



**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT**

**A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN BALE
ca.1890 – 1991**

**BY
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A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN
BALE ca.1890 - 1991

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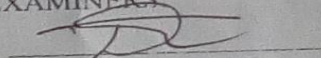
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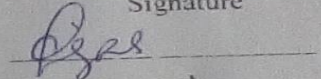
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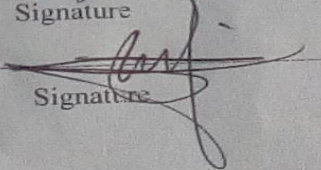
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Preface

This thesis attempts to uncover the history of Christianity in Bale of Ethiopia from the 1890s to 1991. The paper aimed to uncover the history of Christianity in Bale province for the period under discussion. Accordingly, the first chapter outlines the physical settings and the historical background of Bale such as the early history people, Islamization of Bale, the Bali State and the Christian Highland Kingdom, Menelik's occupation of Bale, Bale during the Italian occupation, the administrative history of Bale and the ethnic groups, and religious make up of Bale.

The second chapter introduces us the history of Christianity in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the chapter attempts to shed light on the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church, Catholicism and Protestantism in Ethiopia. Emphasis was given for the history of Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekakne-Yesus (EECMY), Ethiopian *Qalä Hiwot* (Word of Life) Church, the Ethiopian Full Gospel (*Mulu Wängél*) Church and the Ethiopian *Mäsärätä Kerestos* Church from among the sects of the Protestant Churches.

The third chapter deals with how the Orthodox Täwahedo faith spread and the number of followers of the faith increased in Bale since Menelik's incorporation of the area until 1991. It assessed to what extent the church had possessed land, utilized it and the fate of the church after the *Därg* regime nationalized rural land including the church land. The chapter also assesses the administrative history of the diocese of Bale, educational roles of the church, how Christians were treated by the Italians during the occupation period. Furthermore, the chapter deals the role played by the church in the socio-economic development.

The fourth and the last chapter assesses how the Protestant Christianity churches mainly the EECMY, the *Qalä Hiwot* Church, the Full Gospel Church and the *Mäsärätä Kerestos* Church and their faiths spread in Bale. It also deals with how Catholicism was introduced and spread in the area. Furthermore, the roles played by these churches in the socio-economic life of the society and the inter-religious interactions in Bale in the period under study. In general, this study will pave the way for other researchers to conduct further study on this topic, will serve as a source material and fill the gap in line with shortage of sources used to study the history of Christianity in Bale.

Abstract

The focus of this thesis is exploring the history of Christianity in Bale from ca1890 to 1991. The study covers the period from the rule of Emperor Menelik II to the coming to power of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government. The study is important to shed light on the history of Christianity in Bale. Especially, it assesses how different Christian faiths and churches spread in Bale and the role played by the EOTC, the EECMY, the Gala Hiwot, the Full Gospel and the Mäsärätä Kerestos Church in the socio- economic development of the people of Bale province. The study was conducted making use of the data collected from both primary and secondary sources. To mention, archival sources, thesis, PhD dissertations, journals, proceedings, magazines, books and periodical publications were used. In addition to this, fifty-five oral informants were also interviewed. The collected data were evaluated by checking and counter checking with other sources. Finally, analysis and discussions were made using the qualitative method of research. In Bale Province, the work of evangelization of the Christian faith was very weak. The propagation of Orthodox Tewahedo faith to some extent strengthened in line with the spread of the Protestant faith. Until 1991, the interaction between the Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the different sects of Protestant churches as well as the Catholic Church was not good. The believers of the Protestant faith and the followers of the Catholic Church were perceived as heretics by the believers of the Orthodox Tewahedo faith and segregate in the different social life of the society. However, that ugly relationship improved and relaxed in line with the freedom of worship the people of the country enjoyed following government change in 1991. The harmonious relationship and tolerance existed for centuries between Christians and Muslims of Bale also continued as before until these days. Before 1960s the role played by the different churches found in Bale in development work that benefit the people of the area was not satisfactory. However, from 1970 onwards the Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the different sects of Protestant Churches and the Catholic Church engaged themselves in rendering holistic services for the people of the area such as by opening schools, clinics, helping deep poor people and carrying out other development works.

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

1. Symbols used to read Amharic words in this thesis

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

1 st	ሀ	Hä
2 nd	ሁ	Hu
3 rd	ሂ	Hi
4 th	ሃ	Ha
5 th	ሄ	Hé
6 th	ህ	He
7 th	ሆ	Ho

II. Palatalized sounds are represented as follows:

ሸ	Šä
ሹ	Čä
ሺ	Ńä
ሻ	Jä
ሼ	Zhä
ሽ	Yä

III. Glottal zed sounds are represented as follows:

ቀ	Qä
ጠ	Ṭä
ጨ	Čä
ፀ/ጸ	Şä
ጸ	Pä

IV. For words having the sound of the six alphabet at the end, is not necessary to add the representing letter of the sound

Example: *Däber*
Mähär
Qäsis

V. Consecutive Vowels are usually separated by apostrophe.

Example: *Mika'él*
Guba'é
Serä'at

VI. Stressed sounds are usually represented by doubling the consonant

Example: *Gäbbar*
Gobba
Dällo Männa
Taffäsä

1. Symbols used to translate Afan Oromo words in this thesis

I. Vowels:

<u>Short</u>	<u>Long</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>English Meaning</u>
a	aa	<i>afaan</i>	mouth, language
e	ee	<i>eeboo</i>	spear
i	ii	<i>ija</i>	eye
o	oo	<i>oduu</i>	news
u	uu	<i>ulee</i>	stick

II. Consonants:

Afan Oromo consonants are stressed by doubling the similar phonemes and combined by devoicing two different consonants. Totally, there are five paired Afan Oromo consonants. These are ch, sh, dh, ny and ph. Of these, ch and sh have English equivalent the remaining three have no English equivalent.

Example:

<u>Oromo</u>	<u>English Equivalent</u>	<u>Equivalent Symbol</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>English meaning</u>
Ch	ch	–	<i>Mummicha</i>	head office
Sh	sh	–	<i>Shan</i>	five
Dh	–	–	<i>Dhadhaa</i>	butter
Ny	–	ñ	<i>Nyaata</i>	food
Ph	–	p	<i>Hirpha</i>	gift

Almost all Oromo phonemes have the same sounds with English consonants except phonemes c, x and q.

Example:

<u>Oromo</u>	<u>English Equivalent</u>	<u>Equivalent Symbol</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>English meaning</u>
c	-	Ĉ	<i>Calalii</i>	sorting
x	-	ṭ	<i>Xaa'oo</i>	fertilizer
q	-	q	<i>Qabeenya</i>	resource

Acronyms

AD	After the birth of Christ
ADBZ	Archive of Diocese of Bale Zone
AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BQHCA	Bale Qalä Hiwot Church Archive
BZAA	Bale Zone Administration Archive
BTHD	Bachelor of Theology in Degree
DEM	Danish Evangelical Mission
Dr	Doctor
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
ECMY	Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
EECMY	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
EOC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EOTC	Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GFGCA	Ginnir Full Gospel Church Archive
HIV	Human Immunity Virus
Kg	Killo gram
KHC	Qalä Hiwot Church
Km	Kilo meter
MA	Master of Arts
Miss	Women who is not married
Mr	Man's surname that have certain official position
Mrs	Surname of married women
NALA	National Archive and Library Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLC	Norwegian Lutheran Church
NLM	Norwegian Lutheran Mission

ONRS	Oromia National Regional State
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
Ref. No	Reference number
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission (the later Society of International Mission)
SNNPR	Southern Nations Nationality and Peoples' Region
St.	Saint
TDMM	Transformational Discipleship Making Ministry
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
WMMRC	Wolde Meskel Memorial Research Center

CHAPTER ONE

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BALE

1.1 Geographical and Physical Setting of Bale

Bale is located in the southeastern part of Ethiopia. Before 1991, Bale bordered with Somalia in the east, province of Arsi in the west, Harärgé and Sidamo provinces in the north and in the south respectively.¹

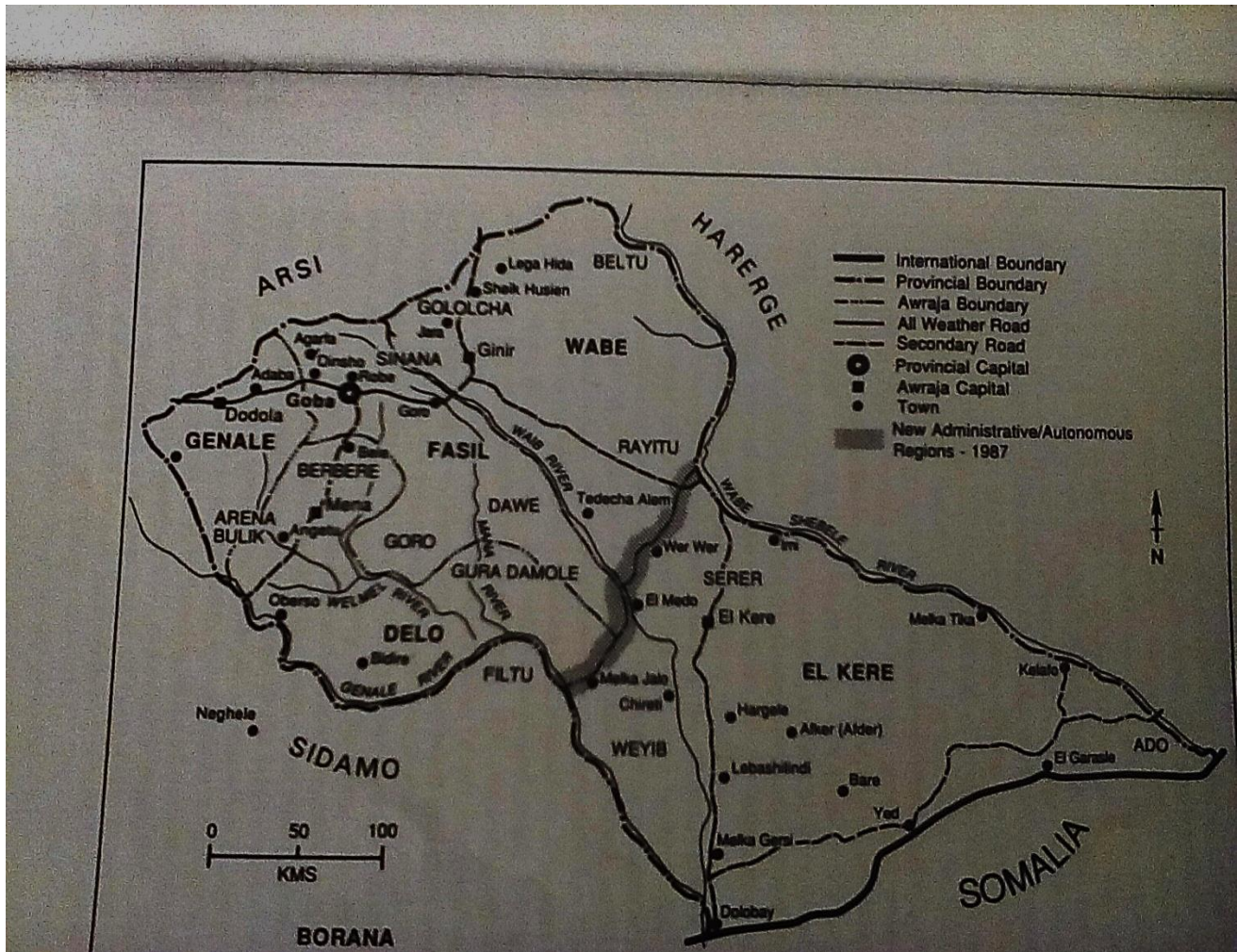
Fig.1. Pre 1991 administrative divisions of Ethiopia that include province of Bale



Source: <https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Awraja-of-Ethiopia.png>.

¹Solomon Korsä, “Rural Land Distribution and Management in Highland Bale: A Study of Goba, Dodola and Sinana, 1975-1991” (M.A Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 2005), P.1.

Fig.2 Bale before 1991

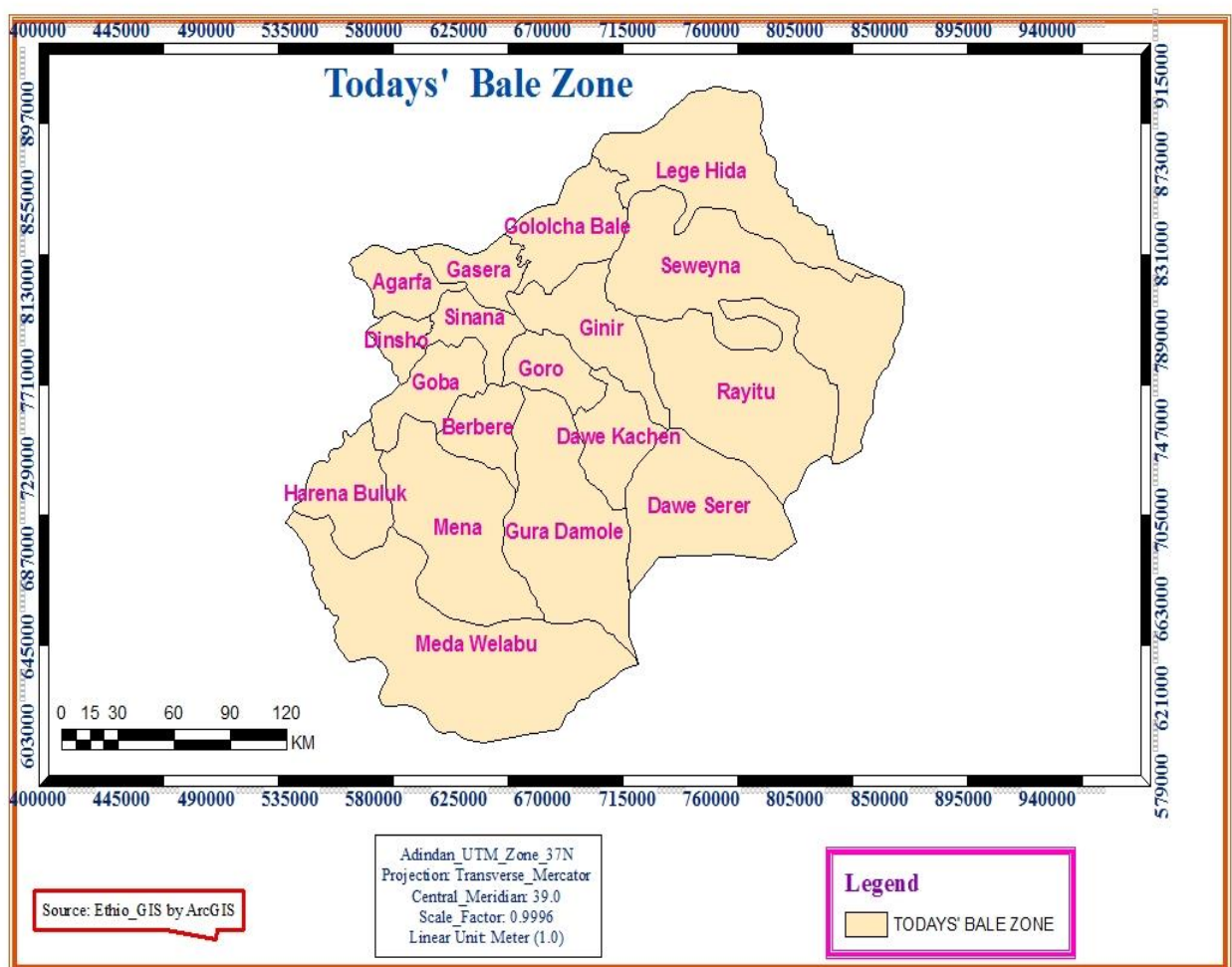


Source: Gebru Tareke, p.127.

Currently, the Bale Zone shared borders with West Arssi, Arssi, Guji, West Harärgé, and East Harärgé Zones of Oromia National Regional State (ONRS) the Somali National Regional State and the Southern Nations Nationality and Peoples' Region (SNNPR).²

²Abenet Eshetu Gebere Amlak, "Impacts of Pilgrimage Tourism: The Case of Bale Dirre Sheik Hussein" (MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Archaeology, 2011), pp.33-34.

