everything to show the glory of God. There are also diverse currencies of Emperor Menelik II, Empress Zewditu coins that served for commercial exchange. Some of them had been donated by Empress Zewditu in 1917 and some were donated by believers.²⁷¹ Beside the above donations, the monastery had been endowed by the empress personal ear jewelry which was made up of gold. Not only the empress but also there is Emperor Haile Silase's one dollar and a silver plate that contains the image of Empress Zewditu, donated by two believers named *Birhane Tensaye and Wolete Mikael* in 2016 as a commemoration of the Emperor and the Empress.²⁷²

The widest part of the museum category is a collection of vellum manuscripts. Those manuscripts which were made up of animals' skin; were written on various issues using both Amharic and Geez languages. They were written by black and red ink. The black ink was prepared by using *Tilashet* (soot) and water. The red ink was made by mixing red flower and red soil. As to informants, the red ink was served for writing the name of God, Christ, saints and angels to give them respect and emphasis. Those manuscripts included Miracle of Mary (teamere Maryam), Miracle of Jesus (*teamer Yesus*), *Gibre Himamat*, book of liturgy, *Zimare* (church music), psalm, Gospel, different *Gedlat* (hagiographies) and *Dirsanat* (Homilys).²⁷³ Among them Miracles of Marry, *Negere Maryam*, *Zimare* and psalm (this four types of manuscripts were gift of *Abuna Baslios* from the veneration of the establishment of Amba Mary Monastery in 1916 to 1926) and vellum, *Sinksar*, *Gibre Himamat*, Miracle of Jesus, *Qidase Maryam* were offered by Empress Zewditu.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ Informants: Bahtawi Wolda Chergos Wolda Yohannes and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

²⁷¹ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya.

²⁷² Ibid; Informants: Mägabi Aba Fikeregiorgis Melaku and Ato Alemu.

²⁷³ Ertiban Demewoz, *Assessment on Potentials and Challenges of Heritage Tourism Development: the case of Kidist Bethelhem Maryam church*, MA Thesis in Tourism and Heritage Management, (Gondar University Press, Ethiopia, 2012).

²⁷⁴ Informants: Aba Abraham Mekonen; The church document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 years' anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C

Fig.18. collection of vellum manuscripts rendered by empress Zewditu in 1916.



Source: Photo by the researcher, 2021.

The upper Monastery of Mänagäsha endowed with heritages disclosed in the ground at different times. As to the clergies, these heritages might be associated with the church that had been hidden during the invasion of Imam Ahmed by grace of God.²⁷⁵ There are also censers, vellum manuscripts and different utilities of Empress Zewditu. There are also Atronos and Aweed that served to read *Orit* (Old testaments) which might have been donated by individuals and royal families of their times.²⁷⁶

Further more, there has been also a tub which had been served as hand washing stuff of clergy after they finished sanctify. Some professionals suggested that it was made up of bronze and a gift from Emperor Haile Silase I in 1960 when he established the church of Medhanealem.²⁷⁷ There are also different heritages in the church and the father's monastery which are made up of cast iron and horn. These heritages were donated by Empress Zewditu in 1916 to serve the fathers on their daily routines.²⁷⁸

In Ethiopia, at different times when fathers went to the battle field or somewhere distant, they used to hold water and pepper (for appetizer to eat their dried bread and meat) with these stuffs. It was

²⁷⁵Futūḥ al - Ḥabaša: The Conquest of Abyssinia, [16th century]. Edited and translated by Paul Stenhouse. Hollywood: Tsehai Publishers, 2003), pp.166-7.

²⁷⁶ Informants: Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla and Qäsis Taye.

²⁷⁷ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Aba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

made up of horn and donated by Empress Zewditu in the year 1920 after she became Empress of Ethiopia. It is known that Zewditu was very devoted Orthodox Christian and she had a habit of visiting churches. Thus, in one of her visits in Garaw Medhanealem church, she brought these items for ascetics.²⁷⁹ Moreover, there is a platter which was made up of wood that donated by Empress Zewditu in 1918.²⁸⁰

Figure 19: Water Clasp Horn and Water Jar with its Drinking Mug



Source: Photo by Researcher in 2010 E.C.

The above figures also shows Empress Zewditu's water jar that was made up of skin and its mug made up of horn. The Empress went everywhere with this jar holding water and finally donated it for the church on 27th of March 1920.²⁸¹ In this church there are various manuscripts but the one that is astounding, unique and well-designed is known by the name of *Gebre Himamat* or apostles' work. In 1960 when Emperor Haile Silase built the church of Garaw Medhanealem, he donated many different types of *Newaye Qidusat* to the newly constructed church. Of the collections, this vellum manuscript was one. It is different because the writing is very different and beautiful like it was written by computer in addition the vellum itself seems just like a modern paper.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Informants: Mägabi Abba Fikeregiorgis Melaku.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*; Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Qésä Gäbäz Girma.

²⁸¹ Informants: Aba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla and Marigeta Mandefro.

²⁸² *Ibid*; Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriy.

4.2.1. The Cave of Garaw Medehanealem

Commonly, most of the time, caves were built inside big mountain. However, the cave which is found in Garaw Medhanealem or upper monastery is the unique one because it is built underground and when someone looks at it, it is more of a house. Currently, they built a kind of small house above the cave for protection. The cave is believed to be designed and prepared during the reign of King Yishak. As to informants, though the researcher can't find written sources that substantiate their claim, it was used for two reasons, to hide heritages from enemies/invaders that come to attack the church and for the sake of a prayer place for fathers. When an enemy came to attack the church, it would be very hard for the enemy to identify the cave from the ground. In this cave there are seven rooms and five of them are visible and the other two are not. Although, the rooms are not comfortable for sleeping, fathers use them for prayer and can stay there for so long.²⁸³

Figure. 20: The Cave in and outside View.



Source: Photo by Researcher in 2010 E.C.

Because of its age, one can consider the cave itself as a heritage. Inside the cave there are chaplet of father's used during prayer times, their clothes made up of skin and the chain used to incarcerate them during prayer. As to informant, though there is a possibility of shifting these three heritages

²⁸³ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla.

from the cave to museum, they believe that they can tell more history in their present location inside the cave than in the museum.²⁸⁴

The monastery under the study area endowed with many religious and cultural treasures which have historical, religious, economic, aesthetic, and educational and socio cultural values. The researcher observed that more or less all heritages at Mänagäsha -Amba St.Mary and *Garaw Medhanealem* monastery are relatively not found in a good condition because their personnel are somewhat unaware of managing and protecting their sacred objects.

The aged relationship between church and state in Ethiopian history (Ethiopian kingdoms and EOTC) has revealed in the studied area as Empress Zewditu, Haile Silase I and Menelik II. Moreover, it can also give us useful information about the period and even about the battle of Adowa for historians. In addition, they can easily show the history of the naming of the sites like Mänagäsha and Addis Alem. It can create awareness of the community about their religion and about the value of historical sites. As well, heritage management officers should work hard to manage the sites properly and to bring infrastructural and accommodation development. It can also become the source of income for the churches and it can also become one of the tourist destination areas for the country.²⁸⁵

The buildings of Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary and the Garaw Medhanealem, the museums, the collections, the cave of *Garaw Medhanealem*, the monthly and annual ceremonies and others can be great tourist attractions if they are managed well. Apparently, Churches were the origin of education so that the studied monasteries have a plan of providing education both secular and religious for the surrounding community.²⁸⁶

As a result, Mänagäsha-Amba St. Mary monaastery can be served as bridge between generations and transfer the wisdom and indigenous knowledge of the earliest generations in the area of architectural style, manufacturing of the vellum books and the emergence of mass song by Geez language and the content and methodology of church education. Heritages are the only evidence of

²⁸⁴ *Ibid* and Mägabi Abba Fikeregiorgis Melaku.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid* and Mägabi Abba Fikeregiorgis Melaku.

²⁸⁶ Informants: Ato Eticha Gemmechu and Ato Dejene Dibaba.

knowing and understanding the prehistoric period of the country's history for those countries that have lack of sources like Ethiopia.²⁸⁷

Mänagäsha is endowed with varied types of heritages that ranged from natural to cultural, tangible to intangible, movable to immovable heritages such as historical churches and monasteries with considerable collections. It is clear that well conserved heritages have several values that can be a means of tourism attraction and lead to the overall development of the country.²⁸⁸ Conservation and protection of heritages has a great role not only for the monasteries but also for the country in general. Initially heritages of the study area undoubtedly can show us the identity of its people, civilization, culture and custom, religious and also the architectural development of the earliest period.²⁸⁹

Mänagäsha -Amba St. Mary and *Garaw Medhanealem* monastery with their movable and immovable heritages can be the foreign and domestic tourist destination sites. Secondly, when those heritages were conserved well they can be visited by many people and become source of income which in turn contributes for the development of the tourism industry. The Church, the community and the concerned government offices should work together in protecting the heritages and in promoting and attracting visitors.²⁹⁰ The researcher also observed from the officers and the church administrators that though their aim is the same which is conserving of heritages from any kinds of problems, their methods is very different. Thus, they need to promote trust and discussions in between them so that they can work together. Even, the main target of this research is focused not on the heritages but to fill the information vacuum of the studied area by using these heritages as bridge.

Donations which were given by various high ranking officials at various levels provided in different forms to the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary were source of income. In this respect, Mämher Wolde Gäbreal who was appointed by Mänagäsha Awraja Betä-Kihinät (Synod) authority in 1963, as a mämher played a remarkable role. He wrote a series of letters which introduced the condition of the problems in the monastery to different authorities. The problem which he raised in

²⁸⁷ Informants: Bahtawi Wolde Cherqos W/Yohannes and Abba Moges H/Mariam.

²⁸⁸ Proclamation No. 209/2000.A Proclamation to Provide for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Negarit Gazeta. June27, 2000. Article 7.

²⁸⁹ Ephraim Ashagre, *the Intention and Potential of Ethiopian Orthodox Church Museums*. (Addis Ababa. June 2011)

²⁹⁰ Informants: Ato Teshome Assefa and W/ro Assegedech Bezabih.

his letter including the crop failure, declining of the monastic lives i.e. monks and nuns' income, deforestation of the forest of the monastic lands. As a result, various donations were given by different institution at various levels.²⁹¹

References could be made to the institutions in the Gondar *Betä – Kihinät* offices which provided clothes and food crops to the monastery due to the sudden crop failure in 1975 for the reason mentioned above. In addition, the Däbrä Berhan Sellase and Gishän Maryam churches also gave similar donations to the monastery in response to the request made by Mämher GäbräSelasie.²⁹²

The principal donators of the property were Ethiopian Emperors, bishops, archbishops and the governors of Western Showa region. The second important groups of donators were governor and dignitaries of other provinces and clergy of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, Empress Zewditu had a great contribution in the history of the monastery.²⁹³

Empress Zewditu was accountable for the establishment of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. The Empress had not left the monastery vacant. On one side she had allocated budget for the smoothly running of its ministry. In addition to this, the empress determined to fill the monastery's store with very important relics.²⁹⁴ The researcher felt guilty if he ignored the donation rendered by the empress to the monastery.

Empress Zewditu donated innumerable objects to the monastery. To list some of them, black and white Kabbas (robes) which were worn during inaugural and commemoration days. Informants noticed that these robes of royalties were brought from Greek, Armenia and Jerusalem while others argued that they were made by native Ethiopians who were settled in the Gondarian state.²⁹⁵ Most probably, people of the black Jewish or the Falasha who had lived in the Northern Ethiopia would be the makers of these garments.²⁹⁶

Local notable informants and a bulletin found from the monastery revealed that the empress stretched her donations of religious books numbered five hundred thirty three to the monastery. Most of these books are very rare to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. These religious books had

²⁹¹ Abba Wolde Georgis Abeje and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

²⁹² Informant: Qomos Aba Mogess Hailemariam.

²⁹³ Informant: Qomos Aba Mogess Hailemariam.

²⁹⁴ Informant: Qomos Aba Mogess Hailemariam.

²⁹⁵ Informants: Mämeher Mandefro Sisay and Ato Alemu.

²⁹⁶ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya.

contributed a lot to construct the history of the time and the region. Amazingly, these books were made of goat skins which traditionally known as brana (vellum) numbered about fifty two.²⁹⁷ Informant *Bahtawi* or *hermit Wolde Cherkos* informed the researcher that the number of these books was more than hundred but they had been stolen by different selfish people both within the monastery and by visitors.²⁹⁸

No doubt that these sacramental calligraphies were scripted by devoted Ethiopians as all of them were written in Amharic and Geeze languages with Ethiopian contexts. The researcher sensed that these books could have been the best bench mark to reconstruct the history of Ethiopia particularly in the central and western Shoa. The book that the researcher found in the monastery's museum, *Feteha Negest* (Justice Book by kings) had a substantiated role to handle different social chaos and societal conflicts in the monastic regions.²⁹⁹

Though, it was a habitual duty for the Christian rulers to donate church objects to churches and monasteries, the researcher found so worthy that Empress Zewditu was the most patronage one in the history of Ethiopian Christian church. The empress donated her own dresses, trousers, seats, shoes, tables and other objects to the monastery.³⁰⁰

Informants gave their suggestion that the empress did all these donations to the monastery so as to enrich the monastery with adequate objects and to show her generosity to her fellows and kinsmen. However, other peoples argued that the empress had done these impressive donations to win the heart of the Orthodox Christian believers. What so ever had been the case, the researcher summoned up that the monastery has had big opportunity to raise the income of the monastery in particular and the country level in general.³⁰¹ The monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary has been endowed with various gold, bronze and silver objects. Importantly, vessels made of pure gold with different size and kind have abundantly found in the monastery. Some of these ornaments, necklaces, bracelets token that they were rendered by the empress.³⁰²

²⁹⁷ Informants: Bahtawi/Abba Wolde Cherkos WoldeYohannes.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ Informants: Deacon Daneal Kibret and Abba Mogess.