Fig. 3. Today's Bale Zone



Source: Ethio-GIS by ArcGIS

Bale is divided into three altitudinal zones namely Lowland (*Gämmojjii*), Intermediate (*Badda daree*) and Highland (*Baddaa*). Almost half of Bale Zone is lowland. *Wärädas* (districts) like Lägä Hida, Mäddä Wälabu, Säwwéna, Rayitu, Dawé Särär, Dawé Qachän, Gura Damolé, Dällo, parts of Bärbäéré, Gololča, Ginnir and Goro are lowlands.³ Parts of Gololča, southern Goro, parts of Ginnir and the likes lie in the intermediate zone. Highland zone of Bale includes districts of Gobba,

³Mendaye Abebe, “The Oromo of Bale: A Historical Survey to 1974” (MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 2005), p. 17.

Sinana, Gasära, Agarfa, Dinšo and the likes.⁴ In general, Bale gets rainfall twice a year in the spring and autumn seasons. The spring season runs from the months of March through May whereas autumn begins with September and ends with November. Months from November to February known by its dry weather condition.⁵

In high land Bale, there are different mountains. Of these mountains, Tullu Dimtu and Batu mountains are the known. The height of Batu is 4307m while Tullu Dimtu's height is 4373m. This makes mount Tullu Dimtu the second highest mountain in Ethiopia. On top of this mountain, there is a plateau called Sannäté. This plateau extends up to 4000m above sea level and has a very splendid land feature, which makes it attractive.⁶

The forest coverage of Bale zone differs based on the difference in the distribution of rainfall, soil type and the climatic variation of the area. Highland parts of Bale are covered with forest consists of various kinds of vegetation. In this area, the Afro-Alpine and semi Afro-Alpine forest is common. There is also mountain grassland and moist lowland forest in highland Bale.⁷ One of the known forest areas in Bale is the Haränna forest.⁸

Bale is also endowed with amazing national park known as the Bale Mountain National Park which is founded in 1977. The total area of this national park is about 2200 kilo meter square. This park is the domicile of forty-six different kinds of mammals and over two hundred sixty kinds of birds. The other thing that makes this national park interesting is that its different kinds of endemic animals such as Jedala Fardaa (the Ethiopian Wolf), Gadamsa (mountain Nyala), Borofa (Menelik's Bushbuck). From the fourteen attractive species of birds found in Ethiopia, twenty of them are living in the BMNP. In addition, this park is the resident of many big mammals that are common in the highlands of Bale.⁹

⁴Ketema Meskela, "Evolution of land Owner Ship and Tenancy in Highland Bale: A Case Study of Goba, Sinana and Dodola to 1974"(MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 2001), p. 3.

⁵Solomon, P.1.

⁶*Ibid*, p.1.

⁷Mendaye, p.17.

⁸Deborah Randall, Simon Thirgood and Anouska Kinahan, *Walia: Special Edition on the Bale Mountains*,(Maputo, 2011), p. 3.

⁹Solomon, p. 1.

In Highland Bale, there are about one hundred rivers and forty-three streams. Some of them are seasonal while others are perennial. The major and well-known rivers in Bale are Gännalé, Wäyib, Wabé- Šäbälé, Wél Mäl and the likes. These rivers run towards the southeast direction into Somalia. Most of the streams and rivers of Bale spring from highland areas of the region. Therefore, the mountainous areas of Bale make the region one of the natural watersheds in Ethiopia that feeds the lowlands of Eastern and South Eastern parts of Ethiopia as far as Somalia.¹⁰ Rivers of the region are so vital for the people of the area in that, they served the people for irrigation and source of electric power. For instance, the Yadot River has been using for hydroelectric production for Männa town of Dällo district and the Wabé Šäbälé River have a hydroelectric scheme which is providing electricity to different areas of Bale and other areas of the country.¹¹

Bale's other natural endowment is its "Hara" (salty soil) which people of the area accustomed to use it for livestock consumption. This soil believed contains minerals like sodium, calcium, manganese and zinc that make cattle fat and healthy. It is obvious that the natural resources that Bale possesses are very important for the expansion of education, to conduct scientific research and for the development of our country's economy in general and for Bale zone in particular. Even though Bale has these all kinds of natural resources, due to lack of proper administration, absence of wise use of these resources and high rate of deforestation, at present the forest coverage of area is decreasing and the wealth that Bale has been getting also began draining.¹² Therefore, to curb this problem the government should create awareness for the people about the demerits of deforestation and inappropriate management of natural resources.

The people of Bale were and still leading their life by practicing different economic activities. The livelihood of the majority population of Bale is mixed farming, both farming and animal breeding. Early before the occupation of Bale by the Aswan Amara settlers, the people of Bale were dominantly engaged in animal husbandry but this agricultural practice gradually changed after the incorporation of Bale into Mengele's empire state of Ethiopia. In line with the incorporation of Bale, the people of the region started to shift their way of life from cattle breeding to that of mixed

¹⁰Mendaye, p. 17.

¹¹Bale Zone Culture and Tourism Office, *Bale Tourism Attractions Tentatively Nominated in the World Heritage List*, (Robe, 2014), pp. 18-19.

¹²Solomon, p. 2.

farming.¹³ This kind of farming mostly practiced in the highland part of Bale.¹⁴ This is so due to the climatic condition and soil type of the area is comfortable for such type of agricultural practices. In highland Bale brown and black soil of the Afro-Alpine forest and other kinds of soil are existing. These soil types are suitable for better productivity because they contain minerals of different kinds. The sandy soil of lowland areas of Bale as well suitable for farming if irrigated and get sufficient amount of rain. However, lowlands received low amount of rainfall. Due to this reason, the people in low land Bale were and still leading a pastoral nomadic way of life.¹⁵

Based on difference in climatic condition, various kinds of crops produced in Bale. In area where enough rainfall existing, cereals like barley, wheat and tiff produced in great quantity by peasants of the area. Coffee also produced in great quantity mainly in districts of Bärbärré and Dällo.¹⁶ In addition to this, pulses like field pea, horse beans and linseeds are also cultivated. Productions of crops carried out in the province in two rainy seasons. These are the *Bälg* (spring) and the *Mähär* (autumn) seasons. Residents of Bale produced crops both for household consumption and for sale. For instance, people of Bale have been providing barley for different markets in Ethiopia.¹⁷

1.2. The Historical background

1.2.1. The Early History of Bale

Bale is dominantly inhabited by the Cushitic speaking people and the largest ethnic group in the east and north east Africa which is called the Oromo.¹⁸ As Ketebo stated, the Oromo of Bale are the Arsi Oromo who had originally lived in Bareddu (beautiful) Kurkurru, the locality found in today's Bale.¹⁹ According to the genealogical tradition of the Arssi Oromo, the name Arssi derived from the name of a man called Arsé who was lived in Bale.²⁰ It was in Bale that the name Arssi for the first time used by the people of the area. This was so, probably in line with the division of the

¹³*Ibid*, p. 3.

¹⁴*Ibid*.

¹⁵Raya Abagodu and Alemayehu Mamo, *Report on the Secondary Data of Bale Highlands with Particular Emphasis on Sinana and Goba waradas of Madoyu*, (Awasa, 2001), p. 11.

¹⁶Mendaye, p. 17.

¹⁷Solomon, p.3.

¹⁸Teshome Amenu, "The Rise and Expansion of Islam in Bale of Ethiopia: A Socio-Cultural and Political Factors and Inter-Religious Relations" (MA Thesis, Norway, Philosophy, 2008), p. 26.

¹⁹Ketebo Abdiyo Ensene, "A Historical Survey of the Arsi Oromo ca1910- 1974" (MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 1999), p. 1.

²⁰Ketema, p.5.

Oromo early before they begun expansion in the 16th century. Arsé had two sons.²¹ The elder was called Siko who begotten five sons. They were Bulala, Wachala, Jawi, Waji and Ilani whereas the younger, Mändö fathered seven sons who were called Raya, Hawätu, Wanäma, Uta, Wayu, Käjäwa and Béltu.²² Around the 16th century, the offspring of Siko had moved from Bale to Arsi crossing the Wabé Šäbälé River and settled there while the descendants of Mändö largely remained in Bale. However, the Arsi Oromo expanded into different areas like the Arssi proper, Sidamo, Southern Šäwa and Bale itself through time.²³

As cited by ketema, the time when the principal clans of Arsis, the Seiko and Mändö had occupied their today's settlement area did not known but the other Oromo groups had moved in to the four directions in the country during the 16th century Oromo expansion. However, the Arssi did not move far from its original homeland. There is also a general agreement among many scholars that the south and southeastern part of Ethiopia that comprises Bale region is the ancient homeland of the Oromo.²⁴

According to informants, the Wäyeb River in Bale served as the boundary between the areas of Siko and Mändö clans. As the elders narrate, the Siko inhabited the areas east of the Wäyeb River while the Mändös settled in the areas west of the river. The huge stone planted at the village called Ginba often called Mälka Ginba had used as their boundary.²⁵ In Bale region, the Mändös largely settled in Gololča, Ginnir, Sawéna, Gasära and Lägä Hidha districts. On the other hand, even though the Sikos largely settled in Arssi proper, they also settled in Bale west of the Wäyeb River starting from the edge of Wabé Šäbälé River in the north and up to Elkäre in the south.²⁶

In addition to this, in low land areas of Bale including Mäddä Wälabu, the clans of Mäča, Tuläma and Gälalča Akako found. The Gälalča Akako clan comprised other sub-clans such as Méta, Digälu,

²¹Ketebo, p. 4.

²²Teshome, p. 30.

²³Ketebo, p. 2.

²⁴Ketema, p. 16.

²⁵Informants: Ato Muhammäd Ali and Ato Jämaal Usman.

²⁶Eshetu Bekele, Tesfaye Belachew, Sali Mamma...and others, *Baale Eessaa Gara Eessaa: Seenaa Baale Gabaabbinaan* (Bale from Where to Where: A Short History of Bale), (Robe, 2013), p.12.

Rayitu, Dénu, Dawé and the likes. However, whether these sub clans remained in the area in the 16th century during Oromo expansion or came to these areas to carry out Muda ceremony, later settled in the area as well as multiplied there not known. Following the bank of Wabé Šābälé River, mainly the marginalized society called the Wärrä Dubé clan has been lived in Bale. Other clans like Ĉäwa and Wata have been also living in Bale dispersed in different parts of the region.²⁷ The Somali with their large number of sub-clans had also been living in the lowland areas of Bale. The Sidamas who largely settled in Sidamo were also residing in Bale in Gännalé Awraja, mainly in Kokosa and Dodola districts, the present day districts of West Arssi Zone. Immigrant settlers who came from different parts of the country mainly the Amharas are the other people who have been living in Bale for long years with the Oromo originally living in the area.²⁸

Before and after their expansion, the Oromo had their own indigenous and unique political, social, economic and religious institutions. One of these institutions that the Oromo organized themselves and involved in it was the Gada system, a system in which the male members of the Oromo join the Gada classes and succeeded each other's every eight years passing through different age-grades. Passing from one age-grade to another carried as the member advanced in age. Of the age-grades in the Gada system, the sixth age-grade (Gada) is the most important and decisive one that the members of the Gada assume the position of leadership in political, social, military and spiritual matters of the society. At this stage, there are different Gada officials such as the Abba Gada (Bokku) the spokesman of the Gada assembly (Caffee), Abbaa Dula (the commander of army) and Abba Sera (who in charge of the Oromo traditional laws). In the Gada system, power was not hereditary rather transferred to the coming Gada age-grade democratically every eight years. When the Gada officials ended their term of office, they hand over the power to the next Gada class and became advisors.²⁹ Before assuming power, the Gada class had required to carrying out a Butta war to conquer new areas that did not occupied by their predecessors. This practice highly helped the Oromo to expand into different parts of the country.³⁰

²⁷*Ibid.*

²⁸NALA, Folder No17.1.5 File No.02.01.

²⁹Teshome, pp. 25-26.

³⁰Asmarom Legesse, *Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society*, (New York, London, 1973), p.74.

Before the 16th century, the Oromo people organized under one Gada center. This Gada center found in today's Bale in a locality known as Madda Walaabu. However, in line with the increase in the number of Oromo people and their expansion into different areas necessitated the establishment of additional Gada centers in many parts of Oromo areas. These are Oda Walaabu, Oda Nabé, Oda Bisel, Oda Bultum and Oda Roba.³¹ Of these five Oda's, Odo Roba is found in Ginnir district while Oda Walaabu existed in Bale Zone.³²

Before embracing either Christianity or Islam, the Oromo had their own traditional religion known as waqeffanna. The Oromo believed in one supreme God known as Waqa (Sky God). In this religion there was institution called Qallu institution. The Qallu served as the high priest who communicates the Oromo people with the Sky God (Waqa). The Qallus were involved not only in religious matters but also in secular issues.³³

1.2.2. Islamization of Bale, the Bali State and the Christian Highland Kingdom

In written sources, the name 'Bale' started mentioned for the first time during the early years of the Zagwe period. With regard to the genesis of the name Bale, oral traditions obtained from the elders of the area tell that the name Bale came into use after an Oromo called Bale. This man believed lived and died in the area around the present small village called Sambitu that found in Sinana district on the way to Gasära district in the northeast direction 14 kms away from the capital of Bale zone, Robe. Elders of the area narrate that the Oromo sub-clans called Alloshe had been carried a Muda ceremony on the tomb believed to be the tomb of Bale that exists until these days. Even though the time when the man called Bale lived in the area mentioned above was not known, the area where the tomb of this man was believed to be found around the area that had been the center/capital/ of the Muslim sultanate of Bali, Zullah.³⁴

Sources indicate that the Oromo of Bale had the tradition of demarcating the boundary of their grazing land by putting leafs or branches of trees around their possession until a visible and constant

³¹Tewodros Beyene, *Heberä Iteyopeya* (Multi-Nation Ethiopia), Volume I, (Addis Ababa, 2015), p.195.

³²Eshetu, Tesfaye, Sali... and others, p.13, See also Terje, p. 22.

³³Teshome, p. 26.

³⁴Eshetu, Tesfaye, Sali... and others, p.13.

mark erected. This tradition called by the local people as *Baala Bufanna* /leaf putting/ a practice that carried in some areas of Bale even these days.³⁵ Even though the name ‘Bale’ believed derived from the tradition of *Baalä buufänna* but the time when this name came in to be use did not known.³⁶

Islam introduced into Bale and preaching of the faith started in the area since the early 13th century. Early before the introduction of the faith into the area, people of Hadya-Sidama dominantly resided in Bale. These people had their own indigenous Cushitic religion and the first to embrace Islam no matter how this argument not accepted by the Arsi Oromo. The factor that contributed for the spread of Islam in Bale was the settlement of about one thousand Muslim families in the area by the then ruler of Adal, Shihab al-Din Badley.³⁷ The other factor was the Islamic missionary campaign carried for the first time in Bale in the late 12th century and early 13th century. Especially, the legendary Sheik Hussein believed contributed a crucial role in the spread of Islam in Bale. Written sources explain that Sheik Hussein had started preaching Islam in Anajina (Dirré) by establishing madrasas (Islamic schools). He also succeeded in attracting large number of *darasas* (students) to Anajina. When the *darasas* studied Quran in Anajina and returned to their localities disseminated the faith in their respective areas.³⁸ Therefore, Anajina served as center of Islamic learning and as a station for the traders who were travelling between Haräрге and Bale.³⁹

In the eyes of the early Muslims, the Oromo of Bale regarded as *awaamaa*, people who ate meat of animals’ slaughtered by people other than Muslims mainly believers of traditional beliefs. According to informants, until recent times, large number of Oromo of Gädäb area, especially in Dodola, Kokosa and Nänsäbo remained neither Muslims nor Christians.⁴⁰

The process of Islamization of the Oromo of Bale was not fast. Rather the people of the area abandoned their former faith and embraced Islam through a process took long years. At the beginning, the Oromo were against Islam. Especially, the people of Gädäb had a negative attitude

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Informants: Muhammäd Ali, Jämaal Usman and Ato Hasan Abdii.

³⁷Terje, p.15.

³⁸Eshetu, Tesfaye, Sali... and others, p.13.

³⁹Terje, Localizing Salafism----p.76.

⁴⁰Informants: Mäggabi Afäwäraq Dässalän, Märigéta Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Mämmeré Tasäw Wäldä Sämayat

towards Islam and scorned Muslims as well. In general, the early inter-religious interaction between the Oromo and the Muslims was not harmonious one. The Oromo who had exceeded them numerically also secluded Muslims. Even more, there was time in which the early Muslims of Bale pressurized by the Oromo to leave their settlement areas. The Oromo of Bale were also worked a lot to contain the spread of Islam in the area. Nevertheless, the presence of Oromo did not totally stop the spread of Islam in Bale no matter how Muslims remained minority for long time. Some Oromo of Bale embraced Islam at an early stage but others later. The process of Islamizing the people of Bale carried merging Islam with some elements of the traditional Oromo religion. Generally, Islam able to become the dominant faith in Bale passing through the above mentioned hindering factors.⁴¹

In line with the introduction of Islam into the Ethiopian region through the gateways like the Red Sea coast, different Muslim sultanates established in the country since the 9th century AD.⁴² The Muslim sultanate of Bali was one of the Muslim states established in Ethiopia as in line with the spread of Islam.⁴³ Thus, this sultanate believed to have established in the 13th century AD during the Zagwe period.⁴⁴ As different written sources explain, the Muslim sultanate of Bali situated between the sultanate of Däwaro and Sharka in the North, Hadya in the West and Adal in the East. However, historians have no consensus about the exact location of this sultanate. Some suggested that the Sultanate of Bale situated most probably in the area around the Wabé Šäbälé River. Its territory largely found South of Wabé Šäbälé River while some of its portion found Northeast of Wabé Šäbälé River.⁴⁵

Other written sources also explain that the Muslim sultanate of Bale was located along the mountainous region east of the present day Adaba district, the area that comprised the northeastern part of Bale. Adaba also believed to have the boundary between the Muslim sultanate of Bale and the sultanate of Hadiya. Even more, other written sources depicted that the territory of the Muslim sultanate of Bale comprised all of the former Mandoyu *awraja* and northeastern parts of the previous Wabé *awraja*. The particular areas it comprised were the present day *wärädas* (districts) of

⁴¹Terje Østebo, *A History of Islam and Inter-Religious Relations in Bale, Ethiopia*, (Stockholm, 2005), p. 25.

⁴²*Ibid*, p. 8.

⁴³Teshome, p.23.

⁴⁴*Ibid*.

⁴⁵*Ibid*, pp. 24-24.

Gobba, Sinana, Gasära, Dinsho, Agarfa, and Goro. In addition to this, the central highlands of Bale, the area of the people of Gädäb, the southern and southeastern lowlands also regarded as the territory of the Muslim sultanate of Bale. In addition, historians argued that the presence of different shrines and the trading activities carried in the area taken as an evidence for locating the Muslim sultanate of Bale around the areas mentioned above.⁴⁶

In 1332, the Muslim sultanate of Bale conquered by the Christian king, Amda Seyon. However, the Muslim people of Bale were never accepted the integration of their territory into the Christian Empire. As a result, hostility prevailed in the area between the two groups. The neighboring Muslim states such as Ifat and Adal were also repeatedly attacked the new Christian rulers of Bale. Even more the Adal ruler, Shihab al-Din Badley was able to conquer Bale for a brief period until the Christian king; Zärä Yaqob controlled it again and strengthened the Christian rule in the area in the 15th century.⁴⁷

Although Bale remained under the direct rule of the Christian rulers, the neighboring Muslim states never stopped their attack against the Christian rulers of Bale. Accordingly, in his early years Imam Ahmed had attacked the forces of the governor of Bale, Azmach Dägälähan; the brother-in-law of Emperor Lebnä Dengel. From the very beginning, Imam Ahmed was following a strategy of first conquering Bale before conquering the northern highlands, the territories that ruled under the Christian rulers. During Grañ's military expedition to Bale, his force said met large number of Christians who had great interest to embrace Islam. This showed that, earlier the indigenous people of Bale were half-heartedly embraced Christianity or the faith was imposed up on them without their willingness. At the beginning, the attack of the Imam's force was not organized one because it was a war carried not more than a raid. As a result, the Christian rulers of the area were said to have underestimated the attack of the forces of the Imam and remained in their office rather than clearing out them from the area. Using this situation as a good opportunity, Imam Ahmed carried out organized military expedition into Bale.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Terje, p. 14.

⁴⁷Eshetu, Tesfaye, Sali... and others, p.16.

⁴⁸Terje, p.13.

The two Christian noblemen of Bale, Simu and Sabbaru were who initiated the struggle to remove the Christian rulers from Bale and to conquer the area. These two Christian noblemen, who observed the strengthening of the Imam's attack, abandoned Christianity and renewed their loyalty to Islam because they half-heartedly embraced Christianity from the very beginning. They also started working secretly with Wazir Adolé, one of the Imam's war generals to fight against the Christian governor of Bale, Addällu in the 1532. The forces of Grañ and the forces of governor of Bale confronted each other's at a place called Zullah, an area around the present day Sambitu village that located northeast of Robé town. In this battle, the Christian forces lost the day and bitterly defeated by the forces of Imam Ahmed. After their defeat, the option of the Christian nobles of Bale was became either embracing Islam or being killed by the forces of Adal. Bale was the first province in the country that controlled by the Imam's force. During the rule of Ahmed Grañ Bale had also served as a strategic place for attacking the areas under the Christian highland rulers and it also served as an area where the Imam recruited as well as organized his troops.⁴⁹

Imam Ahmed defeated the Christian rulers, controlled and ruled the Ethiopian region including Bale until he was defeated and killed in battle in 1543. Then after, the Christian rulers restored their preponderance in the country. As a result, Emperor Gälawdéwos had reoccupied Bale even though the Christian rulers of Bale failed to maintain and restore a lasting rule in the area due to weakened by the Oromo expansion carried out in the area as in other parts of the country in the 16th century.⁵⁰

1.2.3. Menelik's Incorporation of Bale

The incorporation of Bale by the forces of Menelik II carried out through different methods. These include diplomacy, subversive activities and force. In addition to this, *Ras Dargé* deliberately introduced disease to victimize, affect and weaken the people of Bale. The plan to incorporate and make Bale part of Menelik's empire state of Ethiopia was designed and put into implementation by *Ras Dargé*, the paternal uncle of Emperor Menelik II. This plan came into being after the mission to conquer Arssi and Haräрге was completed in 1886 and 1887 respectively. Then, using Arssi as a springboard, *Ras Dargé* carried out his military campaign to Bale only once between 1887 and his death in 1900. He campaigned to Bale from October 1891 to July 1892.⁵¹

⁴⁹*Ibid*, p. 13.

⁵⁰*Ibid*.

⁵¹Ketema, P. 24.

At the beginning, *Ras Dargé* said to have sent spies to Bale to reconnaissance the situation in the area and gather valuable information that enabled him to control the province. The individual (spies) sent to Bale to accomplish *Ras Dargé's* plan was called Sheik Busari. Busari behaved like preacher of Islam and he moved in different parts of the province as a Muslim cleric. Wherever he moved in the province, he told to the people that he had sent by Allah to preach Islam to the people of Bale who believed in Sheik Hussein. The understanding and knowledge he had about Quran, enabled Busari easily persuade the people. Because of this, he had warm reception from the Muslim community of Bale. No one also suspected him engaged in an intelligence work.⁵²

After secretly gathered valuable information about the situation in Bale, he went to *Ras Dargé's* camp in Arsi and passed the information he had collected from the area to *Ras Dargé*. In October 1891, the forces of *Ras Dargé* crossed the Wabe Šābālē River and camped at Mälka Qurél usually called Mälka Amara at a particular place called Koloba.⁵³ Then, *Ras Dargé* arranged a meeting at Koloba to persuade and get the peaceful submission of Oromo of Bale. To this end, *Ras Dargé* requested the Sikko and Mändö from among other Oromo clans to send their representatives to Koloba.

It was Wätté Débu of Mändö from the Kādu *gosa* (clan) and Kābir Hubba of Sikko from the clan of Koloba who attended on the meeting. After discussion carried, Kābir Hubba accepted the overlordship of *Ras Dargé* without the knowledge and consent of his people. Nevertheless, later in the discussion he made with his people at a place called Shanakkaa, present day Agarfa district, his people agreed to submit peacefully to *Ras Dargé's* force even though there was some resistance. It was believed that Kābir Hubba did these all by the agitation and persuasion of Sheik Busāri. He also knew that due to the Arssi people fiercely resisted *Ras Dargé's* force. In consequence, large number of people of Arsi killed by the forces of the conquerors. Therefore, he peacefully submitted because he knew that his military force surpassed by *Ras Dargé's* force both in armament and in number. He also believed that his peaceful submission enabled him to retain his land and the position he had earlier in his clan as was some local chiefs of Arssi did earlier. Kabir Hubba knew that some local

⁵²Ahmeddin Jebel, *Sostu Ašéwoč Enna Iteyopeyan Muslimoč: Tegel Enna Mäsewatennät* (The Three Emperors and Ethiopian Muslims: Struggle and Sacrifice), (Addis Ababa, 2008), p.99.

⁵³Mendaye, p. 51.

chiefs of Arssi who did not resist against the forces of Menelik refrained from the harsh treatment of the conquerors. What also helped Kābir Hubba knew these all issues that the existence of his clan's territory along the neighboring Arsi territory.⁵⁴

Whatever the case, Kābir Hubba peacefully submitted to *Ras Dargé* on condition that he could retain his power; the peasants' land holdings continued as before and pay tribute to *Ras Dargé*. In contrary, Wätté Débu for his part preferred and decided to return to his people to discuss up on the issue and got their consent.⁵⁵

After succeeding in getting the peaceful submission of Kābir Hubba, the forces of *Ras Dargé* came to Bale crossing the Wabé Šābälé River and *Ras Dargé* established the first military camp at the strategic place called Guranda in the present day Gasära district. Even though *Ras Dargé* asked the Mändo Oromo of Bale to send their chiefs to Guranda several times, the Mändos' met at a trading place called Hambäéré which was found to the east of present day Gobba town and discussed deeply on the issue of peaceful submission and what to do concerning the advancing forces of *Ras Dargé*.⁵⁶

At the end, they determined to fight for their sovereignty instead of accepting the overlordship of *Ras Dargé*. As a result, most of the clans of Mändo organized themselves and marched to protect their territory confronting against *Ras Dargé*'s force that was advancing to cross the Wäyeb River, the boundary of the Sikko and Mändo clans. These antagonistic forces stayed for about two weeks without fighting each other's along the bank of the Wäyeb River waiting for the beginning of the first bullet fired. Finally, the forces of *Ras Dargé* started fighting the forces of the Mändo. Unfortunately, large number of hero fighters of the Mändo including Kusa Obsa killed in battle. This defeat highly affected the courage and morale of the forces of the Mändo to fight against the forces of *Ras Dargé*. The major factor that contributed for the success of *Ras Dargé*'s was his military superiority.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Ketema, p. 24.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶Mendaye, p. 50.

⁵⁷Mendaye, p.53.

Finally, the Mändos forced to retreat. To punish the retreated forces of Mändo, *Däjjazmač* Asfaw sent his soldiers led by *Ras* Layyäh from Guranda to Kärمامida. His soldiers faced no resistance until they reached Kärمامida. As soon as they arrived at Kärمامida, the soldiers of *Däjjazmač* Asfaw was said to have attacked and killed large number of people who belonged to the Emary and Abarrosa *bälbäla* (sub clan) of Kärمامida in area where formerly these sub clans killed six soldiers of *Däjjazmač* Asfaw. To avenge them, *Däjjazmač* Asfaw's force had confiscated the property of the Emary and Abarrosa clan. Accordingly, his forces; looted their cattle, turned their houses into ashes and carried out mass killing and eviction of the local people from their land. In addition to this, the families of Kärمامida were also dislocated and forced to lead a fugitive life until situations normalized.⁵⁸

Däjjazmač Asfaw Dargé, who succeeded in punishing and avenging the Kärمامida, shifted his military camp from Guranda to the center of Kärمامida territory, Gobba. *Däjjazmač* Asfaw Dargé called the clan leaders of Kärمامida from Sinana and Gobba district to his military camp at Gobba. The clan leaders who attended on the meeting discussed, negotiated and finally participants of the meeting accepted the overlord ship of *Däjjazmač* Asfaw Dargé. Then after, the military campaign launched by *Däjjazmač* Asfaw Dargé, continued and extended into other areas of Bale like Dällo as far as Boräna.⁵⁹

In the process of the conquest of Bale, *Ras* Dargé and his son *Däjjazmač* Asfaw succeeded in incorporating the *awrajas* of Mändoyyu, Gännalé and Dällo whereas the eastern and southern parts of Bale, the *awrajas* of Wabé and Elkäre were conquered by *Däjjazmač* Wäldä Gäbre'él. The forces of *Däjjazmač* Wäldä Gäbre'él entered to Bale via the Diré Sheik Hussien Shrine that the Oromos of Bale and other peoples of Ethiopia have been visiting it twice a year for religious purpose. When the Šawans came to this area, they expected that they might face great resistance in Sheik Hussien because they believed that the Oromos might made the area their center of resistance. In contrary, the conquering forces of Menelik faced resistance only from the Hawättu and the Rayitu clans. *Däjjazmač* Wäldä Gäbre'él was able to crush the resistance in that direction and pacify the area by using his diplomatic skill. As a result, he succeeded in getting the peaceful submission of the

⁵⁸*Ibid*, p.55.

⁵⁹Ketema, pp. 25-26.

local chief of Hawātu, Šuti Elémo and the chief of the Rayitu clan, Dadi Tärré. Furthermore it was said to have that *Däjjazmač* Wäldä Gäbre'él allowed these local chiefs to keep their former position. After this success, *Däjjazmač* Wäldä Gäbre'él continued the incorporation of the lowland parts of Bale including Elkäre by sending his force from his military camp he had established at Ginnir.⁶⁰

The other factor that contributed to the incorporation of Bale to Menelik's empire state of Ethiopia was a deliberately introduction of small pox disease into Bale by one of *Ras* Dargé's spy, Sheik Busari who distributed different clothes contaminated with small pox during his second mission.⁶¹ The first victim was the people of Elässa Kobo village, found in the present day Gobba district. From that locality that the disease spread quickly to the other parts of Bale and killed large number of people of the province. There was little doubt whether the outbreak of small pox disease preceded Menelik's conquest of the province or existed just during the time of its incorporation. However, many historians agreed that whatever the case the disease contributed a lot in weakening the resistance power of the people of Bale against the expansionist forces of Menelik and their easy submission to them.⁶²

Generally, as compared to the regions conquered by Menelik, the incorporation of Bale relatively achieved easily and peacefully. After Bale's incorporation completed, Menelik assigned military commanders over four districts namely: Gobba, Dodola, Dällo, and Ginnir as governors of the area. Despite the fact that number of soldiers they had did not known very well, some of their contingents were transferred to Boräna and Ogadén due to the easy submission of the people of Bale to Menelik's force.⁶³ According to informants, many Christian settlers started to settle and churches began to build in Bale following Menelik's incorporation of the area⁶⁴.

1.2.4. Administrative History of Bale

Bale passed through different administrative restructuring. From 1891 until 1946, the name of the areas that stretch from Wabé Šäbälé River to the Gänalé River was "Bale *Wäräda Gezat*" (Bale

⁶⁰*Ibid*, p. 27.

⁶¹Ahmeddin, p. 99.

⁶²Ketema, p.29.

⁶³*Ibid*, p. 29.