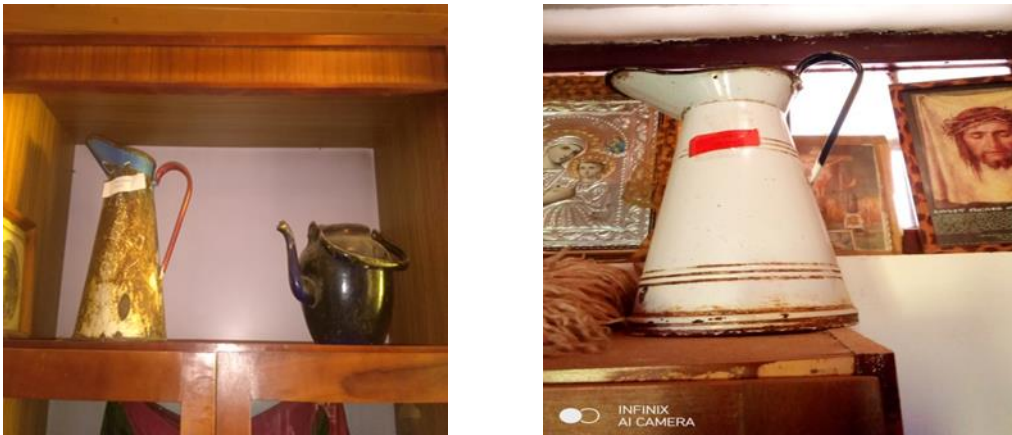
³⁰⁰ Informants: Mämher Yirgalem Moges and Ato Tesfamichael Bante Yideru.

³⁰¹ Informants: Mämher Yirgalem Moges and Ato Tesfamichael Bante Yideru.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

The empress made tremendous efforts to enrich the monastery with her donation. The researcher founded pitchers in the museum of the monastery. It seemed apparent that these jugs were used to hold Ethiopian local beer, *tella*.³⁰³ A piece of information from the local informants had revealed that these pitches served for holding *tejj* or honey–made for drinking at especial occasions such as commemoration and inaugural ceremonies. These objects revealed that they were made in Armenia and Greece.³⁰⁴

Fig.21. Jugs donated by empress Zewditu in 1912.



Source: photo by the researcher, 2013, E.C.

The researcher made deep and systematic investigation with informants and some archives about the originality of those objects. It was proved that the crosses with various sizes, items and quality were not doubtful. The ledger from the store showed golden crosses, semi-gold crosses and bronze and wooden hand crosses were donated by the empress to the monastery. The monastery’s ledger showed that these precious crosses were brought from Greek, Israel and Alexandria. These gold crosses have paramount functions to the monastery. They hold by Bishops, Archbishops, Patriarchs and respected clergies at annual feasts and Zewdtu’s Memorial Day.³⁰⁵

The other wonderful donation of various types of guns (weapons) that had been served during the battle of Adowa found in the museum of the monastery. These guns were read as SKS made in Russia, Minishir, Muzer, Wujjigira, and Guande which had been imported from different foreign

³⁰³ Informants: Qasis Taye Mekuriya and Abba Moges H/Mariam and Ayelech Sahelua.

³⁰⁴ Informants: Qasis Taye and Mamher Yirgalem and Marigeta Mandefro.

³⁰⁵ Informants: Qomos Abba Mogess, head of the upper and lower monastery

countries.³⁰⁶ According to my focal informant Qasis Taye Mekuria, these firearms were brought to the monastery as donation had multi purposes. As to informants, empress Zewditu firstly intended to enrich the museum, secondly, she occupied to transfer object from crowded capital to opened space, the third reason was to show her people that she was very genuine and considered herself as God chosen ruler to safeguard monasteries and churches.³⁰⁷

Fig.22. Different types of guns, spears and horsecloth donated by the empress.



Source: Photo by the researcher.

Not only guns found in the monastery but also cartridge belt made of skin of goats and other objects used by Adowa veterans and patriotic resistant fathers. Various types of bullets of personal guns, pistols have been preserved in the museum of the monastery.³⁰⁸ The leading informant of this research work indicated that empress Zewditu brought these firearms to the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary, because she had been confident enough that the place was so safe to preserve them than the capital city.³⁰⁹ What further made the monastery more potential was the existence of paper money and coins of silver and gold which were the work of 18th and 19th c.

³⁰⁶Informants: Qomos Abba Moges; the Church Document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.p.55.

³⁰⁷ *ibid.*

³⁰⁸ *ibid.*

³⁰⁹ *ibid.*

Maria Theresa Theiler, Menelek's paper money of ten birr note ,twenty five , fifty cents have been founded in the monastery.³¹⁰

Informants witnessed the fact that the monastery had ivory, rhinoceros horn, ostrich fizzer, ostrich eggs and other precious objects which were not vulnerable to visitors and other guests fearing of looting. Tremendously, there had been various types and size of bells which seemed made of gold, bronze, silver and other objects which have no marks to identify they made of what.³¹¹

The communities of the monastery whom the researcher came across during his interview had pronounced the empress Zewditu as Enatachin or our mother. They replied for the question why they preferred to call as their mother. Most of them replied almost a uniform answer that she gave everything to the monastery.³¹² In fact, there were certain sects who argued that she offered these objects to print her name than to enrich the monastery. Whatever the case might be, the researcher had investigated that the monastery might not have the present shape without the generous donation of the empress.³¹³

As the document extracted from the monastery's museum stated, the ex-husband of empress Zewditu, Ras Gugsa Wale had donated the monastery with gifts. The bulletin showed that Gugsa presented the monastery with gold mixed robes which was clearly observable in the museum of the monastery.³¹⁴ Plus to the bulletin, aged notable local people clarified that Gugsa inspired his Queen wife to devote to collect those assets from different parts of the world or within the country to place them in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. He might have been done this perceiving that he would become Christian patronage on behalf of the empress and would be king of Ethiopia.³¹⁵

As the history of Ethiopia revealed, church and state were inseparably chained since the introduction of Christianity to Ethiopia in the fourth century AD.³¹⁶ Due to this old and strong bondage, rulers had attached themselves to the church, basically to conquer the heart of the massive population. Hence, Emperor Haileselesie I had involved in the donation of different object to the

³¹⁰ The ledger found in the museum of the Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba Maryam.

³¹¹ Informants: Qäsis Taye and Bahtawi Wolde Cherqos.

³¹² Informants: Abba Wolde Mariyam Feleke.

³¹³ Informants: Ato Lamma Beyyecha and Ato Tsegaye Tola.

³¹⁴ Informants: Qomos Aba Moges; The Church Document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.p.55.

³¹⁵ Informants: Abba Wolde Mariyam Feleke and Abba Wolde Cherqos.

³¹⁶ Tadesse Tamrat. Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972),p.39.

monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary. The researcher found piece of page from the archive in the museum. The emperor donated certain books such as *Haymanote Abaw* (books of religious fathers), *Kibre Negest* (Glory of Kings), Chronicles, books of Christ Temptation (*Gibirä Himamat*) and other objects.³¹⁷

Echege Gabre Gorgis or *Abuna Baselewoes* was the first *Mämeher* or head of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. His christen name *Gäbrä Giorgis* was reshuffled to Echege or Abun by Emperor Haleselasie I in 1959.³¹⁸ As a *mameher*, *Gabra Giorgis* served at Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery as head of the monastery chosen by the empress. *Echige* or Abune Baseliwos become the first Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church since 1959.³¹⁹

Mämeher Gäbrä Giorgis, the later Abune Baselewoes was devotedly worked to organize the holistic monastery's activities tutored by the empress. As the empress did, the *Mämeher* had also offered different objects or relics to the monastery. Such as robes, the praise books (14) donated in 1933, liturgical books of various types, crosses, vessels, bells and drums.³²⁰ An Egyptian Abune or Patriarch Cornelius in 1922 donated the monastery with picture of our savior Jesus Christ with his mother Virgin Mary.³²¹

It is apparent that books, manuscripts, letters and other written documents are the most precious objects of a country's cultural heritage. Hence, they are important for the reconstruction of history. A large number of manuscripts are found in the Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. The majority of these manuscripts are on parchment. It has already been discussed in chapter one that various kings joined the area for their own purposes. They are believed to have given some gifts to the former Lideta Maryam Church. Most of their gifts were burnt during Imam Ahmad's invasion.³²²

The monastery has also significant collection of different types of *Niwayä Qidusat* (Church objects) to cite some; processional cross, incense box (burners), chasubles, hand crosses, candles, sticks,

³¹⁷Informants: Qomos Aba Moges; The Church Document which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C.pp.51-55.

³¹⁸*Ibid.* p.27.

³¹⁹*Ibid.*

³²⁰*Ibid*, pp.54-55.

³²¹*Ibid*, p.55.

³²²The Church Document Which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary. 2008-2009 E.C p.17.

mägonašafiyas (special vestment used for covering the ark of covenant). *Debab* (a big umbrella), gold embroidered umbrellas, processional wood cross, chalices, prayer sticks, drums, sistrums, bells, kabas,(Mantel), goblets, sena(paten), Berets(hand washing basin) and etc.³²³

Furthermore, the monastery possesses a substantial number of priceless historical relics, which are secular in nature. These including crowns, crown vestments, spears, shields, Lambs, shoes, belts, headgear. Some of the above listed objects are made of such precious metals as diamond, gold and silver, other made of bronze nickel, tin and iron.³²⁴

4.3. The Relationship of Communal (Yä-Andenet) Monastery with the community Reconciliation

As it is obvious, religion could exert crucial influence in the integration of adherent and is a central force for social enhancement of the socio-economic and political structure of a society. Clergymen have an authoritative power mediation, arbitration, reconciliation and teaching. Informants reported that this has decisive implication for inter-ethnic peaceful coexistence in their neighbourhood that might have theoretical significance for building the canal for social integration.³²⁵

It is unquestionable that religious institutions are established for spiritual matters. However, the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary has been playing beyond the spiritual dimension. The monastery served as an intermediary agent between various societal conflicts. Both local notable people and archives confirmed that communities of the region around Mänagäsha Mountain were brought their conflicts to the monastic court that held inside the compound of the monastery once a week on Thursday. The monastic court was more accessible and achievable to the people; even people were more satisfied in the justice delivered.³²⁶

Bercovitch supported the argument that religious institutions were more trustworthy in their mediations than other justice organizations.³²⁷ Informants had also witnessed that conflicting issues which could not be managed by regular courts had been resolved by the monastic mediating

³²³ Informants: Bahtawi Gäbräyäsus and Mägabi Kinfe

³²⁴ The Church Document Which is printed in Amba Maryam 100 Years Anniversary. 2008-2009 E.Cpp.51-56

³²⁵ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuria and Märigeta Mandefro Sisay.

³²⁶ Jacob Bercovitch; Religion and Mediation: The Role of Faith –Based actors. International Conflict Resolution (Washington, D.C.USA, 2007) p.185.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, p.172.

involvement. Particularly, land related issues, marital cases and matricide cases were managed and solved.³²⁸

Appleby argued that religious institutions like monasteries, churches and their leaders were motivated in holding the leadership in peace building or faith based diplomacy. In this regards, Mänagäsha Amba St. Monastery's monks, nuns and priests had showed a paramount role in reconciliation and conflict resolution. Mostly monks and nuns worked to sustain tolerance and non-violent means of conflict resolution in and around the monastery's community.³²⁹

Scholars emphasized more on that religious cults contributed a lot in curbing several bloody cases into peace full atmosphere. Scholars like Daneal Mekonen stated that even though, those religious institutions did not have published law or a well-organized structure in alleviating the conflict and to enact its decision, they were very successful. They were relied on consent of the disputants and customs, norms, spiritual beliefs of the local people for the implementation of its decisions.³³⁰

Both Scholars and informants had a common consensus on how these religious institutions were more trustworthy. These religious institutions were used oaths, blessings through words of Gospel and cross of Christ, sometimes cursing and many other spiritual methods to enforce the decisions made between the conflicting parties.³³¹

As to informants, *Mämeher Tekle's* court was the most famous and known court in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery. As described above, the court had a mandatories over societal cases which arisen over resources, marital issues and murdering.³³² During the reign of Emperor Haileselesie, there was *Chiqa Shum* or *Atibya Dagna* (local judge or local courts) in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery. The *Chiqa Shum* or the *Atibya Dagna* who served for long period was *Mämhere Tekle*. He was brought up in the monastery from the monastic community and attended church education. People who knew about him explicitly recounted his justice and accuracy.

³²⁸ *Ibid*, p.176. Informants: Abba Wolde Chergos Wolde Yohanes and Qäsis Taye Mekuria..

³²⁹ Appleby, Scott R. *The Ambivalence of the sacred* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), pp.211-212.

³³⁰ Daneal Mekonnen, *Major Features of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism in Ethiopia*: International Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Science (Debre Markos University, 2016), p.11.

³³¹ Aymro Wondmagegnehu and Joachim Motovu. *The Ethiopian Orthodox Church*, Addis Ababa; Berhanena Selam Printing press, 19770), p.127.

³³² Takle Yesus Yezemen Tarik matarakamiya"" n.d, National Library, No.522.pp.80-82.