⁶⁴Informants: Afäwäraq Dässälän and Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay .

district Governorate).⁶⁵ From 1946 to 1960, this same region was known as Bale *Awraja Gezat* (Bale Provincial Governorate) having seven *wärädas* (districts) and 19 *meketel wärädas* (sub districts).⁶⁶ Since Menelik's conquest to 1960 the Bale *wäräda gezat* and *awraja gezat* was part of Harärgé *Awraja Gezat* and *Täqalay Gezat* respectively and governed by the governor-generals of Harärgé.⁶⁷

As informants explain, the then administrative structure had negatively affected the socio-economic development of the people of Bale in different ways. In the period under discussion, the people of Bale suffered from several problems because the distance between Bale and Harärgé was too long and no modern means of transportation. The journey also carried on foot and pack animals. As a result, the journey from Bale to Harärgé and a return was so difficult, monotonous and time consuming. The march also took averagely more than two months. During the rainy season, people who went to Harärgé and who came to Bale for official as well as personal reasons had lost their life while they attempt to cross the Wabé Šäbälé River. In general, the then administrative structure had obliged the people of Bale to waste their time, money as well as their energy.⁶⁸ However, in 1960 Bale became a separate "*Täqalay Gezat*" (Bale Provincial Governorate General) independent of the Harärgé *Täqalay Gezat*.⁶⁹

At the beginning, the Bale's *Täqalay Gezat* was divided into four *awrajas*.⁷⁰ Later on, the *awrajas* of the *Täqalay Gezat* grew to five *awrajas* that existed up until the collapse of the *Därg* regime. These five *awrajas* were Fasil (later Mändoyyu), Gännalé, Wabé, Dällo and Elkäre. These *awrajas* (sub provinces) also divided into 25 *wärädas* (districts) with an area of 127,052 square kilometer.⁷¹

⁶⁵Solomon, p.3.

⁶⁶NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 396.02.

⁶⁷NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 403.02 E.C., NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 396.08.

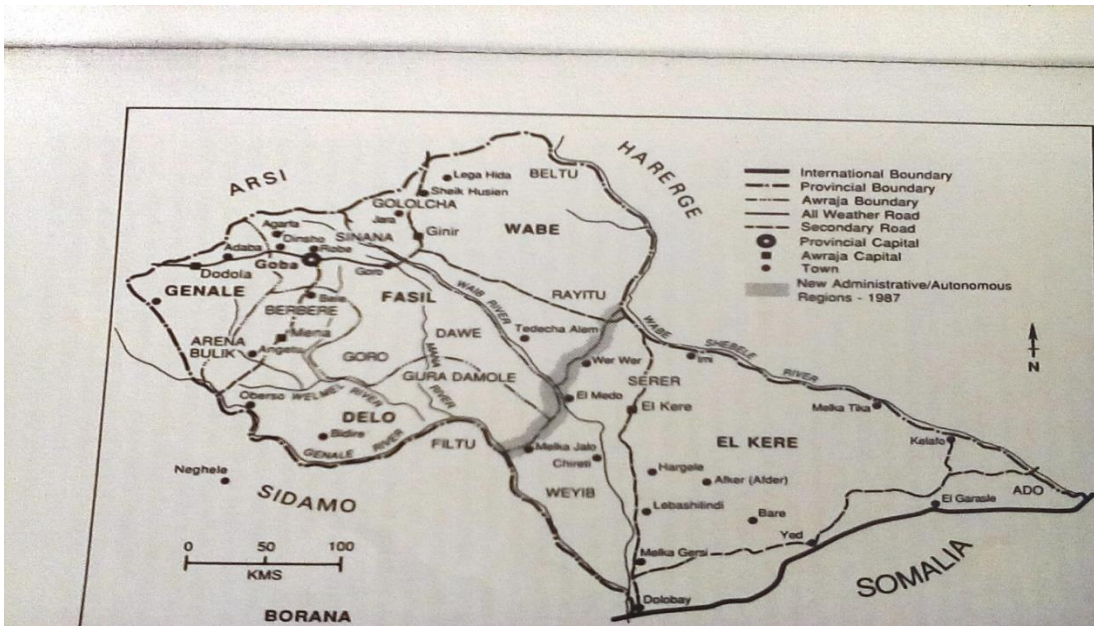
⁶⁸Informants: Asäfa Fäqqädä, Mängestu Yergu and Mämmeré Däbbäbä Mälläsä.

⁶⁹NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 419.02.; NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 419.04.; See Appendix I

⁷⁰NALA, Folder No 17.2 File No 403.02.

⁷¹*The Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia Office of National Committee For Central Planning Central Statistical Office: Area by Region, Awraja, Werada in Sq. Km, Gasha, Hektar , Bulletin-49,(Addis Ababa, 1986), P. 16.*

Fig. 4. Sub provinces (*awrajas*) of Bale before 1991



Source: Gebru Tareke, p.127.

Following the 1974 Revolution, administratively Bale gained different names. At the beginning, it named as “*Yä Bale Keflä Hagär*” (Bale provincial Administration) but later this name changed into “*Yä Bale Keflä Hagär Astädadär Akkababi*” (Bale Administrative Region). In line with the fall of the *Därg* regime and the coming to power of the FDRE’s government (1991) zonal administrative structure put into use. In this restructuring, the Bale zone had seventeen *wärädas* with an area of 121,208 km². This reduction of area was caused due to the former *wärädas* of Elkäré *awraja* made part of the Somali National Regional state in the new administrative restructuring.⁷² Again, due to another administrative restructuring of 2006, which include the four former *wärädas* of Bale namely Dodola, Adaba, Nänäsäbo and Kokosa separated from Bale and made part of West Arsi zone.⁷³ In the new administrative restructuring, the total area of Bale is reduced to 63,329.9 Km².⁷⁴ Currently the Bale zone has a total area of 323,765.28 hectares.⁷⁵ Currently, in church administration Dodola, Adaba, Nänäsäbo and Kokosa *wärädas* still administered from Bale zone.⁷⁶

⁷²Ketema, p. 13.

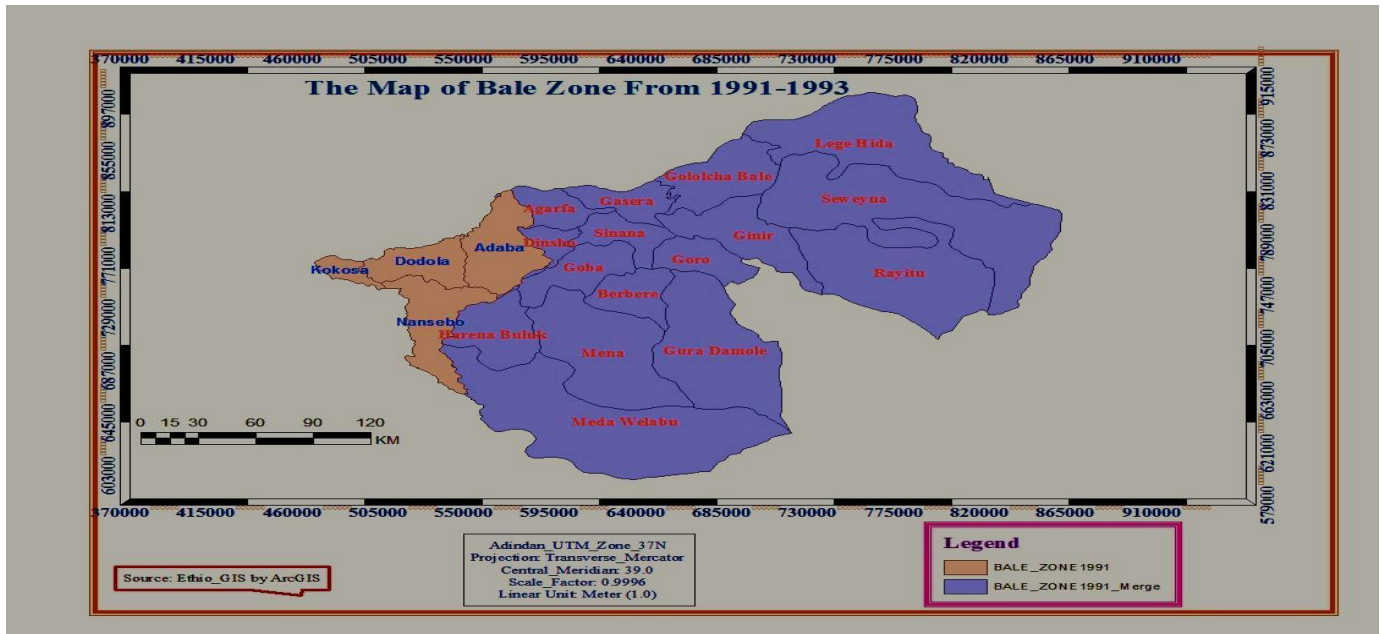
⁷³Phetros Argaw, “The History of Dodola District 1890-1991” (MA Thesis, Addis Ababa university, History, 2015), p.1

⁷⁴Council of Regional State of Oromia Bureau of Planning and Economic Development, *Physical and Socio-Economic Profiles of 180 Districts of Oromia Region*, (Finfinne, 2000), P.50.

⁷⁵Abenet, p. 34

⁷⁶Informants: Ato Asäfa Fäqqädä, AtoMängestu Yergu and Mämmeré Däbbäbä Mälläsä.

Fig.5. The map of Bale from 1991 to 1993



Source: Ethio-GIS by ArcGIS

Therefore, the study focuses on the history of Christianity in Bale including Dodola, Adaba, Nänäsäbo and Kokosa districts of the today's West Arsi zone and the former Elkare *awraja*, now part of the Somali Regional State.

1.2.5. Bale during the Italian Invasion

Italy conquered Bale in 1937. Italians entered to Bale from the direction of the southeast through Elkäré. One of the factors that helped the Italians to control Bale was the support they got from local collaborators who felt oppressed by Christian Amharas such as Fätulé Täqäné, one of the Somali chiefs in Elkäré.⁷⁷ As different sources explained, Italians sent Fätulé Täqäné to Rayitu to win the support of the known Oromo *balabat* known as *Fitawrari* Nuho Dadhi Tärré.⁷⁸ After the Italians succeeded in getting the support of *Fitawrari* Nuho, they sent him to *Qäñazmač* Muhammäd Yubé of Goro to persuade him and won his support of in effort they tried to control the capital of the province, Gobba. Accordingly, before the Italians advanced and entered central Bale, *Qäñazmač* Muhammäd Yubé agreed to collaborate with the Italians by the persuasive activities of *Fitawrari* Nuho. Even more, *Qäñazmač* Muhammäd Yubé in turn able to persuade the local people as well as one of the

⁷⁷Ketema, p. 49.

⁷⁸Terje, p. 127.

balabats in Robé Wäläšé, *Fitawrari Šéymo*. Therefore, in the Italians success in the occupation of Gobba, the contribution of *Fitawrari Šéymo* was very great.⁷⁹

In the 1930s, the governor of province of Bale was *Dajjazmač Bäyyänä Märed*. Emperor Haile Selassie made him left Bale and join with the army of Ethiopia that confronted against the fascist force in the southeastern front. *Balambaras* Emeru had given the responsibility of supporting *Dajjazmač Bäyyänä Märed* defending Gobba from falling under the control of the Italians.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, he was unable to resist the Italian attack that reinforced by the Oromos who were collaborated with Italian and armed by them. As a result, the capital of the province, Gobba was fall under the control of the Italians. At the end, *Balambaras* Emeru along with his forces fled to Harärgé through Dirré Sheik Hussein to join the patriots fighting the Italians in the bushes.⁸¹ After they conquered the province, the Italians established Muslim type of local administration in Bale. For instance, the local chiefs of Bale: *Sheik* Muhammäd Šéymo, Nuho Dadhi and others were empowered with a title known as Sultan and the opportunity to visit Rome also given by the Italians for some notable Oromos.⁸²

The administrative structure established in Bale by the Italians divided the province into two *Commissariatis* (provinces) and six *Residenzis* (districts). The two *commissariatis* were the *commissariati* of Gobba and the *commissariati* of Ginnir. Under the Gobba *commissariati* the *residenzi* of Dodola, Sačégillo (Dällo) and Gobba itself were included while the *commissariati* of Ginnir comprised the *residenzi* of Mägalo (Goro), Sheik Hussein and Ginnir.⁸³

The Italians had worked a lot to get the support of majority Muslim society of Southeast Ethiopia including Bale who had great grievances against the rulers of the area and who felt suffered from religious operation and exploitation of the *näftäñas*. As a result, Italians carried out an extensive propaganda campaign up on the Amhara rule in the area. Intentionally, they were working to create hatred between the Christian settlers and Muslims in the province. Italians also behaved as the

⁷⁹Ketema, p. 49.

⁸⁰Mendaye, p. 72.

⁸¹Ketema, p. 49.

⁸²Mendaye, P.74.

⁸³Ketema, p. 49.

liberators of Muslims from the oppressive and exploitative rule of the Šāwans.⁸⁴In the Italian period, Muslims of Bale benefited to some extent. For instance, Italians abolished the *gābbar* system. Due to this reason, Oromos were able to regain their lost lands. To mention, in Gololča district Tāmamo area, there was eleven *gašas* of land that registered as *Šālāqahudad* and controlled by the name of *Qāñazmač* Bālačāw Buši in 1917. However, Italians took that land from *Qāñazmač* Bālačāw Buši and gave it to *Grazmač* Umār Sāmma who claimed that land was belonged to him before the advent of the Italians.⁸⁵

Even though Muslims were and still dominant in Bale, there were no Muslim judges in the area before the Italian period. Therefore, in judiciary the Italians benefited Muslims of Bale in that they replaced Christian judges by the Muslim ones.⁸⁶ In addition to this, the Italian era in Bale helped the Oromos of the area to get freedom of religion. Even more, Italians supported the Muslims in the province in the construction of Mosques in the districts like Gobba, Ginnir, Dodola and Dällo Männa.⁸⁷ In contrary, the Italians were against the churches. Instead of supporting building churches, they had destroyed many churches in the province in the period under discussion even though there was no organized data that indicate the exact number of churches destroyed.⁸⁸Italians had also created favorable situations to enable Muslims attend religious pilgrimages in the Muslim centers like Diré Sheik Hussein.⁸⁹Italians did these all things not because from their genuine interest in Islam rather a tactic they did to get support from the Arab world for their activities they carried out to establish its colony in the Horn of Africa.⁹⁰However, after liberation Emperor Haile Selassie continued his former policy. During his rule, there was some degree of tolerance towards Islam but a guarded one. The regime had also worked to correct the influence of Islam that came into being in the area during the Italian period.⁹¹

⁸⁴Informants: Jemal Usman, Māngestu Yergu and Asāffa Fāqqädä.

⁸⁵Ketema, p.50.

⁸⁶Mendaye, p.74.

⁸⁷Terje, p.129.

⁸⁸Informants: Afawarq Dāssalāñ and Tadasa Wāldä Tänsay.

⁸⁹Menday, p. 73.

⁹⁰Terje, p. 35.

⁹¹*Ibid*, p. 130.

1.2.6. Ethnic Groups, Population and Religious Groups Found in Bale

Up to the early 1960s, Bale was a province inhabited by small number of population. Afterwards however, this condition gradually altered in line with the subsequent increase influx of settlers to the region and fertility of the people. According to the 1984 census report, 88.9 % of the population is Oromo, while 7.6 % are Amhara and 3.5 % are other ethnic groups.⁹² According to this census report shows, Bale's population number reached 780,254. The report also shows that the Muslim population of the province was 69.7%. The Orthodox Christianity ranks second having 23.9% of believers followed by followers of traditional belief which accounts for 4% of population of the province. The remaining 1.1% were others, 0.7% were Protestant Christianity while 0.5% and 0.2% were not stated and Catholics respectively. Islam was and still is the dominant religion in the region. As of the 1984 census report, it accounts for 544,046 number of population. In this census, the population of the frontiers of Bale added on estimate.⁹³ The 1994 census result also justified that there was radical progress in the increase of population number in Bale. The census shows the number of population of Bale Zone was 1,217,864. Religion wise, 76.70%, 19.1 %, 2.76 %, 1.15%, 0.17 %, 0.14 % were Muslim, Orthodox Christianity, Believers of traditional belief, Protestant Christianity, stated as others and Catholics while 0.05 % were categorized under not stated.⁹⁴ In the 2007 census also the number of population in Bale zone raised to 1,402, 492. When the number of population of the four former districts of Bale that are now made part of West Arsi zone namely Dodola, Adaba, Nānsābo and Kokosa added, the figure reached 1,994,129. Of this 81.30% is Muslim and 14.49% is Orthodox Christianity. The rest 3.35 %, 0.47 %, 0.27 % and 0.10 % are followers of Protestant Christianity, Traditional beliefs, Catholic and others respectively.⁹⁵

⁹²Abenet, p. 34.

⁹³People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: Office of the Population and Housing Census Commission, *1984 Analytical Report on Bale Region*, Addis Ababa, 1989, p.20.

⁹⁴Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Office of Population and Housing Census Commission Central Statistical Authority: *the 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, Results for Oromia Region, Volume I: Part I, Statistical Report on Population Size and Characteristics*, Addis Ababa, 1996, p.362.

⁹⁵Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission Central Statistical Agency: *The 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia Results for Oromia Region Part I Statistical Report on Population Size and Characteristics*, Addis Ababa, 2010, pp.292-300.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY IN ETHIOPIA

2.1. The Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity

According to the sources of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Ethiopia embraced Christianity in the first century AD. As stated in the Holy Bible, Christianity brought to Ethiopia around first century AD during the reign of Negest Hendäké (Queen Candace) of Ethiopia. It was when an Ethiopian Eunuch went to visit Jerusalem and met with an evangelist Philip there. Evangelist Philip preached the gospel to the Eunuch who was completed his worship and ready to return to his country. At the end, the Eunuch agreed and baptized by the hands of the evangelist Philip. As a result, the Eunuch became the first Ethiopian to embrace Christianity. On his way back to Ethiopia, the Eunuch preached the gospel for the people.⁹⁶ However, other scholars do not agree with the argument that the Eunuch preached the gospel in Ethiopia because there are no evidences that assure whether the Eunuch preached the gospel in the country or not.⁹⁷

Other sources tell us that in the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem there were Ethiopians who participated in the baptism of Holy Spirit. When these Ethiopians returned to Ethiopia, they introduced the faith and began preaching the gospel. Again, some other sources argue that Jesus' disciple called Mathew who came to Ethiopia for evangelization was who preached the gospel in the country. Still there is no ample evidence that support this claim.⁹⁸

However, many written sources tell us that from its cradle place in the Middle East; Christianity introduced to Ethiopia, gained the support and recognition of the state in the 4th century AD.⁹⁹ This was associated with the arrival of a Syrian merchant known as Meropius along with the two

⁹⁶Acts.8:27-40, See also Abba Gorgoriwos, *Yä Iteyopeya Ortodokes Täwahedo Bétäkerestiyän Tarik* (The History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church), (Addis Ababa, 1982), p.20.

⁹⁷Taffese Muluneh, *Yä Haymanot Leyyunätoč* (Religious Differences), (Addis Ababa, 1997), p.56.

⁹⁸Dawit Yohannis Wariyo, "Factors Sustaining the Growth of Local Congregation: The Case of the Three Congregations of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (Addis Ababa, Dodola and Awassa, Tabor)" (MA Thesis, Bergen, Norway, Theology, 2008), p. 26.

⁹⁹Buruk Wäldä Mikaél, "The Lake Zeway Churches and Monastery 1941 to the Present" (MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 2009), p. 1.

Christian brothers named Frumentius and Aedesuius around the Red sea coast. Unfortunately, Meropius killed at the port of Adulis. Persons of Adulis found the two young boys who were crying under the tree. Finally, they brought them to the then king of Aksum, Ella Amida with the help of the governor of Baher Nāgash. The king made Frumentius and Adisius to live with his children, Ezana and Saizana in the palace.¹⁰⁰ This opportunity helped the two Christian youngsters learn Ge'ez language. Liqā Kahenat Embärā thought them Ge'ez in Aksum. After the king and his wife died one after another, the responsibility to rule the country using the Jewish culture fail on the shoulder of Ezana and Saizana. During that time, the pagan kings of Aksum, Ezana and Saizana baptized by Frumenatius and became Christian. Their baptismal name also called Abräha Wä Aşäbäha (Abreha and Atsbeha). Since then, Christianity started to spread in the country. Furthermore, Ezana sent Frumentius to Alexandria, Egypt to request the Alexandrian bishop send a bishop for Ethiopia. The then Alexandrian Bishop, Atnatéwos (Athanasius) who was known for his protest against the teachings of Ariwos, deeply examined the question of Frumentius and determined to send a bishop who could understand and communicate in Ge'ez as well as knew the culture and the way of life of people of Ethiopia. To this end, bishop Athanasius persuaded Frumentius himself who fulfilled these qualities to be the bishop of Ethiopia. The bishop and Frumentius reached at an agreement. Then, Bishop Athanasius granted the religious titles of deacon, priest and Bishop for Frumnetius one after another based on the Orthodox Church rule.

Finally, Frumnetius was send to Ethiopia and became the first bishop of the country. His name also called *Abba Sälama*, Käsate Berähan (Father of Peace and Revealer of Light). However, his brother, Adisius returned to his country. As soon as he became bishop, *Abba Sälama* continued teaching the gospel and worked to spread Christianity in Ethiopia. The first Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido church, the Tseyon Maryam church (Tseyon Mary's church) of Aksum established in 342 AD. This church was unique in its architectural design from the churches built at that time in the world. Then after, different rock hewn churches built in different parts of Ethiopia at different times.¹⁰¹

The spread of Christianity which begun during the time of Frumentius reached its peak in line with the advent of the Nine Saints who came from Syria namely *Abba Zä Michaél*, *Abba Liqanos*,

¹⁰⁰Taffese, p.56, See also Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, 1994), p.7.

¹⁰¹Belay Geday, *Yä Iteyopeya Seletané* (The Ethiopian civilization), (Addis Ababa, 1991), p.115.

Abba Péntéléwon, Abba Yeshaq/Gäräma, Abba Guba, Abba Yemata, Abba Tséhma, Abba Aléf, and Abba Aftsé in the 5th century A.D.¹⁰² These Saints contributed a lot in spreading Christianity, translating the bible from Greek language to Ge'ez language and the establishment of monasteries and the beginning of monastic life in Ethiopia.¹⁰³ Some of the monasteries established in the name of these Saints were Däbrä Damo, Qonaşel, Asebo, Mädära, Badäralta, Gäralta, Şädäniya, Bezehan/Halléluya and Yoha/Yéha.¹⁰⁴

In the 6th century, in line with the rise of St. Yared a new chapter was opened in the advancement of the services provided by the EOTC. St. Yared came up with three different church hymn that the EOTC using from the antiquity to the present. The three varieties of Yared's hymn that the church has been using are *Ge'ez, Ezel* and *Araray*. These hymns of Yared, was and still used in the day-to-day services rendered by the church.¹⁰⁵

From the Aksumite period up to the 1974 revolution, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church served as the state official religion. However, during the reign of king Suseniyos Catholicism was declared as a state official religion of Ethiopia. This situation however, resulted in civil war between the Orthodox and Catholic followers, which claimed the life of many people of Ethiopia. The civil war ended when the Orthodox Tewahedo faith restored and Susiniyos abdicated his power in favor of his son, Fasiledes.¹⁰⁶

During the war of Ahmed *Grañ*, Islam got the opportunity to spread in Ethiopia and many Christians forced to convert their religion to Islam. Due to this war, many valuable religious documents and churches burnt and the life of large number of people lost.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰²Wendyé Ali, *Bämäkära Weset Yabbäbäč Bétäkerestiyā: Yä Iteyopeya Qalä Hiwot Bétäkerestiyā Tarik, HulättäñaEttem* (Church out of Tribulation: The History of the Kale Hiwot Church, Volume I), (Addis Ababa, 2000), p.10, See also Sergaw Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270*, (Addis Ababa, 1972), p.115, Abba Gorgoriwos, p.26.

¹⁰³Mekre Selassie Gebre Amanuel, *Yä Egzi'abehérMängest Tarik Bä Meder Lay: Täqlala Yä Bétäkerestiyā Tarik* (The History of God's Nation on the Earth: General History of Church), (Addis Ababa, 2008), pp.166-169.

¹⁰⁴Wendye, p.10.

¹⁰⁵Berhanu Gebre Amanuel, Teshome Zerihun, Kenfe Gebrel Altaye... and others, *Yä Iteyopeya Bétäkerestiyā Tenantenna enna Zaré* (The Ethiopian Church Yesterday and Today), (Addis Ababa), 2000, p.13.

¹⁰⁶Taffese, p.84.

¹⁰⁷Germa zewde, *Iteyopis*, (Addis Ababa, 1993), p.97.

The Ethiopian Orthodox church faced internal split during the era of princes. That was due to the controversy over the nature of Jesus Christ. Especially, the doctrinal difference up on the character of the body of Jesus Christ was very strong. Within the EOC, people began to believe differently such as “*Tsäga*” (the three births of Christ), “*Qebat*” (unction), “*karra*” or “*Täwahedo*” (the two births of Christ).¹⁰⁸

After this period ended, Emperor Tewodros II, Yohannis IV, Menelik II and Haile Selassie I had given great emphasis for the spread of Orthodox Christianity. Especially, Emperor Tewodros II and Yohannis IV had tried their best to maintain unity in the EOTC (Ethiopian Orthodox Täwhedo church) and solve the doctrinal differences within the church by arranging religious conferences.¹⁰⁹ Iyasu had followed a unique approach towards religion as compared to the other rulers of Ethiopia in that he gave recognition for both Islam and Christianity. Moreover, Iyasu had supported Islam by facilitating the building of mosques.¹¹⁰

Formerly, Muslims of the country treated equally as that of the Christians. Muslims had been neglected position in different levels of government administrative posts and they had not the right to acquire their own land. Contrary to their predecessors, Emperor Menelik II and Haile Selassie I had showed some degree of religious tolerance. For instance, this tolerance manifested in the 1931 constitution. In principle the constitution provided equal rights for all nations of the country and Muslims of the country enjoyed the right to possess their own land as well as the right to serve in different state administrative posts but in practice these rights did not put into implementation.¹¹¹

The *Därg* that controlled power in 1974 started to follow an ideology known as Scientific Socialism. The *Därg* declared the separation of state and religion. Accordingly, in 1974 *Därg* ended relationship

¹⁰⁸*Ibid*, P.108, See also Teferra Haile- Selassie, *The Ethiopian Revolution 1974-1991: From a Monarchical Autocracy to Military Rule*, (New York, 1997), p.17.

¹⁰⁹R. A Caulk, Religion and the State in Nineteenth Century Ethiopia: *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Volume X, No 1 (Addis Ababa, 1972), pp.23.24.

¹¹⁰Fesseha Yaze, *Yä Iteyopeya Yä Ammest Amät Tarik: Kaltüzämmärälät Iyyasu Iskä Tüzämmärällät Ihadég*(The Five Thousand years History of Ethiopia: From the Reign of Iyasu to EPRDF). Volume 2, Addis Ababa, 2012, p. 14.

¹¹¹Øyvind M. Eide, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia: The Growth and Persecution of the Mekane Yesus Church 1974-85*, (Addis Ababa, 2000), p.35, See also Wudu Tafete Kassu, “The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, The Ethiopian State and the Alexandrian See: Indigenizing the Episcopacy and Forging National Identity1926-1991” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Philosophy 2006), P.294.

existed between the state and the EOC which have been the state official religion. The EOC also lost its former privileges. For example, 1/3 of the agricultural land of the country, possessed by the church for centuries, the regime had nationalized. This land reform highly weakened the economic base of the church and its functionaries. *Därg* also announced the equality of all religions but this right did not put into practice, rather remained on paper. Because the *Därg* had been working to abolish religions through methods like propaganda campaign, persecuting worshippers and even more carried out torture and murder.¹¹²

Muslims who were marginalized in the past regimes had enjoyed some rights during the early period of the *Därg* rule. For instance, Muslim holidays got recognition by the regime.¹¹³ However, the *Därg* gradually started its harsh treatment against the Muslims, Protestant Christianity church followers and the EOC as well. Arrest, torture and killing became common.¹¹⁴ It is starting from the coming to power of the FDRE government that all people are enjoying the right to practice their religion.¹¹⁵

As Christianity introduced into Ethiopia in the 4th century, it was Frumentius (*Abba Sälama*) who discharged religious leadership, consecrated new churches, appointed deacons and priests. On the other hand, the *Liqä Kahenats* controlled the secular affairs of the church. Hierarchically, there was one *LiqäKahenat* at the top and many *Liqä Kahenats* at the bottom who provided the secular church administration in the different regions of the country. Generally, the spiritual matters of the church carried by imported bishops while the secular issues run by Ethiopians.¹¹⁶

Since the 4th century AD to 1959, the EOC was also dependent on the Coptic church of Alexandria, Egypt for its bishop. Ethiopians had no the freedom to elect and to be elected a bishop. This dependence started with the coming of Frumentius, the first Archbishop of Ethiopia. Since then, it was from Egypt that bishops and archbishops appointed and sent for Ethiopia. The sending of bishops from Egypt to Ethiopia carried for the sake of getting more money from Ethiopia than

¹¹²Øyvind M, p.113.

¹¹³Teshome, p.292.

¹¹⁴Øyvind M, p.113.

¹¹⁵John Abbink, *Religion in Public Spaces: Emerging Muslim-Christians Polemics in Ethiopia*, (Leiden, 2011), p.260.

¹¹⁶Tamrat Abera, "The Administration of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Past and the Present" (BTH Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Theology, 1973), p. 3.

rendering theological services and spreading the Christian faith. To get a bishop, the Ethiopian government had to pay tribute to the Coptic church of Egypt. To sustain this benefit and other advantages, the Coptic church of Egypt had passed several laws that made them beneficiary. Surprisingly enough, the bishops who sent to Ethiopia were not able religious leaders. Most of them were less competent to run their offices effectively.¹¹⁷

The Ethiopians age-old dream that the EOC had to become independent from the Copts domination and influence realized after prolonged negotiations made between the EOC and the Coptic church of Egypt. Their effort bore fruit and ended with success in 1959.¹¹⁸ Accordingly, an Ethiopian, *Abunä Basiliyos* was able to become the first Ethiopian patriarch on 28 June 1959. For this success, the contribution of Emperor Haile Selassie was very great.¹¹⁹ This event sealed and ended the dominance of Coptic Church of Egypt over the EOC. Since 1959, Ethiopia won the freedom and independence to produce, consecrate, appoint bishops of its own and sent to different parts of Ethiopia to spread Christianity and to ordain the deacons and priests produced in different parts of the country.¹²⁰

2.2. Catholicism in Ethiopia

The Roman Catholic faith brought to Ethiopia during the war of the Christian highland kingdom and the Muslim sultanate of Adal led by Imam Ahmed (Ahmed Grañ). During this war, the forces of the Christian Highland state unable to withstand the attack of the forces of Adal. As a result, they asked military assistance from their Christian ally, the Portuguese to counter attack the forces of Imam Ahmed backed by the Turks. However, the Portuguese help arrived a year after the death of the king of Christian Highland state, Lebne Dengel in 1541. In this year, the Portuguese military force under the commandship of Christopher da Gama came to Ethiopia.¹²¹ Unfortunately, most of the Christian soldiers defeated and killed by the forces of the Imam in battle. Later, the survivors and the forces of the son and successor of Lebne Dengel, Gelawdewos succeeded in defeating the forces of Adal and killed Imam Ahmed himself at the battle of Woina Dega in 1543.¹²²

¹¹⁷*Ibid*, p. 48.

¹¹⁸Adugna Amanu, "The Ethiopia Orthodox Church Becomes Autocephalous" (BA Thesis, Haile Selassie I University, History, 1969), pp. 2.4.

¹¹⁹Emperor Haile Selassie I, "Yä Iteyopeya Bétäkerestiyān Edegät eñna Näšannät" (The development and Independence of the Ethiopian Church), (Addis Ababa, 1967), p.112.

¹²⁰Tamrat, p. 20.

¹²¹Germa, p.97.

¹²²Yohannis Sandvéd, *Yä Bétäkerestiyān Tarik Bämäkakäläñaw Zämān*, (The History of Christianity in the Medieval period), (Addis Ababa, 1981), p.21.