Qäsis Taye and some archives stated that there was a prison in the monastery's compound. Those guilty were imprisoned from seven to forty days until evidences would gathered and the guilty could confessed. The accused had to cover his ration in the prison and should pay fees for the guards who keep the prison. The prisoner had the right to inform the court to tell the truth at any time and get the justice. If he was found guilty, he had to punish forty times with lash made of strap (*yätefer Alänga*). If the suspected party is found pure, the court would release him giving him certified paper.³³³

Informants credited the justice rendered at the monastic court had enabled the community to live harmoniously and securely. The Justice taken by the monastic court seemed fair and corrective in the time framework. Those issues above the scope of the monastic court were brought to Addis Ababa for further investigation and got resolution by professional judges. However, since such professional justices were costly in terms of time and cost, people were preferred to join the monastic court for their issues. The monastery used even today as an intermediary between different conflicting issues arisen among the community.³³⁴

Zekir(Memorizing the dead) and Sanbete (Sunday Celebrating Association)

The community around the town and monastic area, on every Sunday, monthly and annual feast of saint Mary, there is *Zekir and Sanbete*.The aim of *Zekir and Sanbete* in Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery is to feed the needy or beggars and to deal about some secular issues among the community.One of the most common religious event in the community is senbete. When any *sanbete* is established (arranged) its initial aim is to feed the clergy and the needy every Sunday inside the monastery's compound. The food and drink is brought by the laity of the church who had voluntarily founded any senbete maheber.³³⁵

The Senbete- Maheber has indirectly the power of creating brotherhood among the community and this enabled them to create brotherhood among the community and the local governor. This inturn strengthened the soio-economic relationship in their local area.This idea is supported by Pankhurst and Endryas Eshete.While helping others, members of the senbete developed asense of brotherhood

³³³ *Ibid.*

³³⁴ Informants: Ato Lamma Beyyecha and Dejene Dibaba.

³³⁵ Donald Levine, *Traditional and Innovation in Ethiopia culture*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), p.260.

among themselves. They put together their effort to face common problems. Scholars described senbete and its functions as:

*Senbete is one form of religious club whose members take it in turn to bring food and drink to their church every Sunday. When the ceremony in which the priest take part is over, the organizers invite the poor people to eat as a sign of brotherhood. Later, the members and the priests eat and drink what is left, taking the opportunity to discuss mutual problems.*³³⁶

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary as reservoir of Culture and Civilization

In most cases, monasteries were center of civilization because education and culture were concentrated in the churches and monasteries.³³⁷ Even though monasteries are places of asceticism, their services to the society and the country is not only limited to praying. They serve as source of education, church music, study of holy books and obedience. They were also place of learning of painting, museum, and libraries and therefore, it is difficult to estimate the value of services rendered by monasteries to the community of Western Shoa region.³³⁸ As to the document of Orthodox christianity, spiritual education has a paramount role in the striving the social, political and cultural civilization of Ethiopian community. Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery is one of such indebted agency for the socio-cultural transformation of Western Shoa.³³⁹

Menagesha Amba St. Mary as Center of Healing

Orthodox Christians believed that monasteries and churches are places where they receive healings from their God through different ways since the earliest period. The healing process is manifested through praying, confensing, baptizing, drinking the holy water and pouring the holy oil upon the patients by the ordained monk or priest. As to scholar Hafez's testimony, any form of prayer is useful, and a prayer which evokes medication and relaxation response is most probably effective. In the monastic area, there is a quite room or place of worship is prepared which may suitable for the

³³⁶ Richard Pankhurst and Endryas Eshete, *Self help in Ethiopia*, Ethiopian Observer, II, 11, 1958), p.364.

³³⁷ Ewald Hein, *Ethiopia Christian Africa Art, Churches and Culture* (Ratingen: Melina-Verlag, 1999), p.46.

³³⁸ Berhan Gäbrä Michael, *The Church of Ethiopia past and present*, (Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Enterprises, 1997), p.36.

³³⁹ ንብረአድ ኤሊያስ አብርሃ: በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተክርስቲያን መንበረ ፓትሪያርክ ጽ/ቤት የሰንበት ትምህርት ቤቶች ማቀራጃ መምሪያ (የገዳማት አምድ) በኢትዮጵያ ስልጣኔ የመንፈሳዊ ትምህርት ቤቶች ሚና አዲስ አበባ 2006) ፣ገጽ 23.

healing process. As it is known, most of the Ethiopian monasteries are situated in desolated places.³⁴⁰ In our respective tradition, there is a saying that 'the man makes the place holy and the place makes the man holy.'³⁴¹

Menagesha Amba St. Mary and Environmental protection

The Monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary is one of the places where prestigious trees are found. As scholars suggested, the area under the jurisdiction of the monastery has the oldest indigenous trees of Africa. The mountainous part of the monastery has very tall trees estimated to be 120 to 230 meters. These trees are various species having several medication importances. Because of its trees, the study area has very conducive climate that attracts investors and inhabitants from different parts of the country. Therefore, the Monastery is credited a great deal for its conservation of the environment including soil erosion and forest devastation. The hill of Mänagäsha is also home of various wild life including birds, apes, monkeys, leopards, pigs, aardvark, Menelik antelope and hyenas.³⁴²

4.4. Challenges of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery

Most importantly, the EOTC is the main reservoir of diverse religious heritages as Arks, paintings, musical instruments, crosses, bells, manuscripts and others.³⁴³ The monastery has movable heritages which are not attached to their area of origin, they can move easily from one place to the other. They include parchment, manuscripts, archaeological site and stone paintings.³⁴⁴ Relating to this, there are factors that can make those collections in a critical conditions due to lack of attention and poor handling system relating to the inadequacy of knowledge of the clergies, theft, lawbreakers, unprofessional and unwise conservation. There are diverse heritage management challenges on

³⁴⁰Hafez Siddiqui, *Spiritual Healing*, (New Delhi: Good Will Publishing house, Published by Rajnesh Chowdhry, N.D.:1999), p.94.

³⁴¹ Kefyalew, p.7.

³⁴² Russ. G. *Estimate of Ethiopian Forests Service* (Addis Ababa, 1947, 1974), pp.17, 108.

³⁴³Bantalem Tadese, *A Guide to the Intangible Treasures of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church*. (Addis Ababa University press. Addis Ababa. 2010). P.122; Informants: Ato Demelash Sema.

³⁴⁴Zelalem G. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality "Terasure of Hayeq Estifanos Communal Monasetery: Potential and challenge for Tourism Development"*. 2017.

different heritage collections in the study area.³⁴⁵ Thus, the main challenges of heritage management practices of the study areas are stated below.

On top of all, lack of professionalism is considered as a serious challenge in the area of the heritage management in the study area. The monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary and Garaw (upper) Medhanealem wanted chiefly financial support either from culture and tourism office or the highest management of the EOTC. More sadden, there is lack of fund and lack of focus within the responsible bodies, and thus they didn't perform a meaningful task on the management of heritages.³⁴⁶ Due to the financial or budget constraints, the payments of services offered to priests, Märigetäs, store keeper, Deacons and guards is too little.³⁴⁷ Worsening the situation, these monasteries are not able to receive the necessary assistance either from the concerned government body or the highest management of the EOTC.

Let leave alone financial support from the culture and tourism office, but during the renovation of the hall of Amba St.Mary and upper monastery, the support of culture and tourism office expertise is almost worthless.³⁴⁸ According to the informants, after the construction of Amba St.Mary museum, even if the monastic administrators had a desire to get support from culture and tourism office for the sake of conserving heritage collections properly, the responsible bodies didn't give the necessary backing. They came only once and told them that the monastery has a better conservation standard as compared to that of other churches in the surrounding areas.³⁴⁹

The researcher was dictated by the monks, clergies and the store keeper that a number of heritages are currently deteriorated by pests, since the museum show room is small and narrow. In spite of their request for assistance, their demand for support from the responsible body has not been successful. The researcher identified that the main problem is not financial issue but lack of professionalism.³⁵⁰ Above any monastery in the region, heritages found in the museum of Amba

³⁴⁵Blessing Nonye Onyima, "Nigerian Cultural Heritage: Preservation, Challenges and Prospects", A New Journal of African Studies, Vol 12, 2016. pp 287-288; Yiredaw, "Heritage Potentials, Management Challenges and Prospect in Debrtabor and its Surrounding", unpublished MA thesis.

³⁴⁶Informants: Ato Lemma Beyecha and Gäbäs Girma Hailu.

³⁴⁷Ertiban Demewoz, "Assessment on Potentials and Challenges of Heritage Tourism Development: the case of Kidist Bethelhem Maryam church", MA Thesis in Tourism and Heritage Management, (Gondar University Press, Ethiopia. 2012), p.71.

³⁴⁸ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Mägabi Aba Fikeregiorgis Melaku.

³⁴⁹ Informants: Mämher Mandefro Sisay and Komos Aba Moge.

³⁵⁰Informants: Ato Lamma Beyecha and Bahtawi Wolda Cherqos Wolda Yohannes.

St.Mary are the most endemic ones but they are in danger of extinction. If they were properly conserved and advertised, they could serve as bridge to reconstruct the history of the monastery and the region under discussion.

Fig.23: Empress Zewditu's Tegbar bet (Cooking/kitchen) of the Monastery which is currently forgotten and being served as animals' straw store.



Source: photo by researcher, 2013 E.C.

Moreover, culture and tourism office usually hired persons without the right profession and experiences. The former head of the culture and tourism officer was skilled person in the field of agriculture and was employed without his profession.³⁵¹ There are inadequate numbers of skilled professionals in the area of heritage and tourism offices but expertise are highly important for the preservation and protection of our irreplaceable resources. Thus, the researcher observed that there is lack of professionalism in the study area. Conservation of heritage collections is mainly possible through proper handling system by professionals. The researcher identified that the monastery has exceptionality upon modern professionals for an invincible reason. Most probably, they feared that recruiting trained professionals could expose the heritages to danger.

It is apparent that heritage management systems like documentation, conservation and promotion should be professionalized. However, inside the monastery's museum, the collections were managed by non-heritage professionals and also the guards were uneducated and not well

³⁵¹ Informants: Ato Lamma Beyyecha and Ato Tsegaye Tola.

mannered. As the researcher observed, hermits and monks are preferable for museum due to their honesty. The monastic administration makes susceptible those professional for stealing. Despite all the problems, the collections are in a relatively good position through their traditional method. In Amba St. Mary Monastery, the store keeper (*Abba Wolde Chergos*) was uneducated hermit and he conserves heritage collections without experience; the problem intensified by the narrow space of the show room. This man can speak Amharic, Afan Oromo very little where Amharic is his mother tongue, Afan Oromo is an adaptive and Geez is a language of the church.³⁵²

Nevertheless, in the upper monastery, the store keeper seemed well-informed and well experienced. He can also speak Amharic, Afan Oromo and Geez language very well and English language fairly.³⁵³ The wise administrator of the monastery of Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary and Garaw Medhanealem is an educated man but he doesn't give attention for those heritage collections because of lack of concern.³⁵⁴

This research pointed out those individuals who are found in the monastery's museums faced lack of knowledge about preserving and conserving heritage collections; due to the absence of instaff training regarding the conservation and preservation of heritages from the concerned bodies. What worsened the situation in the museum is that the assigned store keeper has also served as a guide. Such historic heritages are merely kept without benefiting the monastery as its treasures are expected to do so. If it is wisely and scientifically managed, the heritages are the source of income for the monastery. Poor handling system is the major challenges of heritage management practices in the study area.

There are also improper conserved heritages like; figure 24 which shows the long aged Empress Zewditu's tagbarbet or kitchen made corral of animals and straw store.³⁵⁵ Moreover; some casserole and utilities are found in the old kitchen dispersed over the floor. The lengthy box of Empress Zewditu which was made up of Juniper and that had been served for a depository of different raiment's of the Empress was also improperly handled. The mortar and pestle that had been donated

³⁵² Informants: Bahtawi Wolda Chergos Wolda Yohannes and Qasis Taye Mekuriya.

³⁵³ Informants: Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla and Mämher Mandefro Sisay.

³⁵⁴ Informants: Mägabi Abba Fekregiorigis Melaku and Mämher Mandefro Sisay.

³⁵⁵ Informants: Komos Abba Moges and Mägabi Abba Fikeregiorgis Melaku.

by her in the same year; are still served for every festivity of the monastery to make the cultural drink of Tella and others services found extremely in danger.³⁵⁶

Innocently, the monastery's administrators usually focus merely on heritages not to be lost/robbed while the culture and tourism office focus mainly on heritage conservation. The researcher observed that there are priority differences between the church administrator and culture and tourism officers in the area of heritage management which partly created lack of strong coordination. Thus, lack of professionalism can make the heritage management practices a serious task.

Fig. 24: Former Dabe Knead in this Time. Fig. 26: The Current Dabe Knead



Source: Photo by Researcher in 2010 E.C.

During the reign of Empress Zewditu in line with the establishment of the monastery, she offered this (Figure 25) stub box which was made up of aluminum as a Dabe knead stuff for the clergies and ascetic of the monastery.³⁵⁷ But recently they got a new knead which is made up of ceramic (figure 26) for the reason that the monastic administrators and the ministers have lack of awareness about the meaning, conservation and protection methods of heritage collections. Thus, they made the earlier stub box as animal's consumption plate because they have no idea about heritages. But if they are conserving it well, it can be the source of income for the monastery as well as for the country at a large.

³⁵⁶ Informants: Magabi Abba Fikre Giorgs Melaku.

³⁵⁷ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Mägabi Abba Fikeregiorgis Melaku

According to the store keeper of Garaw Medhanealem monastery, the heritages inside the museum are placed in a shelf within mirror; this mirror doesn't moderate warm and cold temperature but it compresses them and the variation of temperature may damage those heritages. The researcher also observed that they have lack of awareness on the scientific method of preservation on the part of clergies and church personnel.³⁵⁸

Obviously, the clergies of the monastery of Amba St.Mary and Garaw Medhanealem had limited knowledge of the modern system of heritage management. It is because of lack of awareness as the monastic administrators and the monastic communities threatened heritages improperly and their management system was backward. As a result of these, the researcher observed that almost all collections are on critical conditions. Thus, the researcher believes that, if conditions continued like this, both moveable and non moveable treasures will be at grave danger.³⁵⁹

More sadden, as to informants, when heritages become fade, broken, cracked, deteriorated and faced other problems, they gathered and reserved them somewhere they would become rotten and finally will be thrown to the garbage. Totally, this monastery has a shortage of knowledge on the practice of heritage management. Culture and tourism office should also give trainings on heritage collection and management areas.³⁶⁰ According to informant whenever a church was constructed by an Emperor or Empress, the royal families had been given gifts/donations as a means of respectation, loyalty and good relationship for the kingdoms. Unlikely, almost in all heritage collections the specific date and year is not written, it is because of lack of awareness on the importance of heritages by the stakeholders to the next generation.³⁶¹

What worsened the situation more critical is the inaccessibility of supplies in the management of heritages in the study area. The main features of inaccessible supplies of the study area are infrastructure, accommodation, institutional elements, other facilities and services. To see some; initially, lack of infrastructure, lack of promotion and conservation restricted the heritage sites from visitors. From the city of Mänagäsha to the church of Amba St.Mary relatively there is accessible transportation of Bajajs through high price (i.e. the distance from the town towards the monastery is

³⁵⁸ Informants: Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla.

³⁵⁹ Informants: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Qäsis Yirgalem.

³⁶⁰ Informants: Abba Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla.

³⁶¹ Informants: Qasis Taye Mekuriya; Qäsis Yirgalem Moges and Mämher Mandefro.

about 3 kmrs but every individual should pay at least a minimum of 50 birr). Nevertheless, to return back it is hard to get the bajajs.³⁶²

It is unexpected to get vehicle or any other means of transportation on the way to Garaw Medhanealem monastery. Thus, everyone is supposed to go on foot because the path is difficult for transportation as it is hilly and rough. Since the road to the monastery is so mountainous and the villages are scattered, every person (visitor) will be expose to looting. Travelling to the upper monastery takes 2-3 hours on foot, besides; recently, vandals used the bush on the mountain as an advantage and robbed visitors including the researcher himself during field work. The monastery demanded additional security from the Woreda police office only in times of monthly or yearly ceremonies. The lack of strong safety had dissatisfied tourists and the visitors especially in Garaw Medhanealem monastery.

In principle, every historical destination should have adequate accommodation service as hotels, cafe, restaurants and others. Nevertheless, the study area has no standardized accommodation facilities. While the visitors required the above services in Garaw Medhanealem monastery, they have to travel about 5 km, to the town of Mānagāsha Kolobo.

The situation is more worsened in both in lower and upper monasteries, with acute lack of pure water services, electric power, internet connection, bank services and roads. Both monasteries are found in chronic problem of drinking water. The researcher observed the inhabitants of the monastery wasting their time 3-4 hours to get 20 liters of water. Sometimes conflict arises between the dwellers of the monastery over the line of water turn. Thus, the researcher believes that Garaw Medhanealem monastery is in a critical condition from facilities perspective and it is hard for the administrators to solve the challenges by themselves. So, government organizations and other responsible bodies should work with them.³⁶³

As far as the monastic heritages concerned, problems related to collection, proper arrangement and display of heritages are also visible challenges in the management process. There are collections in the area that can be easily damaged by clear wing or pests (clear wings are damagers that damages

³⁶² Kolobo Town Municipality Office Archive (KTMOA).File number 07, 2008 E.C.

³⁶³ Informants: Ato Eticha Gemmechu and Ato Tsegaye Tola.

the collections in a gradual basis and finally turned them in to pieces).³⁶⁴ In the selected churches major problems were depending on raiment which deteriorated by pests. The researcher observed in the monastic museum that there is lack of appropriate arrangement of collections in the display area and the collections are not well captioned. It is because in Garaw Medhanealem monastery, there is no description at all and in Amba Maryam, there is a description but it is only either the year or the name of the item. As a result, there is lack of information which is tagged on the collections of the museum display and lack of references which is written in Amharic or English language.

Technically, there is a problem on inventory and documentation process inside the museums. The treasures documentation was undertaken depending on the character of the heritages to get an official protection. Unfortunately, the study area museums display has inadequate space to show their collections. Thus, many of the heritages are stored in the museum show room. As the store is narrow, it created damage on heritages as lack of sufficient air and comfortable sit. A lot of collections have been also displayed under the shelf. Furthermore, in Amba St. Mary museum the sun set and the electric light can also cause damage on collections by making them fade their colors.

In case of conserving and protecting heritages there is a shortage of contemporary method of cleaning detergent to clean the museum and the collections.³⁶⁵ However, there are detergents which can prevent insects from breeding in the museum but around the study area there are no such substances/ utilities. Furthermore, insects and rats attacked some manuscripts and raiment's on Garaw Medhanealem and Amba Maryam Eqa Bets; they are the biggest problems on the monastery and their museums.³⁶⁶

According to *Abba Woldä Cherqos*, every collections of the monastery can be considered as heritage; however, some of the materials are still used in the monastic services. All responsible bodies should do something about it to the extent of replacing these materials with modern equipment so that one can place the earlier ones in museums.³⁶⁷ This new museum has attractive looking but the collections are placed in a crowded way and in some instances exposed for sunlight. In case of this, the researcher faced difficulty during capturing photograph. Even the ceiling is very

³⁶⁴ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Mämher Mandefro Sisay.

³⁶⁵ Ertiban Demewoz, "Assessment on Potentials and Challenges of Heritage Tourism Development: the case of Kidist Bethelhem Maryam church". MA Thesis in Tourism and Heritage Management, (Gondar University, 2012).

³⁶⁶ Informants: Bahtawi Wolda Cherqos Wolda Yohannes and Kesis Taye Mekuriya.

³⁶⁷ Informants: Aba Abrham Mekonen and Qaiss Taye.

close to the ground. However, the museum has six windows and two doors to obtain airing for the protection of collections. Moreover, the windows are covered by mirror and lampshade by cast iron in 2010 by *Abba Gäbrä Silase* but it is not the safest way because this can protect heritages only from robbery not from sunlight.³⁶⁸

Before 2016, the heritages were placed inside *Eqa Bet*.³⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the collections disposition was not good because some were damaged by natural disasters such as biological features and mainly by pests and the carelessness of administrators. The *Eqa Bet* was small in size; as a result, the collections were placed one over the other in a crowded room which lead to heritages to be damaged by pests. Moreover, the raiment of royal families and clergies were deteriorated by pests because the display area is narrow. Furthermore; the dress of Empress Zewditu which is currently damaged because of improper conservation and long age is a good example.³⁷⁰

In this regard, the researcher suggests that extra tables, boxes and shelves are needed to place the collections because the improper placement of heritages can affect the collections negatively. Currently, all heritage collections which are found in Amba St. Mary monastery are placed in critical conditions. Thus, the responsible bodies need to organize the collections and place them in one area and make them accessible for visitors.

The other challenge is related to lack of promotion of heritages in the study area. All heritages which are found inside the selected churches are the property of the society and protecting the collections are also their responsibility. If the heritages are conserved properly they have a great role for the society such as they can be a mark of identity, they can tell history and they can be also being source of income.

Even in this time, the heritages of the monastery are not well-known by the surrounding community because of lack of promotion through social Medias and websites. However, various tourists that are going to visit the selected church heritages are chiefly related to pilgrimage and mourning

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Mämher Mandefro Sisay.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid*: Abba Abraham Mekonen and Ato Lemma Beyyecha.

ceremony. It shows that there is no one who has come to the church for the mere reason of visiting heritages. This is a problem of promotion from the responsible bodies.³⁷¹

Regarding the study of *Garaw Medhanealem* monastery, the researcher faced lack of information because there are no written documents and sources about the heritages. As to the informant, administrators and servers of the monastery have a fear of telling for government bodies for inventory and that they have heritages because of fear of robbery. It is for this reason that; if the heritages are inventoried, they become well known, if they become well known, they may be stolen. Thus they simply prefer not to tell for anybody.³⁷² The other problem of promotion is related to lack of accesses to different promotion medias such as; Brochures, Magazines, newspapers, Internet and mobile. And all these are the problem of promotion from residents, believers, church administrators and officers.

Theft/robbery can also be mentioned as a challenge in the management process of heritages in the study area. Before the coming of the new administrator of the church (Amba St.Mary, *Garaw Medhanealem* and their monastery) *Qomos Abba Moges Haile Maryam*, priests usually leave the vellum manuscript inside the church after their prayers. However, currently he ordered them to take the vellum manuscripts after the prayers to Eqa Bet to discourage robbery. In Amba St.Mary monastery, Senksar, curtain and carpet were robbed during the time of Abba Gäbrä Silase later Abuna Dioskoros in 1984 and in 2008 the church also faced losing of prayer stick which was made up of silver.³⁷³

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

³⁷² Informants: Aba Abrham Mekonen; Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Mämher Mandefro Sisay.

³⁷³ Informants: Qäsis Taye Mekuriya and Mämher Mandefro Sisay

Conclusion

The emergence of Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery in Western Shoa region in Wolmera district has a paramount role in the development of Orthodox Christianity in the region of Western Shoa. The Monastery has been served as spring board for the expansion and escalation of Christian faith to the people of Western Shoa. Due to this fact, Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary coined in minds of the Christian population of the region. It is well known even beyond western Shoa in its effort of monastic history.

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary Monastery had contributed for the development of Modern education in the region. It established church education earlier than modern schools in the region and taught letters and reading skills to produced bureaucrats. This event later inspired local governments to open modern schools in the region.

The monastery was regarded as a reservoir of knowledge in the fields of justice system. The monastery had established monastic court where various social cases were presented and solved by the local judge who was well known by the emperor and empress. Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary was remarkably known by its spiritual leadership in fighting against fascist Italy though it was slightly affected by the fascist attacks.

The monastery of Amba St. Mary had lost its *riste-Gult* by the Darge regime by which the monastery encountered financial problem by which it faced economic constraints. The monastery generates incomes from various spiritual services, bakery, shop and crafts and donations of faithful Christians. The monastery have been administering by its own clergy in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox dogmatic principles. The office of the Qomos has the highest place in the administrative hierarchy of the monastery.

Mänagäsha Amba St. Mary monastery has several historical manuscripts, adequate primary sources, tangible heritages, moveable and immovable treasures. These heritages can serve as bridge to reconstruct the history of the region and Ethiopia and they can also be sources of income by attracting tourists.

Unfortunately, due to lack of coordination between the Culture and tourism offices and the Church administrators, heritages at the monastery are found in a dangerous position. However, the church men tried to conserve the heritages from any kinds of deterioration but they have low skilled

professional management practice. Adding together, Culture and tourism offices are not playing their part on the management process. After the collections have been exposed for robbery (at Amba Mary in 1984), the Clergies and church servers on the conservation strategy of the church is mainly focused on protection of heritages only from theft /robbery.

As a result, they focused on hiding the collections which in turn lead to the deterioration of heritages by rats and pests. Collections, especially at the monastery of Mänagäsha Garaw Medhanealem and Amba St.Mary are not in a good condition because of the improper management system. As to these, in Mänagäsha Amba St.Mary Monastery, there is no modern management system at all.

The researcher finds out the challenges of the heritages and tries to recommend going to be a measure in order to preserve these heritages in a better way and it needs extensive additional Study.

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List of Informants

No	Name of Informants	Sex	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Remarks
1	Abraham Mekonen (Aba)	M	75	17/07/2012 E.C 21/07/2012 E.C	Kolobo	He is the vise administer of Garaw Medhanealem church and has 12 years' experience.
2	Alamu Gammada (Ato)	M	78	28/6/2013	Kolobo	Important for his detailed knowledge about the surrounding areas.
3	Alamu H/Maram (Ato)	M	60	3/9/2013	Cheshire Services	Important for his knowledge about the origin and development of the town of Kolobo.
4	Ajeme Debele (Ato)	M	60	3/9/2013		Important for his valuable information on the history of the surrounding Oromo clans.
5	Amdetsion Wube(Liqa Seyouman)	M	66	22/3/2013 EC	MASMM	He is native to the region, attended his church education at MASMM.Currently, he serves as the head of monastic committee.
6	Assegdech Bezabih(W/ro)	F	68	13/8/2012 E.C 23/9/2012	Sademo	She was one of the daughters of patriot who fought the fascist force in the North West of Menagesha Town.She has good knowledge of patriotic resistance in the Menagesha and the surrounding region. Four of her uncles including

						her faather were took part in the war of resistance among whom two of them were perscuted.
7	Ayelech Sahelu (W/ro)	F	77	18,21/7/2013E.C	MAMM	She has been an office keeper and responsible for the daily card recipients from the selling of various objects .She has good knowledge of the income of the monastery.
8	Bay'isa Hunde, (Ato)	M	65	11/7/2012 23/7/2013	Kolobo	He is one of the famous person for his detail knowledge on the Tulema Oromo clan and the interrelation between the Managasha Mountain and the traditional Oromo religion.
9	Bekele Kidane Maryam(Yeneta)	M	83	14/5/2013	MASMM	He came from Ansaro, North Shoa. H serves as Deguwa teacher(yeneta) of MASMM.
10	Berhane Meskel Abera(Aba)	M	47	12/4/2013E.C	MAMM	He came to the monastery of Managasha Amba before 13 years ago. He is responsible for the preparation of the monastic food known as Dabe (bread like injera) which made free of yeast. This food is cooked by males only.
11	Chali Feyisa (W/ro)	F	81	24/6/2013E.C	Holeta	She was one of the indigenous women in the study area. She had been served as 'Yewust Arbegnoch'(inner patriot) who provided food, medicines and water supplies to the resistance fighters.