After the defeat of the Sultanate of Adal, the remaining Portuguese soldiers preferred to live in Ethiopia rather than returned to their country. These Portuguese soldiers were the followers of Catholic religion. In line with this, the Catholic missionaries send to Ethiopia to render religious services for these soldiers. These Portuguese missionaries often called the Jesuits (*Eyyäsusawiyän*).¹²³The well-known Catholic missionaries of the time were Bermudez, Ovedo, Pedro paez and Mendeth.¹²⁴ The Jesuits tried to spread Catholicism in Ethiopia using a system of converting first the rulers and then the broad mass to Catholicism. After they achieved victory over Imam Ahmed, one of the Portuguese missionaries, Bermudez requested king Gälawdéwos to make Catholicism the state official religion in Ethiopia as well as all Ethiopians embrace Catholicism because he claimed that earlier he had agreement with his father, King Lebne Dengel. However, Gelawdewos refused to do so by responding to him that the agreement was not concerned him and he told him that the issue of religion was not possible through force and decree.¹²⁵

Due to this reason, at the beginning, their attempt to convert the rulers of Ethiopia to Catholicism became futile. However, for the first time Pedro Paez was able to realize his dream in converting Emperor Zä Dengel to Catholicism even though his conversion was secret. Then king Susinious embraced Catholicism by the relentless work of Alfonso Mendez. Finally, Susinious declared Catholicism as a state official religion and the broad mass should accept the government's edict. However, this decree caused a nationwide opposition. The followers of the Orthodox faith determined to die for their religion. As a result, a civil war broke out between the Catholic and Orthodox religion followers. This war resulted in the death of many people from both sides. Susinious understood that the war would become more serious and could claim the life of several people. Therefore, he declared the restoration of the Orthodox faith and abdicated his power in favor of his own son, Fasiledes.¹²⁶ With this, the war ended. Fasiledes also for his part expelled the Jesuits from Ethiopia in 1632 because he believed that the presence of the Jesuits that caused the instability and civil war in the country. However, the Roman Catholic Church never stopped their effort to

¹²³Taffese, p.84.

¹²⁴Germa, p.105.

¹²⁵*Ibid*, p.100.

¹²⁶Wendye, p. 38.

spread Catholicism in Ethiopia. Several Catholic missionaries attempted to enter into Ethiopia and evangelize the people. However, they faced strong opposition from the people. Those missionaries captured by the people suffered from harsh punishment and even sentenced to death. At that time, becoming Catholic was seen as a great betrayal and heretic than becoming Islam.¹²⁷

The civil war carried during the reign of king Susinuos between the Orthodox and Catholic followers became source hostility and distrust in the years ahead. From 1769 to 1855 another period of dispute and civil war, the so-called era of princes that stagnated the development of Ethiopia happened. After this period of crisis ended by Kassa Hayilu, the later Emperor Tewodros II, the Roman Catholic Church ventured to send the Catholic missionaries to Ethiopia. One of these missionaries was a priest known as *Abba Ya'eqob*. He spread Catholicism by preaching the gospel using the local language, Amharic and by conforming to the Orthodox Tāwahedo faith. In his evangelization work, *Abba Ya'eqob* succeeded in gaining over 12,000 converts. In order to render effective leadership for the followers the Catholic faith in Ethiopia, the Roman Catholic Church appointed *Abba Ya'eqob* to be the first bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in Ethiopian. However, in the years ahead, the government disliked the success of the Catholic evangelization and started to oppose the church.¹²⁸

The Italian invasion opened another opportunity for the spread of Catholicism in Ethiopia. During this period, a number of Catholic missionaries came to the country. Many Catholic Churches also built and the faith broadly known among the people. Nevertheless, disagreement occurred once again on the question of the character of the body of Jesus. In consequence, the Catholic missionaries expelled from Ethiopia. However, this action of the regime never stopped the faith from spreading. Now a day's Catholicism gained great acceptance from the public and the government. As a result, beyond spreading the faith, the church has opened many schools in different parts of Ethiopia serving in teaching large number of students. In addition, the church also contributed a lot in helping those people who have different social problems.¹²⁹

¹²⁷Taffese, p.84.

¹²⁸Germa, p.108.

¹²⁹Taffese, p.85.

2.3. Protestantism in Ethiopia

Protestantism first emerged in the world in German by a person known as Martin Luther. At the beginning, he was a Catholic monk but later he began to oppose the mal practices in the Catholic Church and established a protestant church in 1517.¹³⁰ However, Protestantism lacked universality because of the attitudinal difference of believers in different neighboring countries such as in Germany, Switzerland, Scotland, Britain and the likes. Due to doctrinal and attitudinal differences now a days there are over two hundred sect of protestant Christianity churches in the world.¹³¹

They were European protestant missionaries who spread the faith in Ethiopia. Among these men like Peter Heyling, Samuel Gobat and Rev. John Ludwig Krapf attempted to enter the northern parts of Ethiopia; at different times starting from the 17th century. Of these protestant missionaries, Peter Heyling was the first missionary who came to Ethiopia around the end of the 1634. As soon as he came to Ethiopia, he studied the Amharic language and translated the gospel of John into Amharic. In 1830, other protestant missionaries like Samuel Gobat and Christian Kugler also came to Ethiopia. At the beginning, the aim of these missionaries was to work in collaboration with the age-old church, the EOC and was not to establish new churches. However, their aim became unsuccessful because the EOC resisted them strongly. Another missionary, Rev. Krapf marched to the southern parts of Ethiopia as far as Šäwa and made his settlement at a town known as Ankobär. There, he tried his best to evangelize the local people, especially the Oromo. He also established another new church in the area. Later on, many other European missionaries carried out the work of evangelizing the people of the country.¹³² In line with this, different protestant Christianity churches established in Ethiopia. The major protestant Christianity churches in Ethiopia are Ethiopian Evangelical Church-Mekane Yesus (EECMY), Mulu Wängél (Full Gospel) Church, the Qalä Hiwot church, the Mäesärätä Kerestos church and the likes. There are also other churches out of the sects of the protestant church, such as the Seventh day Adventist church, Jehovah witness and the likes established in the country.¹³³

¹³⁰Yohannis, p.85.

¹³¹Taffese, pp.98-99.

¹³²Dawit, pp. 27-28.

¹³³Addise Amado, "Orthodox –Protestant Tension in Ethiopia: A Sociological Perspective on Religious Prejudices and Social Boundaries" (BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Sociology, Social Administration and Anthropology, 1999), p.12, See also Taffese, pp.112-113.

2.3.1. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church-Mekane Yesus (EECMY)

The source of EECMY is the Norwegian Mission and the base of this Church is the Lutheran religion.¹³⁴ The EECMY introduced into Ethiopia, Gondar around 1829 by the Germans, Samuel Gobat and Christian Kugler who backed by the Anglican Church. Before he came to Ethiopia, Samuel Gobat stayed for three years in Alexandria, Egypt and studied Amharic language very well. As he came to Gondar, he partially translated the New Testament into Amharic. Even though there was an attempt to translating the gospel and the New Testament made by the German, Hey League in 1647, *Abba* Abrahām, a priest in Gojjam also translated the Bible in 1818. These earliest missionaries and their followers had introduced large number of Holy books into Ethiopia and were able to spread the gospel where not preached.¹³⁵

The Sweden missionaries who came to Ethiopia via Massawa also attempted to baptize as well as evangelize the surrounding people in 1866. They had also planned to spread their evangelization work into the Oromo region but their endeavor become unsuccessful due to the Oromo regions had already dominated by Orthodox Christianity. In addition to this, the Šāwan king, Sahlä Sellasé prohibited the preaching of other Christian religion in these areas. Furthermore, Menelik of Šāwa ignored any support to these missionaries. However, the Swedish missionaries continued their evangelization in the frontier regions of Northern Ethiopia. Accordingly, they able to baptize an Oromo called Hika of Wälläga.

After got baptize, Heka's name changed to Onismos. Hika got the opportunity to learn in the school the missionaries opened in the frontier region of Northern Ethiopia. Onismos sent to Sweden for further education. After returned to Ethiopia, he translated the Bible into Afan Oromo. He also preached the gospel around Näjjo and Näqämté. Beyond spreading the gospel, the Sweden and German church missionaries were doing different activities. For instance, they had built different schools and hospitals in Wälläga during the reign of Emperor Menelik. Mostly, the interest of rulers of Ethiopia was that the missionaries render health services, providing training for skill development and other social services than evangelization. However, due to the relentless activities of the

¹³⁴Kucha Dewele Alemu, "The Impact of Religion and Churches on the Ethiopian Revolution" (BA Thesis, Yakattit 66 Political Education, Philosophy, 1988), p.41.

¹³⁵Taffese, pp. 95-96.

missionaries, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane-Yesus (EECMY) was able to spread in Northern Ethiopia and around Wälläga. Later on, the EECMY got the permission to build church in the capital, Addis Ababa. The Sweden, Sudorku Yeast who started to preach the gospel in Addis Ababa. He had preached the gospel in respecting and conforming to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This system helped him to stay for long years in Addis Ababa and enabled him to gain three Muslim and four Orthodox Christian converts for the first time in 1921. Soon, this activity continued in Wälläga particularly in Näjjo and Bojji as well as in other areas.¹³⁶

For the churches that built by the missionaries in different parts of Ethiopia, a collective name was necessitated. As a result, these churches gained a name known as Mäkanä Iyyäsus Church. This name nominated in 1951 by a priest called Bademma who was formerly a priest of the Ortodox Täwahedo Church in Bojji town of Wälläga. Bademma accepted the teachings of the ECMY, baptized and became the follower of ECMY faith. Since that time onwards until now this name became the name serving for the whole churches of Mäkanä Iyäsus (dwelling of Jesus) found in the country.¹³⁷ Besides spreading the gospel, the EECMY has been serving the people by providing different social services by building schools, clinics, hospitals, and the likes in different parts of the country.¹³⁸

2.3.2. The Full Gospel Church

The other sect of Protestant Christianity church brought to Ethiopia is the Full Gospel Church (Yä Mulu Wängél Bétäkerestiyan). This faith introduced to Ethiopia by the Finland Missionaries around 1945 and the Sweden Missionaries who came later in 1961. It emerged from a belief called Pentecost known in the USA and spread in Europe later. This sect of protestant Christianity in Ethiopia, mostly known by the name called “*Pénté*”. The unique characteristic feature of this protestant religious group is that it believes in the anointment of Holy Spirit.¹³⁹

¹³⁶*Ibid*, p.97.

¹³⁷*Ibid*.

¹³⁸Lucha Wayessa, “The Contribution of Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) in the Expansion of Educational Services” (B.A Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Sociology and Social Administration, 1988), pp. 9-10.

¹³⁹Taffese, p.102.

In Ethiopia, the EECMY known for its running all the church's activity by Ethiopians rather than using foreign missionaries.¹⁴⁰

During its establishment, there was great disagreement between the Full Gospel believers and the Orthodox Christianity in Ethiopia. To solve this problem the government had intervened in the conflict several times. This religious group officially started religious practices in Addis Ababa around 1967. At national level, the Full Gospel association established in 1970. The believers of the faith faced several hardships and persecutions during the *Därg* Regime. Even more, in 1971 the church banned from carrying out its church ministry and made closed. No matter how the followers of this faith faced these all problems, the church has continued evangelization in secret even during those hard times until they enjoyed their rights since 1991.¹⁴¹

2.3.3. The Qalä Hiwot (Word of Life) Church

The Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) was the basis of Qalä Hiwot church, one of the sects of Protestant churches. The Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) later changed its name to the Society of International Mission (SIM). Its cradle place was the USA and Canada.¹⁴² The Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) founded in 1893 by missionaries known as Walter Guan's, Rowland Bingham and Thomas Kent.¹⁴³ These missionaries had great ambition to preach the gospel for the people of Africa, which Europeans considered as uncivilized. In the North United States, this religious group known by its name called Baptist. This religious group entered into Ethiopia in the 1920's. Of the three American missionaries, it was Dr. Rowland Bingham was who succeeded in achieving his mission. Dr. Tomas Lambe who engaged in rendering health services in Ethiopia heard the news about Dr. Rowland and engrossed by his deeds. At the end, he determined to engage himself in spreading the gospel. To this end, in 1928 he organized a group of individuals and marched to southern Ethiopia. After long journey carried on foot and mule, they reached Hosa'ena within two weeks. Then, they went to Sidamo and Gamo Gofa. Wherever he reached, Dr.Tomas had provided health services for the local

¹⁴⁰Kucha, p.43.

¹⁴¹Taffese, p.105.

¹⁴²Kucha, p.41.

¹⁴³Wendye, p.61.

community. Besides giving medical service, he preached the gospel to the local people. He also baptized those individuals who embraced the faith. As a result, he was able to convert many people to the Qalä Hiwot faith.¹⁴⁴

These early converts included those who were slave raiders and sorcerers. It was passing through several challenges that Dr. Tomas and individuals travelled who travelled elsewhere along with him succeeded in achieving their mission. For instance, during his evangelization work, Dr. Tomas was hit by smack because of the slave owners recriminated him that he was working and agitating to freed their slaves. New converts also suffered from persecution. Even though there were hardships in the years ahead, his disciples continued the evangelization work started earlier.¹⁴⁵

In the eve of the outbreak of the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution, the SIM left the country and the Ethiopian local converts took their place and continued running the church's mission activities. No matter how the mission left the country, it did not stop backing the church in secret since their departure.¹⁴⁶ Due to one common name necessitated for the churches founded by the SIM and the local people in different parts of the country, the church got a collective name called Qalä Hiwot (Word of Life) after the newspaper that had printed by the SIM. In such a way that the Qalä Hiwot church firmly established and many others local Qalä Hiwot churches established in different parts of Ethiopia including Bale.¹⁴⁷

2.3.4. The Mäsärätä Kerestos Church

This church started its church ministry first in the USA. In Ethiopia, the Mäsärätä Kerestos church established in Adama/Nazrét/ town in the 1950's. It got the name Mäsärätä Kerestos (Christ is the foundation) after the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution.¹⁴⁸ They were the foreigners who were Mennonite and working in the Haylä Mareyam Mammo hospital in their part time had preached the gospel and succeeded in getting several coverts. These converts studied the holy bible very well, strongly pray to God and showed miracles. The practices of the converts made them suspected by the foreigners. Due

¹⁴⁴Tafese, p.108.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid*, pp. 108-109.

¹⁴⁶Kucha, p.41.

¹⁴⁷Tafese, p.109.

¹⁴⁸Kucha, p.42.

to this reason, the foreigners detached their relations with the Ethiopian converts because they connected religious practices of Ethiopians with ghoul. To this end, the Ethiopians obliged to rent a house in which they pray in it independently and spread the faith their own. Nevertheless, later on the foreigners begun to accept and believe in the religious practices of the Ethiopians and started to cooperate with them. Even though the Mäsärätä Kerestos church faced several challenges during the *Därg* regime, it abled overcome all the problems it encountered and became one of the major sects of protestant Christianity functioning in Ethiopia.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹Taffese, P.109.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ORTODOX TÄWAHEDO CHURCH IN BALE

3.1. The Historical Background

Information is scanty about the history of Christianity in Bale before Menelik's conquest of the province. Written evidence indicate that the sultanate of Bale was conquered and ruled under the Christian emperors as well as the existence of Christian community settlement in the region until Ahmed Grañ expelled the Christian settlers and their rulers from the area. For instance, the clans today found in Bale such as Kärmamida, Säbro, Fänqäl, Qoiyé, Däyu and Fasil traced their roots back to the early Christian settlers of Bale who settled in the area probably during the reign of Emperor Dawit I and Zärä Yaqob.¹⁵⁰ In addition to this, in Bale there were areas named after the army leaders and Christian rulers of the area. One of these evidences was the existence of the *Azmach Dägälähan* Secondary School in Bale, Gobba town that named after Dägälähan, one of the Christian army leaders who came to occupy Bale in medieval Ethiopia. However, the name of this school changed to Batu Tärara Secondary School in 1977.¹⁵¹

The other issue that describe about Christian occupation of Bale in medieval Ethiopia is the existence of the hill named after Fasil, the brother of King Säršä Dengel who came to Bale to spread Christianity and at the end failed to achieve his mission due to the resistance of Oromos in Bale. Finally, the Oromos defeated and killed him.¹⁵² As the oral tradition obtained from elders of Gobba town, the Fasil *awraja*, one of the five *awrajas* in Bale province also named after the same man, Fasil.¹⁵³ However, the name of this *awraja* changed to Mändoyu in 1977.¹⁵⁴

During the war of Ahmed Grañ, the early Christians settlers and their rulers also expelled from Bale by the forces of the Imam. Nevertheless, after the defeat of the Imam, the Christian rulers reoccupied the province until the area occupied by the Oromos in the 16th century.¹⁵⁵ According to oral

¹⁵⁰Terje, p. 14.

¹⁵¹NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 07.01.; See Appendix II.

¹⁵²Ahmedin Jebel, *Iteyopeyan Muslimoç Kä 615 Eskä 1700: Yaçeqqona Ena Yä tegel Tarik, Andäña Ettem* (The operation and Struggle of Ethiopian Muslims from 615-1700, Frist Edition), (Addis Ababa, 2011), p. 221.

¹⁵³Informants: Däbbäbä Mälläsä, Abba Täšomä Wäldä Mariyam and MäggabiSere'at Afäwärq Dässaläñ.

¹⁵⁴NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 07.01.

¹⁵⁵Teshome, p.28.

information obtained from elders of Bale, churches and monasteries were established in Bale in medieval period of Ethiopia even though difficult to know to what extent churches and monasteries were built as well as the Orthodox faith spread in the province. Because there is shortage of sources and unavailability of studies conducted on the history of Christianity in the southeastern parts of Ethiopia in general and the province of Bale in particular.¹⁵⁶

Available sources indicate that the extensive establishment of the Orthodox Tāwahedo church and the spread of the faith in Bale was coincided with Emperor Menelik's conquest of the province.¹⁵⁷ During his conquest of the area, he encountered the Oromo, majority of them were Muslim and worshipers of traditional religion.¹⁵⁸

According to written sources, Emperor Menelik was known for his emphasizing the Orthodox faith. For instance, while he was the king of Šāwa, along with Emperor Yohannis IV, he had made the Oromo and Muslims to embrace Orthodox Christianity. On the assembly they arranged to persuade the non- Christians accept Christianity, the two monarchs had advised the participants of the assembly as follows:

--- we are your apostles, although our religion, the Orthodox faith was almost made extinct by Muhammed Gagn, you will know that our is a Christian country. Hence fourth, therefore, let all of you Oromos and Muslims accept Christ and be baptized, if you became Christians and start to do a good work, you will be masters of this earth and will also go to paradise later.¹⁵⁹

Emperor Menelik who had such tradition, following his conquest of Bale, he had settled large number of Christians in the region. This Christian community settlement had great relation with the campaign carried by the emperor to settle the people of northern Ethiopia who suffered from the Great Ethiopian Famine of 1888-1892 in the southern, eastern and western parts of the country. Accordingly, between 1890 and 1895 as in Southern Šāwa, Harārgé, Sidamo, Kāfa and Ilubabor, in

¹⁵⁶Informants: Tāšomä Wāldä Mareyam ,*Ato Māngesté Yergu* and *Ato Asāffa Fāqqādä*.

¹⁵⁷Markneh Alemayehu, "Freedom of religion under the charter of Transitional Government of Ethiopia"(BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Law, 1994), p. 30.,See also R.A Caulk), p. 30.

¹⁵⁸Teshome, p. 24.

¹⁵⁹Markneh, p.24.

Bale large number of Christian settlers settled in the province.¹⁶⁰ Concomitantly different Orthodox Täwahedo churches began to be established and the Orthodox Christianity faith spread in Bale province.¹⁶¹

It is obvious that Bale was conquered by forces of Menelik led by *Ras Dargé*, his son *Asfaw Dargé* and *Däjjazmač Wäldä Gäbre'él* between the years 1891 and 1892.¹⁶² In line with the territorial expansion of Menelik, the officials of the regime started building churches in different parts of Bale and brought their tablets to the area to provide religious services for the camp followers, the soldiers and for the settlers in the province.¹⁶³ As soon as Emperor Menelik conquered Bale, the regime's functionaries had worked a lot in the establishment of churches. One of the earliest churches was the Haqo St. Giyorgis church built in 1891 in Adaba district. The other church was the Guranda St. Giyorgis church that was built in 1891 in Gasära district, the area where Menelik's force used it for military camp until this military garrison shifted to Gobba.¹⁶⁴ The shift of this garrison center to Gobba paved the way for the building of another church known as the St. Baläwäld church in 1894. This military camp later evolved to Kätäma (town) and became the permanent seat of the Christian rulers of the province.¹⁶⁵

Emperor Menilik II had great interest and a plan to put in to implementation a policy of spreading the Orthodox Täwahedo faith, built new churches and renewing the old ones in different parts of Ethiopia using the income and labor of the people. With regard to this, in 1900 the Emperor had ordered all Ethiopians especially the government officials to accomplish his policy in a decree he declared and reads as follows:

ሰማ ሰማ ያገሬ ሠው ጌታችን ሀይላችን ላይ ዳታችን ኢየሱስክርስቶስ ለሀገራችን ለመንግስታችን ሰላምና ዕረፍት ሰጥቶን ይህን ያህል ቀን አኖረን አስገዛን። እኛም ይህን ሁሉ አስበን መርዳት ይገባናል። እኔራሴ የከተማየን ዘበኞች ይገዢ ከከተማ ያሉትን አብያተ-ክርስቲያናት እሰራለሁ አድሳለሁ። ሹማምንትም ባለጉልበትም በያጥቢ ያህያለው መቅደስ ቤተ-ክርስቲያን የፈረሰውን በመቃረቢያ ለተቀመጠው ታቦት

¹⁶⁰Lapiso G. Delebo, *Ya Iteyopya Rajem Ya Hezeb Ena Ya Manegest Tarik, Anedagna Matsehaf* (Long History of people and State of Ethiopia Volume I), (Addis Ababa, 1982), p.279.

¹⁶¹Informants: Mängest Yergu, Asäffa Fäqqäda and *Mämeré* Tasäw Wäldä Sämayat.

¹⁶²Ketema, p. 23.

¹⁶³Informants: Däbbäbä Mälläa, Täshomä Wäldä Mariyam and Tasäw Wäldä Sämayat.

¹⁶⁴Informants: *Märiyéta* Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay, Afäwäraq Dässalän and Täšomä Wäldä Mariyam, See also Akliu Werkeneh, Moges Abate and Legese Mengeste, *Yä Gasera Qeddus Mika'el Mika'el Bétakerestiyän Tarik* (The History of the Gasera Saint Michael Church), (Addis Ababa, 2000), p.10, Bale Zone Prison House Administration, Teweweq: Terri Lä Iteyopyanoç (publicizing, Call for Ethiopians), (Addis Ababa), p.42.

¹⁶⁵Asefa Teshome, "The History of Azmach Deglehan School Goba: 1950-1974" (BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, History, 1990), p. 5.

ሁሉ ቤተክርስቲያን ስራ። ወታደርም ባላገርም ጉልበት ያለህ እርዳ። አናጢም ባለህበት ለቤተክርስቲያን ስራ እርዳ። የሀይማኖት መሰረቱ የቤተክርስቲያን ምልክቱ ቤተክርስቲያን መሰራት ነው። ለጉልበትህ ለገንዘብህ ለስተህ ቤተክርስቲያን አልሰራም ብለህ የወሰለትህ ሰው በሰማይ የፈረድብሃል። በምድርም ሹመትህን ገንዘብህን ታጣለህ።¹⁶⁶

My country’s people hear this. Our lord, power, and helper, Jesus Christ gave us peace and rest to lead our country and government until today, we should think these all and grant support. I myself along with my town’s guards build churches. Chiefs, youngsters who have force, build churches to all Ark in your locality their temple and churches that are gave way. You soldiers, countryside men who have power give your hand, and you Carpenters help the work of building temple at where you are. The basis of religion, the sign of Christianity manifested through building churches. Nevertheless, those of you who have power felt greedy, failed to invest your money and if you become idle in building churches, you will be sentenced in the world of becoming. You also lost your authority as well as your property here in this world.

In highland Bale, new churches began to build just with Menelik’s conquest of the area. Following the decree declared by the Emperor, as in other areas of the country, different churches established in Bale. Dirribi stated, most of the churches existing in Oromia including Bale, deliberately established in the area previously the religious places of the Oromo to up root their religion and culture.¹⁶⁷ Generally, during the rule of Emperor Menelik II, most of the earliest churches built in Bale were those built by the officials of the regime.¹⁶⁸ The following table shows this fact as follows.

Table.1. Churches built in Highland Bale during the reign of Emperor Menelik II

No	Name of the church	Year of establishment	Place of Establishment	Founder
1	Haqo Giyorgis	1891	Adaba district	<i>Däjjazmač</i> Asfaw Dargé
2	Guranda Giyorgis	1891	Gasära ”	” ” ”
3	Gobba Baläwäld	1894	Gobba ”	” ” ”
4	St.Giyorgis	1895	Ginnir ”	<i>Däjjazmač</i> Wäldä Gäbre’él

¹⁶⁶Lappso G.Dilebo, *Yä Iteyopeya yä Gäbbar Serä’atenna Jemmer Kappitalizem 1900-1966, Hulettegna Ettem* (The *Gabbar* System in Ethiopia and beginning Capitalism 1908-1974, Volume II), (Addis Ababa, 1991), p.101.

¹⁶⁷Dirribi Demissie Bokku, *Oromo Wisdom in Black Civilization*, (Finfinne, 2011), pp. 450-455.

¹⁶⁸ADBZ, Folder No 210 File No 501/76.

5	St. Mädehané'aläm	1896	” ” ”	” ” ”
6	Säbro Gäbre'él	1897	” ” ”	” ” ”
7	Tämamo Maryam	1897	Gololcha ”	” ” ”
8	St. Mika'él	1900	Kokosa ”	<i>Fitawrari</i> Abäbä Abba Färda
9	Fänqäl St.Giyorgis	1901	Goro ”	<i>Ato</i> Demäto
10	St. Sellasé	1913	Gobba ”	Worshipers
11	Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus	1913	Agarfa ”	<i>Fitawrari</i> Engedawärq
12	St. Mädhané'aläm	1913	Gobba ”	<i>Mämeré</i> Mäkuriya

Source: Report of the Diocese of Bale Administrative Region, pp.10-15.

Fig.6.The earliest churches in Bale Province



Guranda Giyorgis



Gobba Baläwäld



Ginnir Giyorgis



Ginnir Mädehané'aläm



Säbro Gäbre'él



Tämamo Maryam



Agarfa Abunä Gäbrāmānfāsqeddus

Source: Photograph by the researcher

The Christian settlement and building of churches carried in Bale during the rule of Emperor Menelik had also continued during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie. For instance, in 1965 Emperor Haile Selassie also carried out unplanned settlement in Bale. That settlement scheme, intended to secure and maintain a spirit of balance between the Christians and Muslims and ensure peace and stability in the area. This settlement program was on going even following the beginning of the Bale Rebellion of 1963-1970.¹⁶⁹ As a result, of the large influx of the Šāwan Amhara and other settlers to Bale, the number of Christians was increasing since Menelik’s incorporation of the province. Correspondingly, the number of churches built in the area also increased. Accordingly, before the Italian invasion, the number of Orthodox Tāwahedo churches built in highland Bale was around 26.¹⁷⁰ Due to other new churches built, the church’s number reached 58 in 1957.¹⁷¹ This figure rose to 99 in 1974.¹⁷² Furthermore, in 1983 the number of churches in the province grew to 113. After a year, the number

¹⁶⁹Solomon, p. 13.

¹⁷⁰Mendaye, p. 69.

¹⁷¹Lapiso, p. 102.

¹⁷²Leykun Berhanu, “The Role of the EOC in Pre and Post Revolution in Relation to Universal Church” (BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Sociology and Social Administration, 1989), p. 21.

of churches reached 119.¹⁷³ With regard to church's servant, in the 1980s the total number of functionaries of the church was around 865. Of these 318 were priests, 336 were *diyaqons* while 211 were *märiqétas*.¹⁷⁴ The following table illustrated this fact as follows.

Table.2.Number of Orthodox Täwahedo churches and its functionaries in highland Bale in 1983

No	Awraja (sub province)	Wäräda (District)	Number of churches	Functionaries of the churches		
				Priests	<i>Diyaqons</i>	<i>Märiqétas</i>
1	Fasil/Mändoyu/ Gobbaa	Gobba	9	16	26	19
		Sinana	15	38	45	51
		Dinšo	7	11	20	19
		Gasära	7	14	16	11
		Agarfa	7	25	18	20
		Goro	6	24	22	18
2	Gännalé	Dodola	6	21	23	22
		Adaba	5	17	16	15
		Kokosa	6	13	18	6
		Gännalé	12	12	16	2
3	Dällo	Dällo	5	12	13	14
4	Wabé	Ginnir	15	77	67	14
		Gololča	13	38	36	-
5	Elkäré	-	-	-	-	-
Total			113	318	336	211

Source: Report of the Diocese of Bale administrative region, pp.10-15.

3.2. Evangelization and the Orthodox Täwahedo Faith in Bale

As commonly known, the EOC had been the champion of literary works, spreader of Christianity and transmitter of cultural heritages in Ethiopia.¹⁷⁵ However, the work done by the Orthodox Täwahedo Church of Bale province was not satisfactory and that much significant in establishing churches and

¹⁷³ADBZ, Folder No 1File No 77.

¹⁷⁴ADBZ, Folder No File No__.

¹⁷⁵Asefa, p.1.

spreading the faith among the Oromos of Bale. As illustrated in table-3, almost all these churches built in highland part of the province where the Šāwan settlers existed abundantly. Even though large number of Šāwan settlers existed and some churches had established in highland part of the province since the reign of Emperor Menelik II, the church's cadres were passionless in evangelizing the local people.¹⁷⁶

Especially, the church's cadres of the province had never penetrated into the lowland areas to evangelize the local people and did not establish churches. The reason why the church failed to go down to the lowlands was that preachers and the church's leaders of the province were less interested to penetrate into the lowlands to spread the faith. That was because due to the harsh climatic condition of the area and the region had been predominantly inhabited by the followers of Islam and the absence of Christian settlers.¹⁷⁷

Even more, the functionaries of the church had given more priority for serving the government by engaging themselves in secular activities rather than performing religious services. Especially, in line with the establishment of strong Šāwan administration in the province, majority of the functionaries of the church made themselves busy in putting into practice the different policies of the existing government giving less emphasis for preaching of the faith. It is obvious that the EOC and the state were hand in gloves. As a result, the church became oppressive and exploitative just like the existing regime. The church also said put aside providing religious services and engaged itself in maximizing benefit by expropriating the local people in different ways. Therefore, the Oromo all over the province had seen and connected the Orthodox Tāwahedo faith with the Šāwan settlers who were the beneficiaries of the system who expropriated and marginalized them. As a result, the local Oromo people hated the religion and refrained from conversion.¹⁷⁸

Even though the functionaries of the church failed to spread the faith due to lack of interest to penetrate into low land areas of the province and unable to gain the conversion of the local people, it did not mean that the church had not gained new converters from among the Oromo of the province.

¹⁷⁶Informants: *Ato*Bäqqälä Mojo, Tāshomä Wäldä Mariyam and Māngestu Yergu.

¹⁷⁷Informants: Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay, Tasāw Wäldä Sāmayat and Tāšomä Wäldä Mariyam.

¹⁷⁸Mendaye, p. 63.

Therefore, there were Oromos who embraced the religion of their masters. With regard to this, there are no ample evidences that showed the efforts made in Bale to Christianize the local population during the reign of Emperor Menelik II. According to informants, to Christianize the Oromo of Bale the preachers of the faith and officials of the regime were not put pressure up on the local people. Oromos of the area had no good attitude towards the church and had no interest to convert their religion to Christianity the religion that they perceived as the religion of their masters.¹⁷⁹ Available sources indicate that there were attempts to Christianize the local chiefs and some residents of Bale during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I. The reason why these local chiefs embraced the faith was not for the sake of accepting the religion heartily rather they used the faith merely as a means and strategy to have connection and to conform themselves with the Christian Amhara officials to become beneficiary both economically and politically.¹⁸⁰

Despite sources which fully describe the extent of conversion in Bale are scanty, however, it can be mention some of the individuals who conform themselves with the system, embraced Christianity and finally able to became officials and compliant of the Christian Amhara rulers. For instance, *Fitawrari Wäldä Mika'él Bu'i* was one of the known *balabats* in Bale who accepted Christianity and able to become the governor of Gännalé *awraja*.¹⁸¹ Generally, during the rule of Emperor Haylä Selasé, some of the *balabats* who embraced Christianity including *Fitawrari Wäldä Mika'él Bu'i* are listed in the table below.