12	Daneal Kibret (Deacon)	M	56	11/6/2013 E.C	Addis Ababa	He is abundantly equipped with the knowledge and information of Christian religion and monastic life. He was possessed with sufficient religious knowledge.
13	Dejene Dibaba. (Ato)	M	52	22/8/2013	MAMM	An expert who has ample information on the sociological life of the town. He works on the various religious issues of the town of Kolobo.
14	Eskindir Habte(Teacher)	M	56	19/7/2013	MASMM	He is a clergy at Menagesha St. Monastery and serves the church more than 20 Years.
15	Estifanos (Aba)	M	74	23/10/2012 E.C	MAMM	He was teacher of Nebab Bet(reading Grade) and mamher for a long period of time in the monastery. He is very available with the information of the properties of the monastery.
16	Eticha Gemechu (Ato)	M	54	12/08/2012E.C 16/08/2012 E.C	Kolobo	He is the administrator of Kolobo town and served in this area about five years and as teacher about 15 years
17	Fikadu Tadesse (Liqa deacon (chief of deaconship))	M	54	15/8/2013EC	MAMM	He attended his church education at the MAMM and serves in the same vicinity.
18	Fikre Giorgis Melaku (Magabi)	M	64	16/07/2013 E.C	MAMM	He is the manager of finance in Menagesha Amba Maryam and Garaw Medhanealem monastery and has 13 years' experience.

19	Gebreyesus(Bahtawi)	M	88	16/08/2013EC	MAMM	He was accountable for the monastic heritages for long period of time. He is well informed regarding the ages of monastic relics
20	Girma Hailu (Gabaz)	M	73	23/8/2013	Managasha Kolobo	He is an educated clergy. He is responsible for the implementation of monastic rules and regulations.
21	Habtemaryam Eyesus Molla	M	52	15/07/2012 E.C	Kolobo	He is the store keeper of Garaw Medhanealem Eqa Bet, he come in this church currently but before his arriving into this church he was in Amba Maryam church as clergy from his childhood
22	Kinfe Tadesse (megabi)	M	93	15/8/2013	MAMM	He came to the region under study as a teacher of Qine Mahlet from Gojam.
23	Lema Beyecha (Ato)	M	68	3/07/2013E.C 7/07/2012E.C 22/7/2013EC 19/8/2013 EC	Wolmera culture & tourism office	He is a native to the study area; he was a geography teacher of the researcher at lower grades. He has knowledge of the area.
24	Liqä Mäzameran Liqä Lisanat Wolde Michael Haile mariam.	M	71	71 21/1/2012 EC	MASMM	He was born in 1953 E.C at Menagesha.He lost his sight at the age of ten.He learnt church educaton at the monastic school. He is possessor of the history of the monastery. If it is not exaggerated, he is really abook.He is servednow as marigeta(a leading clergy in singing)
25	Mandefro Sisay	M	57	08/08/2013E.C	MAMM	He is a native to the region learnt in

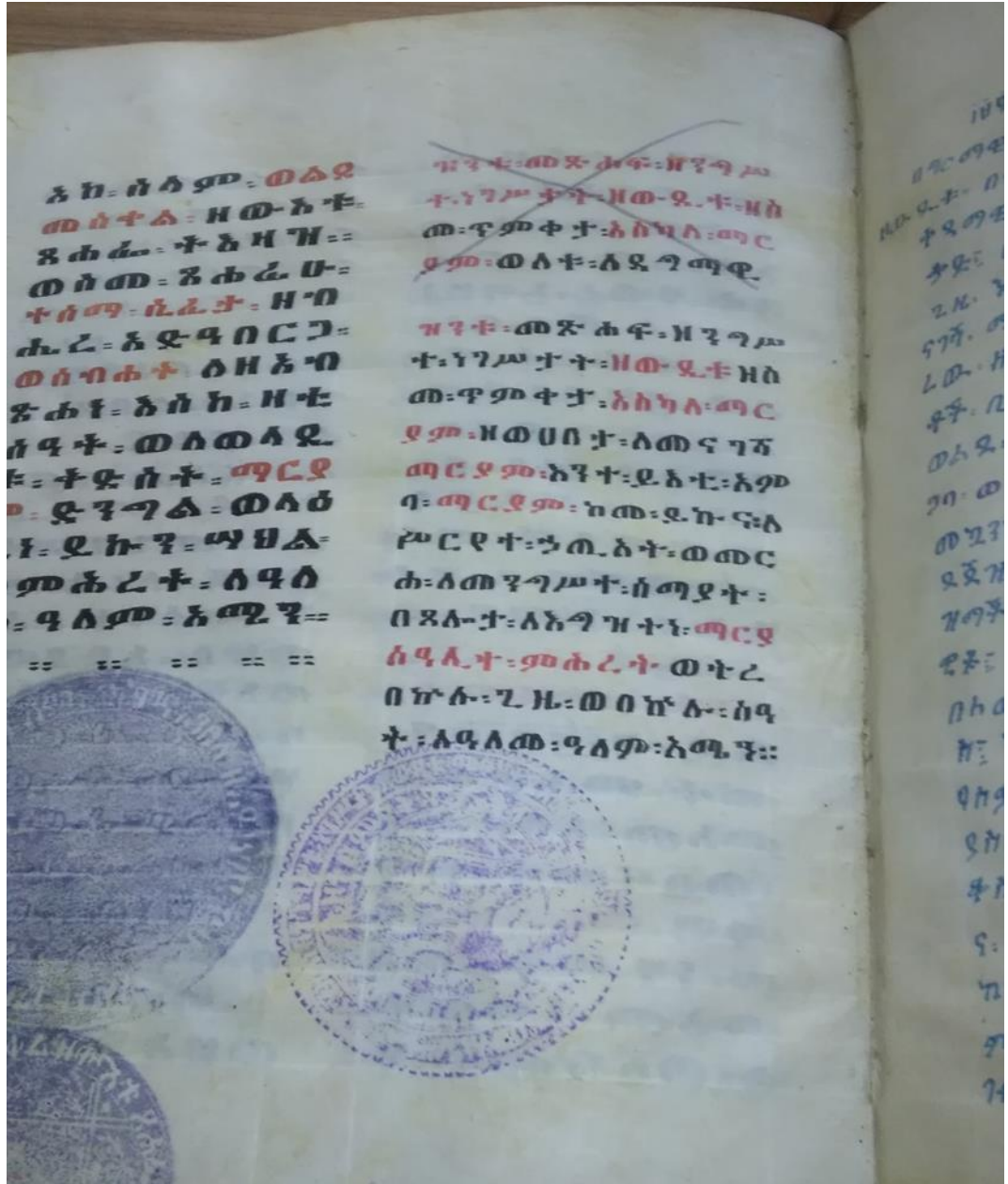
	(Memher)			09/08/2013E.C		monastic school, serves as the supervisor of Amba Maryam monastery and served for about 31 years. He has good knowledge of the monastic administration and monastic land.
26	Mekonen Gebreyesus (Abba)	M	77	8/8/2013 EC	MAMM	He came to the monastery before 35 years ago. He learnt his theology at Addis Ababa. He is by now, Bahtawi (hermit) of the monastery now
27	Moges H/Maryam (Qomos Aba)	M	64	16/07/2012E.C 08/08/2013 E.C	MAMM	He is the administrator of Menagesha Amba Maryam and Garaw Medhanealem monastery. He served as administer currently but served the two churches and the monastery starting from his childhood.
28	Sahelework Amede (Emahoy)	F	76	22/8/2013	Addis Ababa	Has ample knowlge about the monastery of MAM.
29	Taye Mekuriya (Qasis)	M	64	23/07/2012 E.C 16/8/2012 E.C 21/8/2012 E.C 18/01/2013 E.C 21/1/2013 E.C 16/5/2013 E.C 18/9/2013 E.C	MAMM	One of the most prominent and by far important informants of this research. He is native to the monastic area learnt well, serves in the monastery for more than 40 years. The researcher looks this informant as a library or museum/book because he acquainted with all round monastic information. This was emanated from his attending of

						modern education
30	Tekletsadik Gebreab (Marigeta)	M	71	22/3/2013	MASMM	He came from Bulga, attended his church education and church music and grammar at Menagesha ASMM. Now, he serves as a cashier.
31	Terecha Jiru(Ato)	M	77	21/1/2014	MASMM	He is the resident of Menagesha town and well equipped with the knowledge of monastic lands since 1960's.
32	Tesfamichael Bante Yideru(Ato)	M	64	23/8/2012EC	MAMM	He came to the vicinity from Dabre Berhan .He has well equipped with the rules of the dying room and responsible for the preparation of the fire wood.
33	Tesfaye Tekalign (Ato)	M	79	11/8/2012EC	Holeta	An indigenous person in the town, his mother was yewust arbegna (inner patriot). He told me specifically 'Mychew' was the place where many Italian dead were stayed rotten for two weeks.
34	Teshome Assefa (Ato)	M	67	2/6/2013 EC	Holeta	He is native to the region, Mecha Oromo clan. He was a son of patriot and cousin of Dajj. Kabbada Buzunah. He gave me about the Italian rule and about the place called 'Mychew'.
35	Tsegaye Tola (Ato)	M	58	7/07/2013 E.C	Holeta	He is the Wolmera Woreda hotel & tourism expert and the resident of Holeta town and has seven years' experience in this staff.

36	Wolda Cherkos WoldaYohannes (Bahtawi)	M	69	12/07/2012E.C 15/07/2012 E.C 17/07/2012 E.C	MAMM	He is the keeper of the store house of the church of Amba Maryam. He has been working in the church for about 9 years.
37	Woldemaryam Feleke(Aba)	M	79	11/7/2012EC	MAMM	He was transferred as teacher if church music from Gishen Maryam monastery. He has sufficient knowledge of monastic traditional school.
38	Wolde Georgis Abeje(Abba)	M	51	6/7/201	Holeta	He is known by his name Melake Genet Qomos Abba Wolde Georgis Abeje in Office.He is the head of Wolmera Woreda betäkihenet. He has good knowledge of Churches and Monasteries in West Shoa region.
39	Wolte Medihin(Emahoy	F	78	78 19/7/2013	MASMM	Born at Wajitu, in Holeta area.She serves for more than 25 years as aqabit of MASMM.
40	Yirgalem Moges (Mameher)	M	57	05/12/2012 E.C	MAMM	He is a priest in Amba Maryam church and serves the church from his child hood.

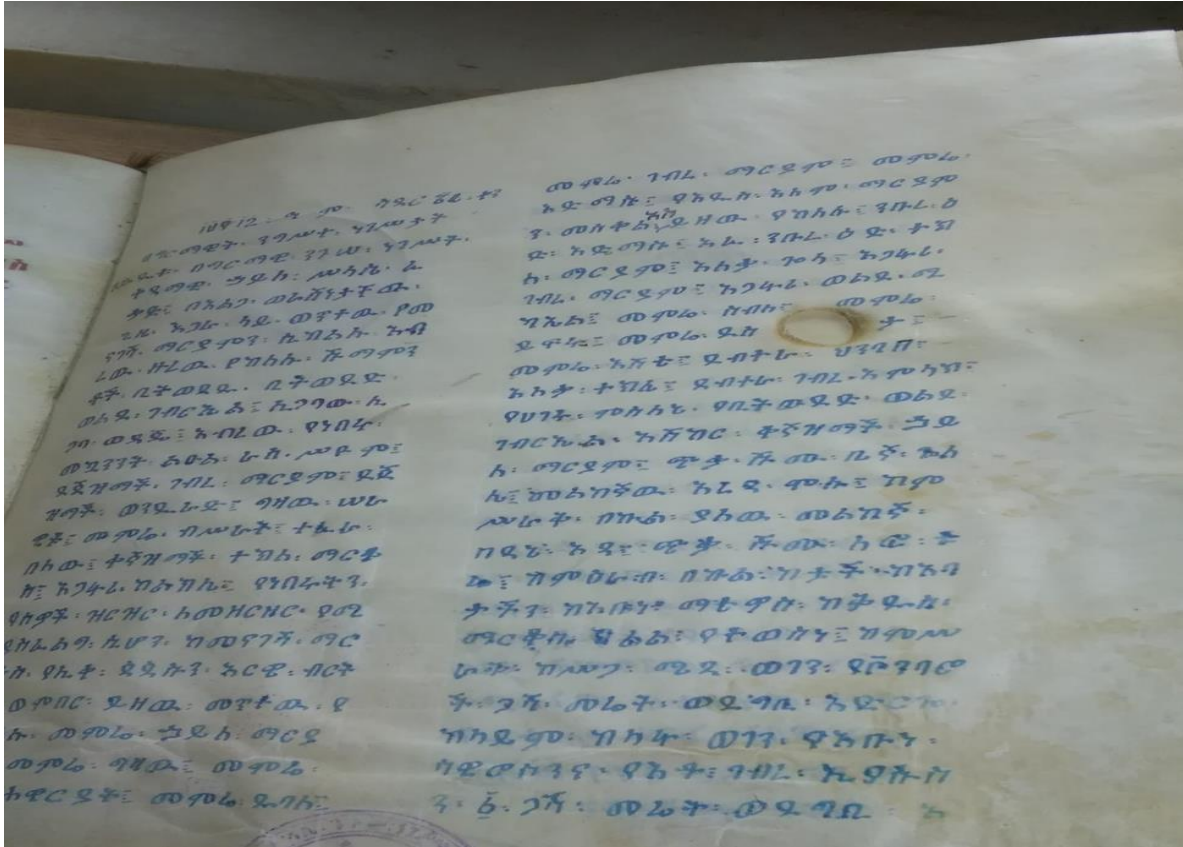
APPENDIXES

Appn.A. An archive demonstrates the prayer book of empress Zewditu Menelik and other role player dignitaries of the monastery Managasha Amba St.Mary

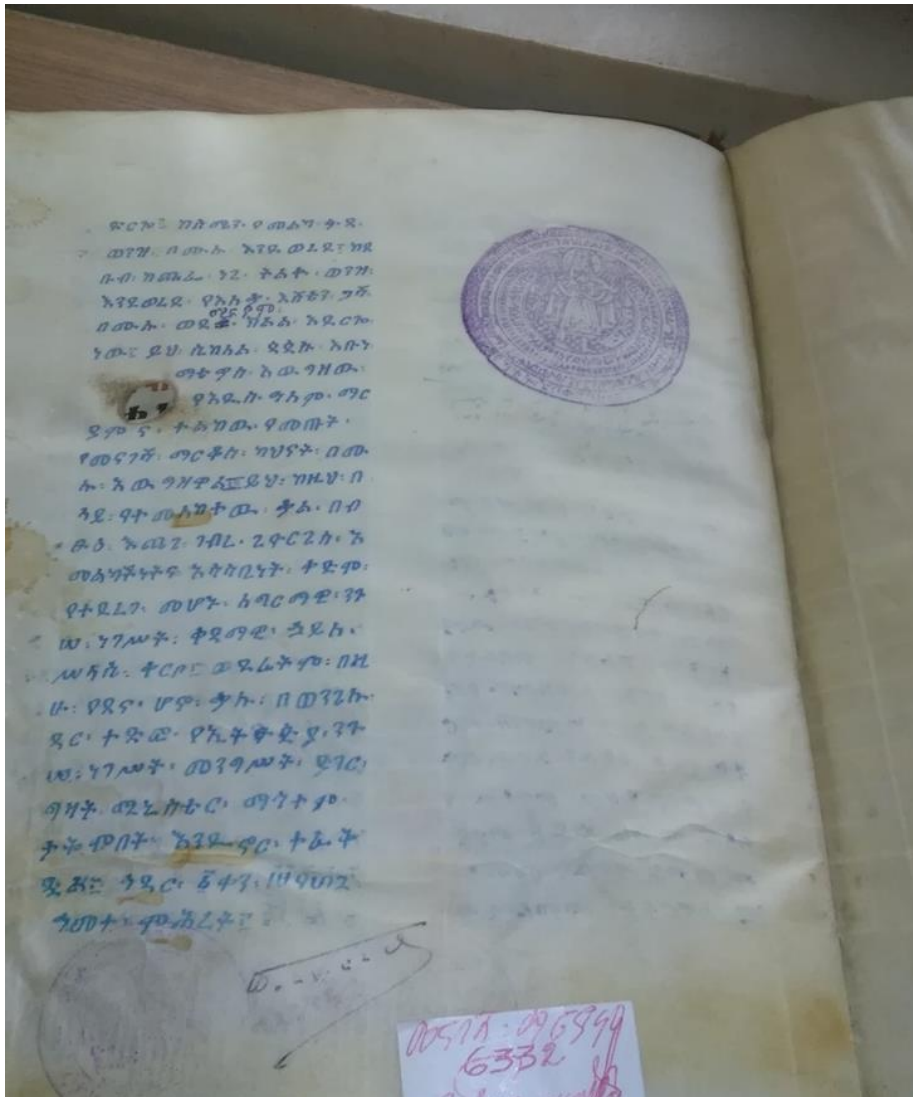


Source: photo taken by the researcher,2020

Appn.B. An archive (November 1912 EC) found from the monastery's museum which shows Empress Zewditu and regent Teferi Mekonen and other notable people who came to *Managasha* to demarcate the territory of the Monastery of Managasha Amba Mary

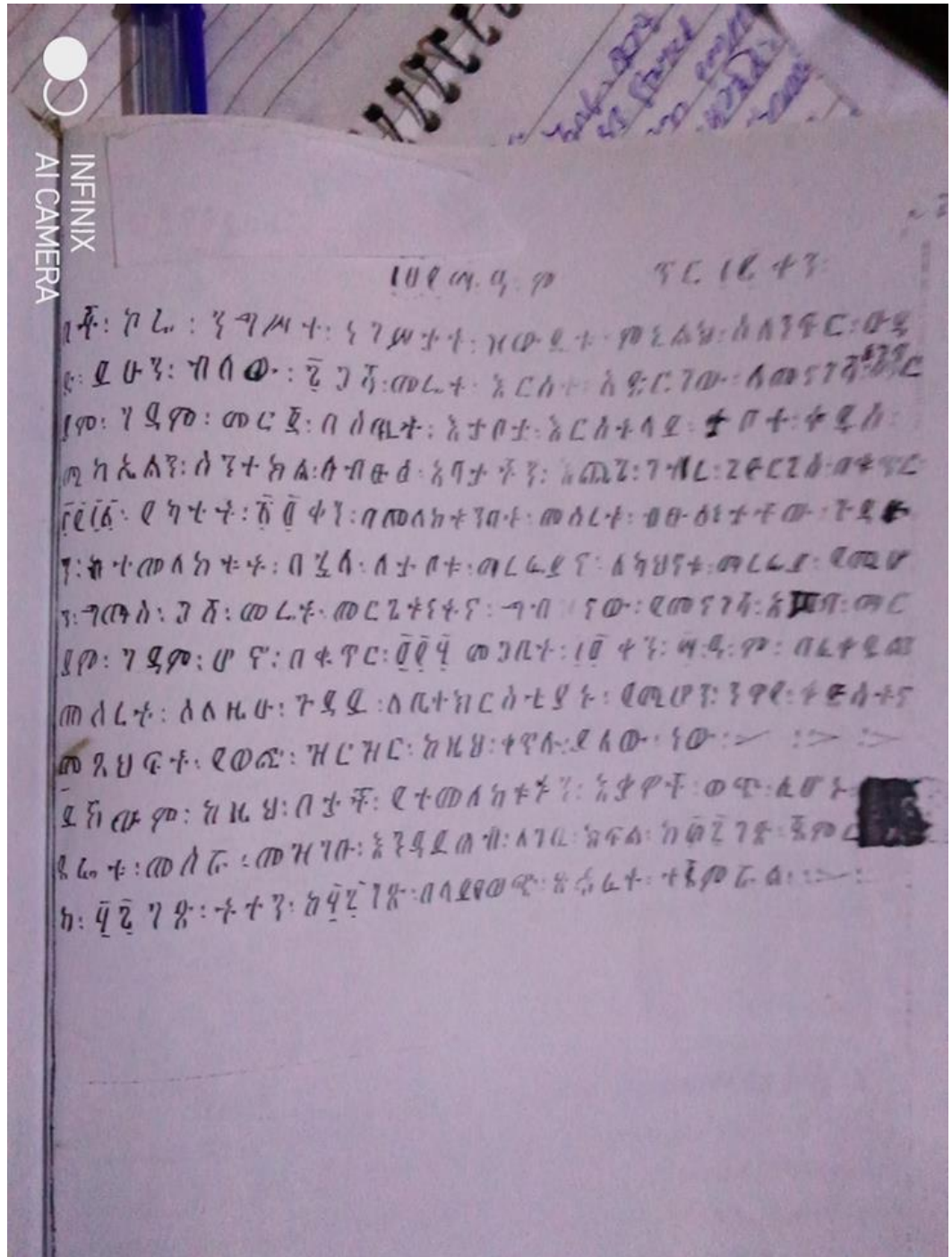


Source: photo by the researcher, 2020.



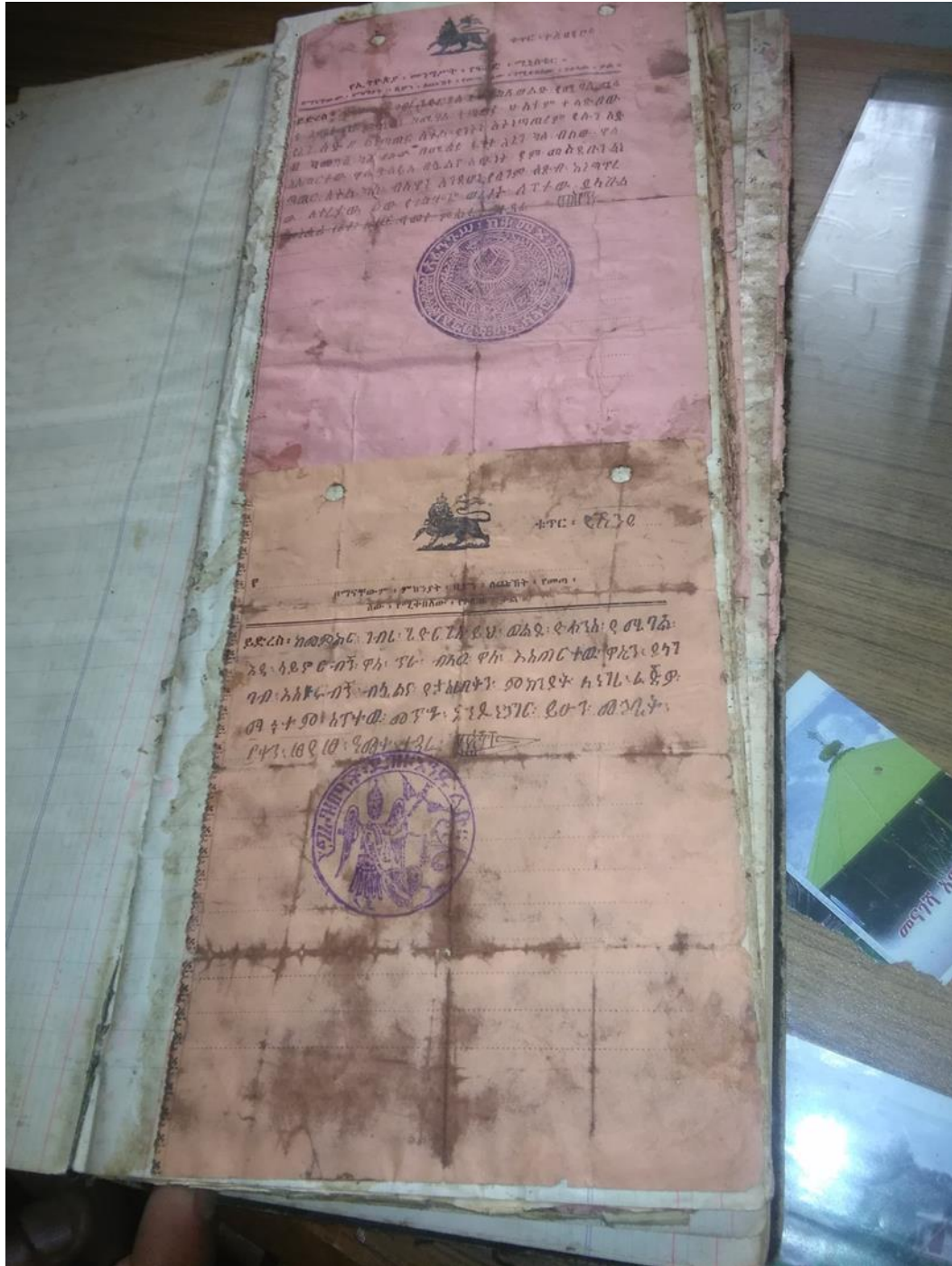
Source: Photo by the researcher.

Appn. C. Archives claime the rest-Gult right of MAMM



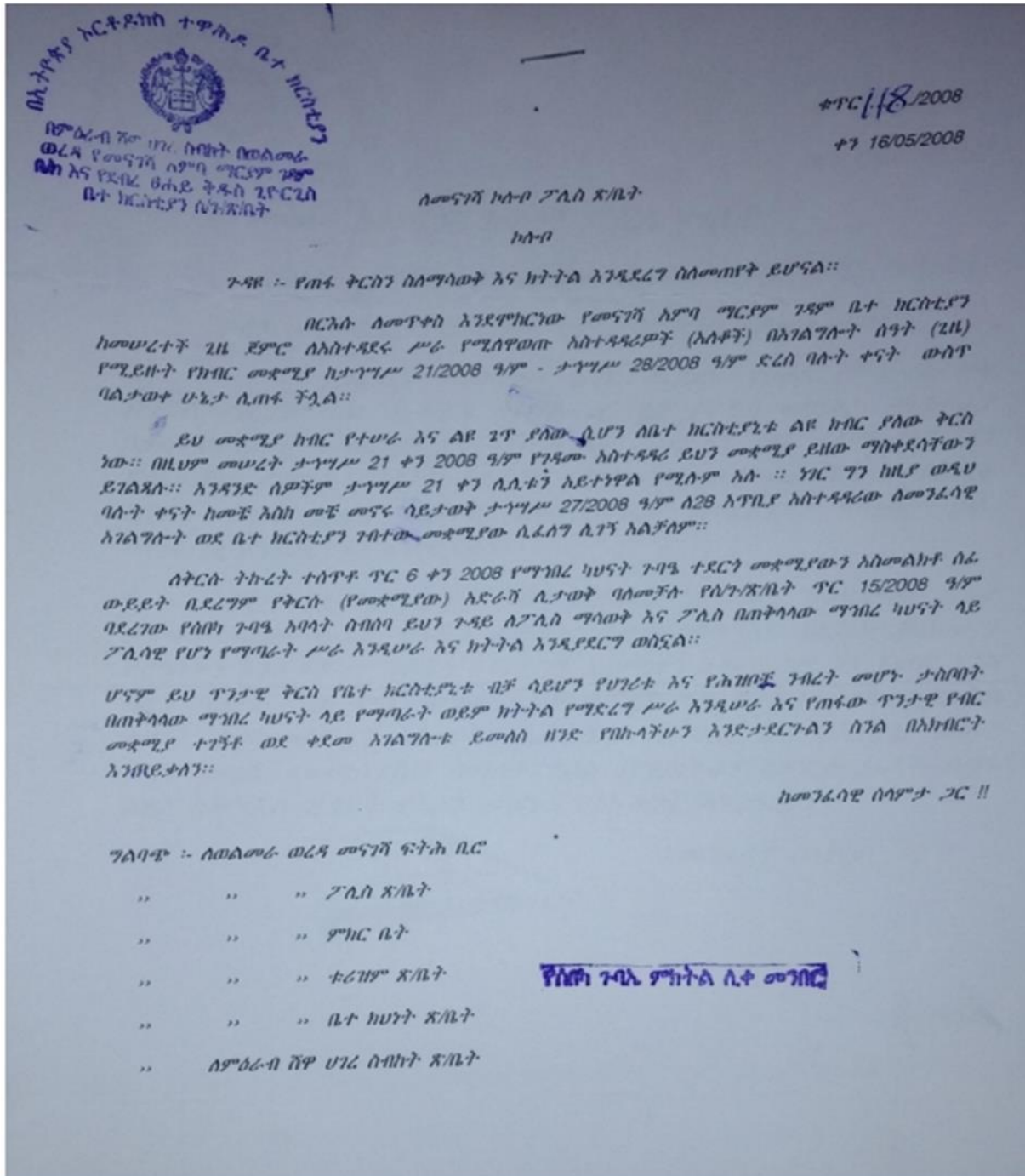
Source: photo taken by the researcher,2020.

Appn.D. An archive written in March 10, 1919 E.C from Grazzmach Yigezu Endelevu to the head of Managasha Amba Maryam Monastery, Mameher Gabra Georgis. It requested the Abbot of the Monastery to deliver justice to certain compliant



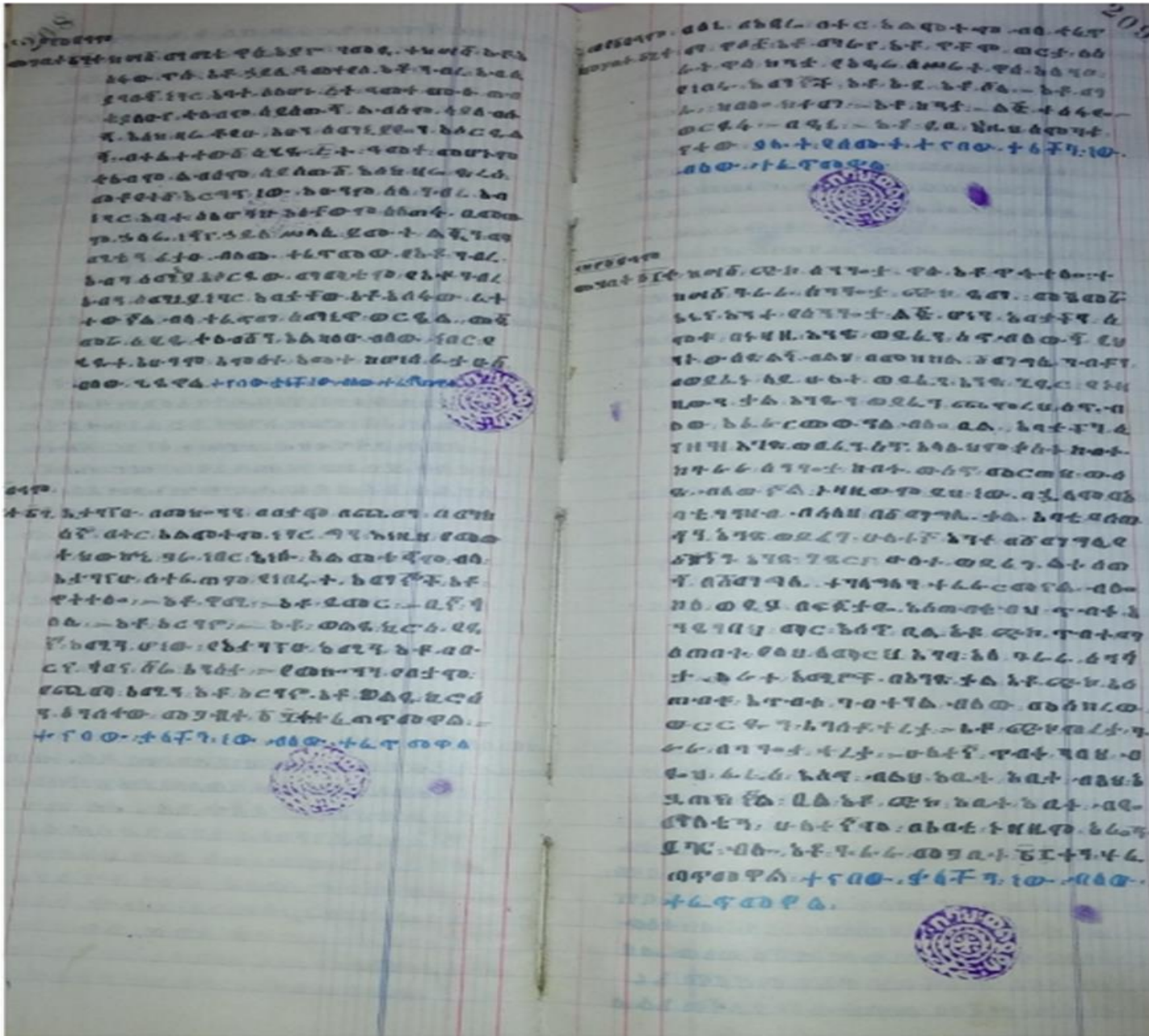
Source: photo taken by the researcher, 2020.

Appn.E.Letter from Amba Maryam for Kolobo Police Office which demonstrated the help of investigation for the robbed bronze-sticks from the monastery in 2006 E.C



Source: Photo by Researcher,2020.

Appn. F. Archive that Served for a Court Purpose in Amba Maryam.



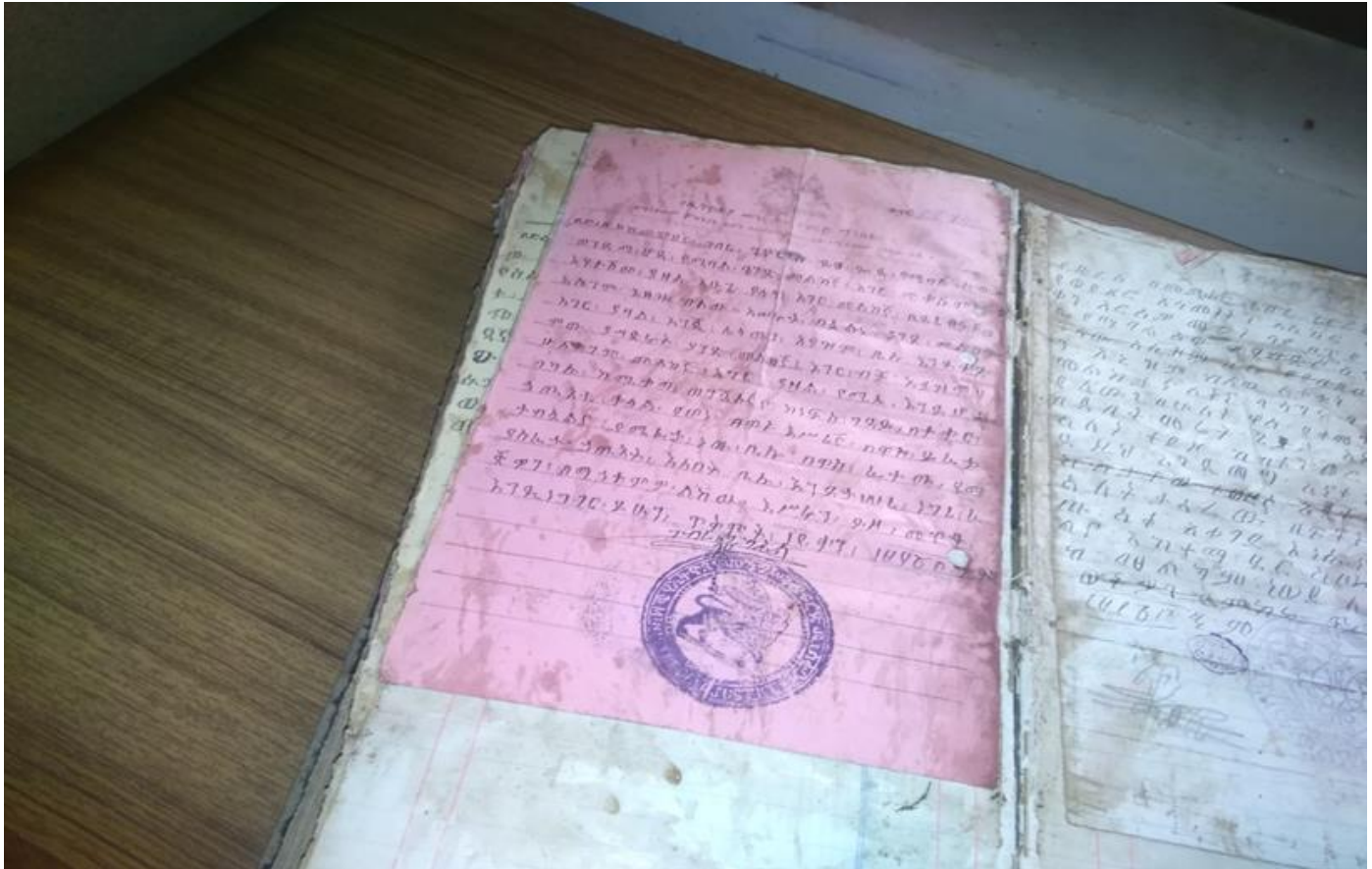
Source: Photo by Researcher, 2020.

Appn.I. Various archival letters requested the *Abbot of the Monastery, Gabra Giorgis (Abuna Baseleos)* to give fair justice to the accused in 1921 E.C



. Source: photo by the researcher, 2020.

Appn.J. Archival letters written for the purpose of conflict resolution arisen among different local appointees (Melkagnas) of the region (October 12, 1923 E.C).



Source: photo by the researcher, 2020.

Appn. K. Various archival letters written in 1921, 1922, 1924 and 1925 E.C respectively. The top left demonstrated the case about the asrat (tithe) payment. The bottom left letter dictated the lost mule of certain local person found and he thanked the court. The top right archive shows the case of burnt house was a sudden and it ordered the local governor to help the owner. The bottom right letter illustrated the child adoption of the study area.



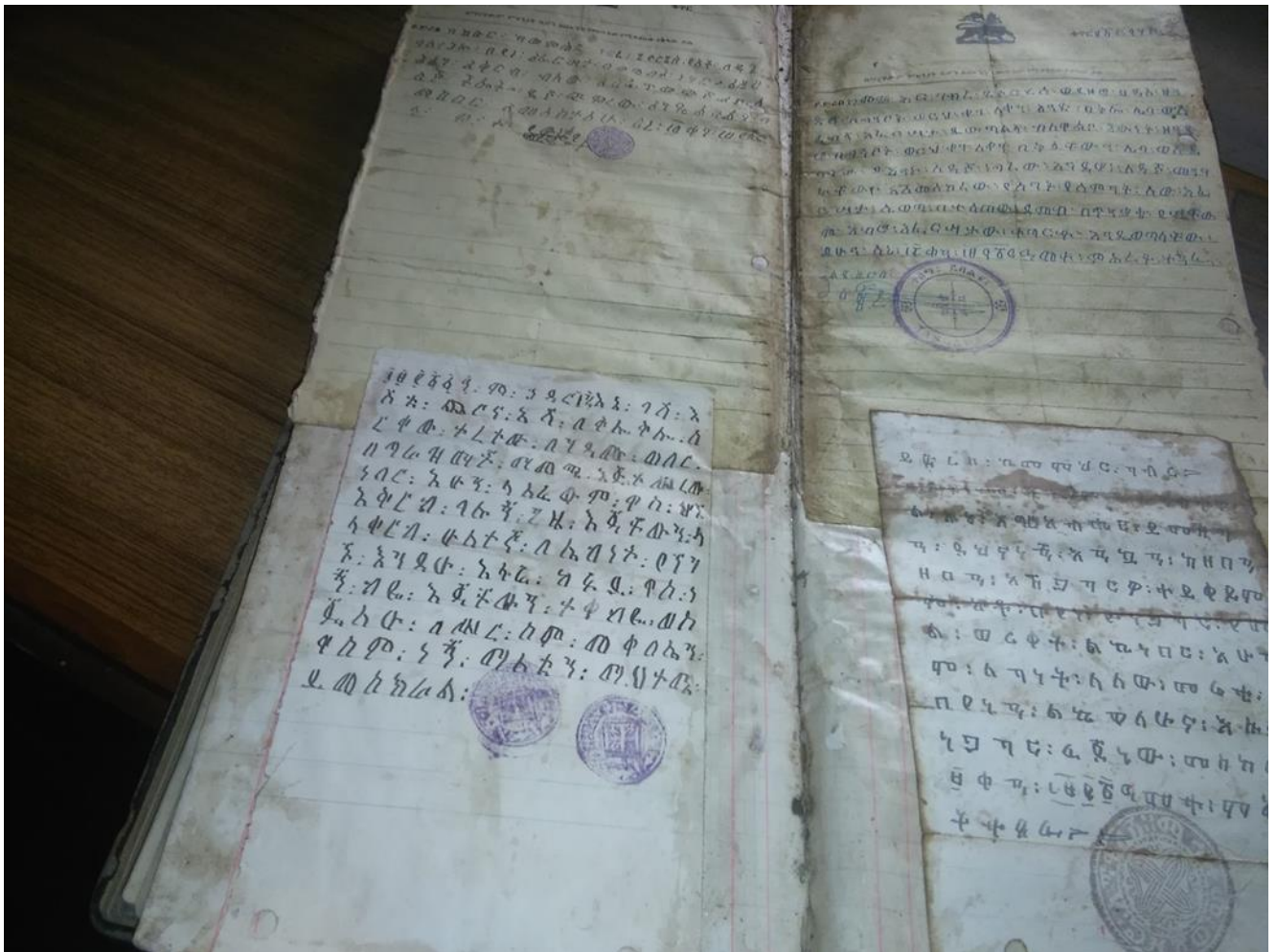
Source: Photo by the researcher, 2020.

Appn.L. an Archive demonstrated the genealogical line of Zewditu to the Israelites and the legitimacy of her Queen ship (Askale Maryam was the christen name empress Zewditu)



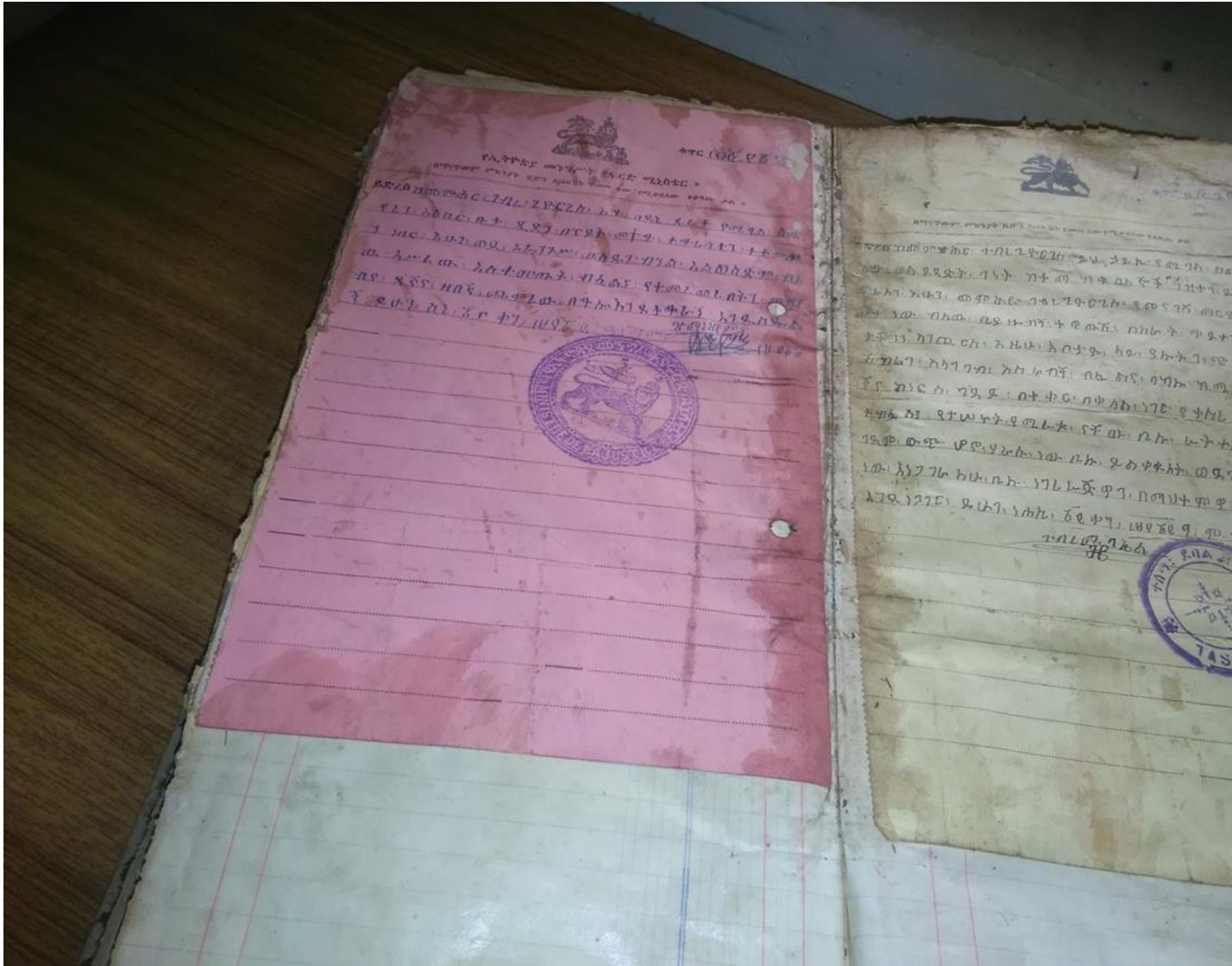
Source: Photo by the esearcher, 2020.

Appn.M. Various archive letters holding justice delivered by the monastic court and appealing from the communities.



Source: Photo by the researcher , 2020.

Appn.N Archives shows cases sought at the of court of Managasha Amba Maryam in 1921 E.C



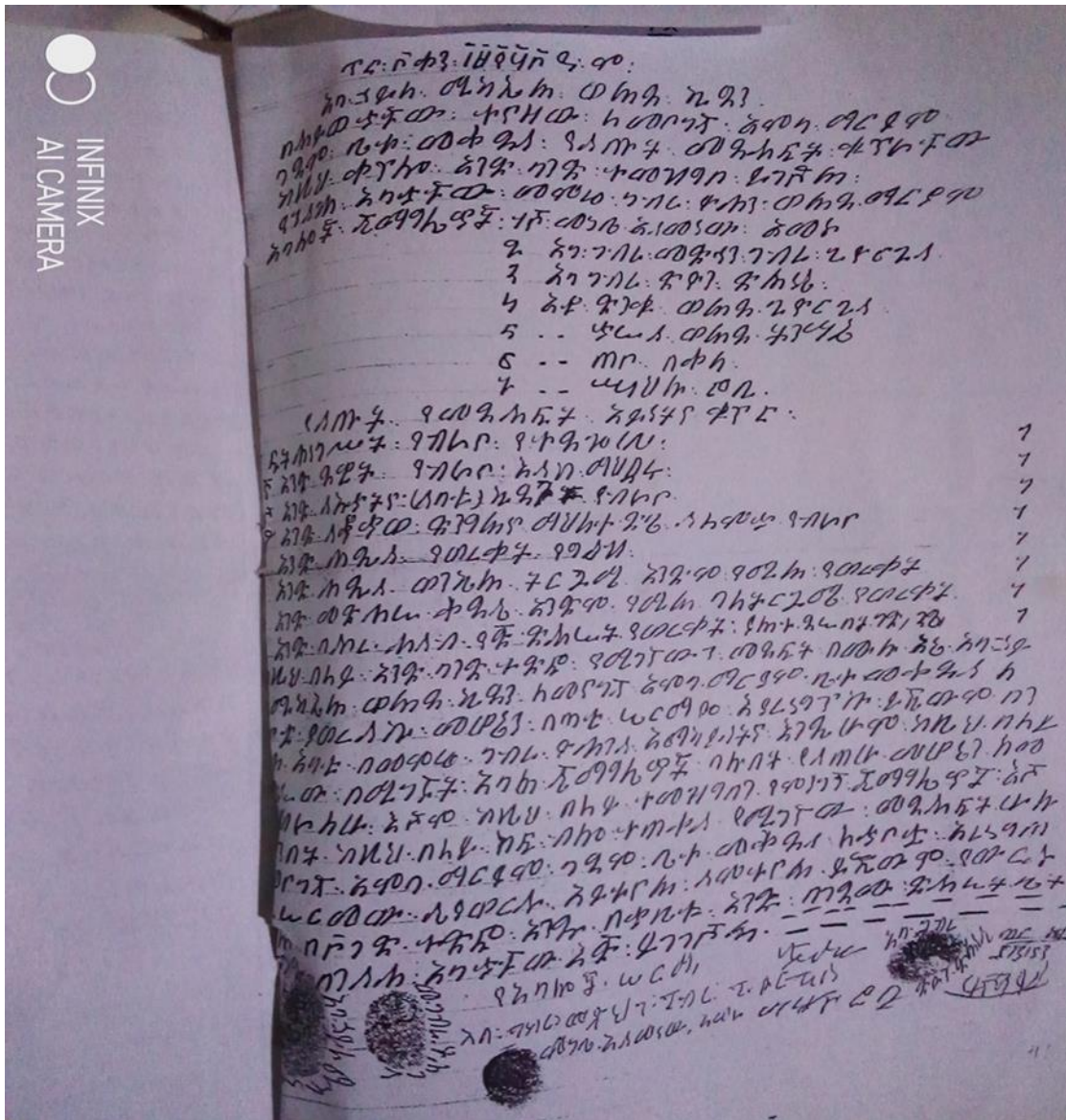
Source: Photo by the researcher,2020.

Appn.0. Archive letters concerning justice issues at the Monastic court of Managasha Amba Maryam. One of the letter (bottom right) dictated that the appellant/requester/ was suffered from endemic that broke out in 1921 E.C.



Source: Photo by the researcher, 2020.

Appn.P. Archive letter written in 1953 E.C. demonstrates various donations from a religious father, Abba H/Michael Wolde Kidan to the Monastery of Managasha Amba Maryam.



Source: Photo by the researcher, 2020.

Appn.Q. An archive Which demonstrates the name of the Ten Medieval kings who had crowned at the mountain of Managasha .(Taken from the Monastic document which published in 2008/9, for the anverssary of 100 years of MAMM and Garaw Medhanealm)

የሚታየው ግርማዊ ጃንሆይ ቀዳማዊ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ፲፱፻፺፯ ዓ.ም. ያሠሩት አሁን በዘመናዊ መልኩ ለታነጸው ቤ/ክ በመቆይበት ለታሪክ ተት-ቶ የሚያገለግል

በዚህ የተሰጠው ግማደ መስቀል በዚህ ቦታ ለ፯ ወራት በማረፊ ሲሆን፤ ቀደም ሲል የተሰወረው ገዳም የሚገለጸውም ጌታችን መድኃኒታችን ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ በየዘመኑ የአመቤታችን የድንግል ማርያም በዓል የሚከበርበት አመክንዮ/ምክንያት ጌታችን መድኃኒታችን ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ ለመጣ ሲቃረብ በሐዋርያው በቅዱስ ማርቆስ መሪነት የተሰወሩት ሁሉ ይወጣሉ ይባላል። ይህንንም ቦታ የሚጠብቀው ሊቀ ብርሃኖት ቅዱስ ራጥስ መሆኑን ገድለ አባ ኤሊያስ ይናገራል። ይህ ገዳም ከተሰወረ በኋላ አስከፊ ፲፱፻፶፱ ዓ.ም ድረስ ሌላ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ወይም ገዳም አልተሰራም።

በታሪክ በመናገሻ አምባ ማርያም ገዳም ተራራ ላይ የነገሡ አስር የነገሥታት ስም ዝርዝር

ቁ	ስም	የነገሡበት ዘመን/ዓመት	ከ-አስከፊ ዓ.ም
1	አፄ ዳዊት	፴	፲፫፻፳፭-፲፫፻፺፭
2	አፄ ይሱህቅ	፲፭	፲፫፻፺፱-፲፬፻፲፬
3	አፄ ዘርዓ ያለቆብ	፴፬	፲፬፻፳፯-፲፬፻፺፰
4	አፄ በዕደ ማርያም	፲	፲፬፻፺፰-፲፬፻፸፫
5	አፄ መልአክ ሰገድ	፲፮	፲፬፻፸፫-፲፬፻፹፯
6	አፄ ናዖድ	፲፬	፲፬፻፹፯-፲፭፻፶፫
7	አፄ ንብለ ድንግል	፴፪	፲፭፻፶፫-፲፭፻፸፫
8	አፄ ገላውዴዎስ	፲፱	፲፭፻፸፫-፲፭፻፺፭
9	አፄ ሚናስ	፬	፲፭፻፺፭-፲፭፻፺፭
10	አፄ ዘድንግል	፯	፲፬፻፸፫-፲፬፻፸፮

16

INFINIX AI CAMERA

Source: Photo by the researcher, from the Magazine of the monastery,2020.

Glossary

Abba = Title of elders/priests in Ethiopian Orthodox Churches

Abemnet = The leader of ascetic fathers in the monastery

Amba: Home

Aqabi = Male custodian in the church

Aqabit = Female custodian in the church

Arde'et = Individuals who helps the church by splitting wood, simulating of water and others.

Asrat: tithe

Ato = The title for a married/unmarried man

Atrones = Book stand, lectern for manuscripts

Awraja: Sub-province.

Baletestsfa = A volunteer association established to support the church

Birt = A type of tup used as washing hands of the clergies inside the church

Chiqa-Shum: Local headman

Dabe = A blessed diet which was a usual meal of clergyman (pumpkin)

Däbir: cathedral

Daga: Highland.

Dajjasmach: Title given to the feudal Lord by the Emperor, general of an army.

Deacon = Someone who give services in the church.

Derg: The e-government of Ethiopia.

Ememnet = The leader of ascetic mothers in the monastery.

Falasha: Black Jewish.

Gabbar :Tribute payer.

Gabaz: Church admnstrator.

Gadle: Hagiography

Gasha/Qalad = Land of 40 ha. size.

Gesho: buckthorn (plant for making local beer tella)

Golla = A type of large casserole.

Gult: Conditional right to the tribute and corvee.

Gult: right to given an official to collect tributes.

Injera: The staple pancake.

Megabi = The ascetic fathers in the monastery.

Kebele: Local administration.

Kibre Nagast: The glory of kings.

Lij: Aboy.

Liqe Aamero= The head of students of traditional school.

Magabi: Religious Title given to high level theological teachers in EOC.

Mameher: chief person in the monastery.

Marigeta: Religious Title given to middle level theological teacher in EOC.

Misig: Fortress

Nebure _Ed = Title of administrator in Axum Tsion and Addis Alem Maryam church

Nefro = Frosted maize

Qallu: Oromo religious leader.

Qasis: Senior Priest.

Qidus: saint

Qolla: Lowland.

Qurban and Täskar: communion services.

Ras: Head

Rest: hereditary land

Säfar: Quarter

Sänbälet: Tall grass.

Sanbate: Sabbath association.

Säbäka Gubae: church council

Sinkisar (synxar) = Book of saint's story

Täbel :Holy water

Tella = Home -made beer.

Teff: thinny plan.

Timbaho:Tobaco

Tsenha = A bowl

Yedemet Meret = The prior land holding system in Addis Alem Maryam Church.

Zikir :food and drinks

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis entitled The History of Managasha Amba Maryam Monastery“ is my own original work that has not been submitted for any other degree in Jimma University and any other universities. All the sources I have used in this thesis have been duly acknowledged and indicated in the reference page.

Name: Abay Haile Mariam Tadesse

Signature: _____

Place: Jimma University

Date of Submission: December, 2021.