Table 3.Oromo Converts during the Rule of Emperor Haile Selassie I

Name of converts with their baptismal name	Locality	Their baptismal father
WäldäMika'él Bu'i	Gädäb	Emperor Haile Selassie I
Gäbrä Selasé Ĉakké	Dällo	<i>Däjjazmač</i> Hayilä Selasé (governor of Bale)
Gäbrä Mädehen Domboba	Kärmamida	Prince Asfawäson
Gäbrä Mariyam Abbayyi Ali	Šäffila	Prince Mäkonnen
Gäbrä Mäsqäl Abubäkär Därga	Šédämä	Prince Sahlä Selasé

Source: Mendaye, p.64.

¹⁷⁹Mängestu Yergu, Jamaal Usman and Afäwärq Dässaläh

¹⁸⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁸¹Teshome, p. 42.

In addition to the *balabats* mentioned in the table above, some Oromos of Bale baptized and embraced Christianity in one way or another. Generally, as Gemechu stated, the EOC worked less to spread Christianity in south Ethiopia. His ideareads as follow:

Until the end of the Italian invasion (early 1940s), the Ethiopian Orthodox Church did not engage in missionary activity to convert the people of the occupied territories of the south. The reason might lie in the fact that Christian conquerors perceived themselves as the chosen people and their religion as a tool of conquest against the conquered. The conversion of the local people was not in the best interest of the Amhara conquerors who also wanted to monopolize the spiritual sphere. They did not want the local people to use their conversion to Christianity as a tool to improve their social status. Even if the number of Christians among the southern people increased steadily, it was only religious emblems such as Christian's necklaces that were copied by the local people in an attempt to improve their social status.¹⁸²

In Bale also until 1959, the EOC did not conduct a planned campaign to evangelize and convert the local people to Christianity. After Menelik's conquest of the province, for the first time the church succeeded in gaining more converts by an open campaign carried out in 1959. The major reason that made this campaign successful in winning the conversion of many Oromos to Christianity was the great effort made by the patriarch of the EOC; *Abunä* Baselyos who himself had lead the campaign. Before the *Abun* carried his missionary campaign to Bale, he set out a missionary campaign to Arsi in 1957 to baptize and convert the local people to the Orthodox Tawahedo faith. In this campaign, *Abunä* Baselyos succeeded in converting large number of Oromos of the province to the Orthodox Tawahedo faith.¹⁸³

After completing his mission in Arsi, the *Abun* turned his face towards Bale in 1959. At that time, in Bale the influence of Islam was very weak and majority of Oromos of the region were worshipers of traditional religion. The *Abun* started his evangelization work in Kokosa. In his stay in Kokosa district, *Abunä* Baselyos converted the local people in mass to Christianity. The number of these converts exceeds 15,000. For these new converts, the patriarch had established the church of Täklä Haymanot. For the up keep of its functionaries, the church also obtained 12 *gašas* of land. Even

¹⁸²Gemechu J.Geda, "Pilgrimage and Religious Transformation among the Arsi Oromo of Ethiopia" (PhD Dissertation, University of Bayreuth, Germany, Philosophy, 2013), pp.36-37.

¹⁸³Informants: Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay, Tasäw Wäldä Sämayat and Täšomä Wäldä Mariyam.

though this success gained, still majority of people of the district worshiped their own traditional religion, *Waqéffäta*.¹⁸⁴

The missionary campaign of the *Abun* targeted not only in the area where the people who worshiped traditional religion but also extended towards the area where the followers of Islam was dominant. Accordingly, the *Abun* had carried on his evangelization work and able to Christianize thousands of people in the area between Kokosa and the capital of the province, Gobba. This area was an area where Islam firmly spread. Generally, due to the missionary campaign carried by the *Abun*, the total number of converters reached around 20,000.¹⁸⁵ These new converters worshiped this faith only for short period. However, the converters gradually stopped worshiping the religion that considered as the religion of their masters and at the end returned back to follow their previous religion because, the people embraced the faith halfheartedly. The other reason that contributed to the return back of the Oromo of the area to their former religion was that the EOC had not carried strong evangelization work persistently in the area.¹⁸⁶

It also said, the Oromo of the area were preferred death to become Christian because they inclined to believe the church was part of the state, whose functionaries exploited, oppressed and imposed harsh treatments up on them. Some of the grievances of Oromo peasants of the time in connection with this issue include: the Oromo had forced to provide sheep, goats, cattle and the likes for slaughter for both the church functionaries and government officials during Christian holidays such as Christmas, Easter and others. Furthermore, peasants required to pay different types of tributes and worked unpaid labor such as building of houses, fences and the likes for the authorized individuals of the state as well as the church.¹⁸⁷

As in other areas of the country, in Bale also there was no freedom of worship during the *Därg* Regime. In the region, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church had faced different challenges during the period under discussion. However, as compared to the protestant Christianity churches such as the Qala Hiwot Church, the Mulu Wangel Church and the likes, relatively the EOC was

¹⁸⁴Mendaye, p. 64.

¹⁸⁵*Ibid*, p.65, Informants: Tasäw Wäldä Sämayat and Bäqqälä Mojo.

¹⁸⁶Informants: Mängestu Yergu, Täsäw Wäldä Sämayat and Täšomä Wäldä Mareyam.

¹⁸⁷Mendaye, p. 67.

carried its evangelization work while the believers of the protestant churches were persecuted, totally banned from engaging in evangelization work and their churches were also closed.¹⁸⁸

3.3. The Adherents of the Orthodox Täwahedo Church in Bale

Bale was one of the sparsely populated provinces of Ethiopia. The majority of population was believers of Islam.¹⁸⁹ As has been indicated earlier what made increase the number of Christian population in the area had been the large influx of the Šāwan Amhara and other Christian settlers into the province starting from Menelik’s conquest of the region and due to fertility. According to the 1984 population and housing census result, out of the total population found in the province (780,254), Orthodox Christianity accounts for 186,382 (23.9%) and exceeds in number against the followers of other Christianity churches such as protestant Christianity in general and the followers of the Catholic faith which have 5,637 (0.7%) and 1,423 (0.2%) population respectively.¹⁹⁰

The number of Christians in the province had also increased than before in the years ahead. This change and progress clearly observed from the 1994 population and housing census result. At the *wäräda* (district) level, the Sinana- Dinšo district is a district that had the largest number of believers of the Orthodox Täwahedo faith (51,330) as compared to the other districts of Bale while Säwwéna, Lägähidha and Guradamolé districts has the least number of believers of the Orthodox faith by having 15, 20 and 54 believers respectively.¹⁹¹ The detail is shown in the table below.

Table 4. Religious composition in Bale at *wäräda* (district) Level

No	<i>Wärädas</i> /districts/	Total Population	Religion						
			Orthodox	Protestant	Catholic	Muslim	Others	Traditional	Not stated
1	Kokosa	88,834	5,311	3,301	1,043	50,115	468	28,433	163
2	Dodola	126,495	18,806	899	30	104,498	29	2,178	55
3	Adaba	97,586	18,796	538	52	78,042	41	12	105

¹⁸⁸Informants: Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay, Asäffa Fäqqädä and Däbbäbä Mälläsä.

¹⁸⁹Abera Qetsela, “The Rebellion in Bale (1963-1970)” (BA Thesis, Haile Selassie I University, History, 1971), p. 13.

¹⁹⁰The 1984 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, Results for Bale Region, p. 41.

¹⁹¹The 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, Results for Oromia Region, Volume. I, pp. 362-365.

4	Agarfa	66,610	18,384	391	61	47,648	9	19	98
5	Goloča-Gasära	119,499	35,876	331	6	83,404	21	5	56
6	Lägähida	38,052	20	-	-	38,010	-	1	11
7	Ginnir	97,739	23,894	388	22	73,406	10	15	4
8	Sinana-Dinšo	137,354	51,330	805	127	85,043	13	6	30
9	Gobba	59,028	31,711	887	85	26,317	25	1	2
10	Männa- Arännabulluq	81,011	3,827	217	-	76,927	5	1	34
11	Nänsäbo	48,024	6,476	6,167	190	30,828	1,326	3,031	6
12	Mädda Wälabu	61,919	1,014	149	2	60,585	148	1	20
13	Bärbäre	38,617	3,320	24	-	35,262	1	3	7
14	Guradhamolé	19,015	54	1	-	18,956	1	3	-
15	Goro	71,256	12,628	162	4	58,452	-	2	8
16	Rayitu	31,056	107	1	1	30,919	4	-	24
17	Säwéna	35,769	15	-	-	35,783	1	10	5
Total		1,217,864	231,579	14,061	1,623	934,150	2,102	33,721	625

Source: The 1994 Population and Housing Census Report, pp.363-364.

3.4. Land Grants (Sämon Märét) of the EOC in Bale

In the history of Ethiopia, the sovereigns of the country were the first to embrace Christianity. Since Christianity brought to Ethiopia up until 1974, the EOC had been the state official religion. This opportunity helped the church to play a crucial role in social, economic and political life of the country beyond rendering spiritual services. For instance in the land tenure system of the country, as the soldiers and other social classes found in the country; the EOC had also been one of the tribute appropriator.¹⁹² During the reign of Emperor Menelik II and Emperor Haile Selassie I the Orthodox Täwahedo Churches of the country including the churches in Bale province had their own lands. At this period, one thirds of the land had been going to the church.¹⁹³ The church land that often called *yä*

¹⁹² Almaze Wondemu, "Land Reform in Ethiopia" (BA Thesis, Haile Selassie I University, History, 1967), p. 15

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

Sämon Märét had different categories such as *yä Qés Märét*, *yä Däbtära Märét*, *yä Diyaqon Märét* and *yä Gäbäz Märét*.¹⁹⁴

It is obvious that Bale was and still predominantly inhabited by Muslims. The number of Christian settlers and churches in Bale were very few before the Italian occupation. In this period, there were around 26 churches in the highland Bale. Each of the churches had land that they gained in grant from the government and the churches' servants used to extract tributes from it. At this time, these 26 churches had owned about 330 *gasas* of land. Of these 26 churches, 14 churches had owned 270 *gasas* land and collected tribute from it.¹⁹⁵

Table.5. Land Holdings of the Ortodox Tawahedo Church in Bale ca 1935.

S.No	Name of the church	Location	Amount of land
1	Qeddus Gäbre'él	Qasso (Gobb)	6
2	Qeddus Amanu'el	Lolla-Qasso (Gobba)	18
3	Qeddest Mareyam	Gobba	35
4	Mädehané'aläm	Gobba	37
5	Qeddus Giyorgis	Gobba	25
6	Qeddus Mika'él	Gobba	25
7	Abunä Täklähaymanot	Oborra (Sinana)	15
8	Qeddus Mika'él	Sinana	12
9	Gäbrä Kerestos	Dodola	20
10	Qeddest Mareyam	Lénqo (Dodola)	15
11	Qeddus Giyorgis	Haqo (Dodola)	15
12	Qeddus Mika'él	Ebäno (Dodola)	15
13	Abunä Täklähymanot	Gäta (Dodola)	12
14	Kidanä Meherät	Dodola	20
Total			270

Source: Ketema, pp.44.

¹⁹⁴Mendaye, p. 68.

¹⁹⁵Ketema, pp.43-44.

After liberation (1941), the number of churches in Bale dramatically increased in line with the increasing influx of Christians both Amhara and the Šāwan Oromo into the highland areas of Bale. The strong relation that had been existed between church (EOTC) and state since the antiquity helped the newly established churches in Bale to have large *gasas* of land from the government in the years ahead. In the post liberation period, under the *Qälad* system the land belonged to the churches in Bale reached around 1612 *gasas*. From these *gasas* of land, the largest portion found in Gobba and Sinana districts where the number of Christian settlers were high. For instance, in Gobba district there was 279 *gasas* of land while 269 *gasas* of land found in Sinana. What is known here is that whether Christian or Muslim, one had the opportunity to work on the *Sämon* land but they were required to pay tax to the church.¹⁹⁶ Peasants who were working on the church land had the right to transfer it to anybody by sale or through inheritance but changing the tenure system not allowed.¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, in 1957 the Diocese of Bale Region objected the sale of church land to the Muslims and requested the Emperor disallow them from buying church land. With regard to this Ketema described as follows:

---the Bale *Awraja Hagärä Sebkät* (Diocese) asked the Emperor to ban the sale of church lands to Muslims. The officials argued that if the Muslims continued to hold lands, over which church had jurisdiction, they might not pay taxes. The Emperor however, resisted the appeal and promulgated the right of all his subjects to buy lands irrespective of religion as far as they obeyed the law.¹⁹⁸

In line with the implementation of the land measurement known as the *Qälad* system, the surveyors were sent to Bale by the government often in Amharic called the *Qälad Tayoč* had investigated and divided the land of Bale into four categories including the church land called *Sämon*. Accordingly, the first category called the *gäbbar* (private lands) which comprised the greatest portion of the newly measured land. This land was accounts for about 90% of the land and the most common form of tenure in the highland Bale. The second was the land granted to the *näftäñas*. This land was known as *Madäriya Märét* (a land given instead of salary) which was held by the soldiers and civil servants who had been working in different government offices. The third one was *Yä Mängest Märét* (government land).The government land was the private property of the government and the money extracted from

¹⁹⁶*Ibid*, p. 73.

¹⁹⁷NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 20.01.

¹⁹⁸Ketema, p. 73.

this land was goes directly to the central treasury of the state. The fourth and the last, but not the least, was the *Sämon* land (church land).

Table.6. Distribution of measured lands in some districts of Bale by tenure types (in *gasä*) in 1955

No	Wärädas/districts/	Type of tenure			
		Gäbbar/rest	Sämon	Madäriya	Total
1	Gobba	6,946	300	8	7,254
2	Ginnir	12,734	201	-	12,935
3	Gädäb/Dodola	11,884	216	4	12,104
4	Agarfa	7,099	136	1	7,236
5	Goro	3,518	111	-	3,629
6	Dällo	9,658	2	-	9,660
Total		15,839	966	13	52,818

Source: Ketema, p.63.

Formerly, the functionaries of the church had collected revenue from the local peasantry (*gäbbars*) in kind in the form of tribute or tax. After Italian warriors chased out from Ethiopia due to the reform introduced by Emperor Haile Selassie on taxation system of the country, the tax collected from land including church land was changed. Accordingly, the government made every one working on the church land had to pay tax in cash by the government rents.¹⁹⁹ In Bale, rent of the land made different based on its productivity. As a result, the government classified the land into three categories namely: *läm* (fertile), *läm- täf* (semi-fertile) and *täf* (poor). In 1955, in Bale *Awraja Gezat*, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church had 533 *gasäs* of land. Of this 136, 188 and 209 *gasäs* of land categorized under fertile, semi-fertile and poor respectively. These lands rented 58.50 Birr, 52 Birr and 19.50 Birr respectively per a *gasäs* of land annually.²⁰⁰

The land owned by the church had increased concomitant with the number of new churches established in the province. For instance, in 1969 from the 52,467.40 *gasäs* of agricultural land, found in Bale, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church Diocese of Bale province had 1280.44 *gasäs* of land. Of

¹⁹⁹Almaze, p. 16.

²⁰⁰ADBZ, Folder No 1157.

these 464.39 *gašas* of land were categorized under fertile, 368.39 *gašas* were semi-fertile and 447.66 *gašas* were poor lands.²⁰¹ The detail showed in the following table:

Table 7 Distribution of measured land in Bale by type of tenure and classification in *gaša* in 1969

Type of Tenure	Classification				
	Fertile	Semi-fertile	Poor	Total	%
<i>Gäbbar</i>	4330.24	5312.72	15438.53	25081.49	47.8
<i>Sämon</i>	464.39	368.39	447.66	1280.44	2.4
<i>Mängest</i>	4.35	11.23	32.53	48.11	0.1
<i>Madäriya</i>	66.36	350.38	11575.75	11992.49	22.9
<i>Gebertäl</i>	24.06	19.47	14021.34	14064.87	26.8
Total	4889.40	6062.19	41515.81	52467.40	100
%	9.30	11.60	79.10	-	100

Source: Ketema, p.69.

The only difference the tax collected from the church land from the general taxation system in that, the money collected from the church land did not go to the treasury of the government but it goes directly to the central treasury of the church. The collected money used by the church to cover its expenses and used for the up keeps of the functionaries of the church. As in other parts of the country, in Bale province also the Orthodox Täwahdo churches have owned large amount of land that used for the up keep of the church's functionaries.²⁰²

In 1970 during the first Arch Bishop of Diocese of Bale, *Abunä Märqoriwos*, there were around 84 Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Churches in Bale. However, most of the churches in the province had no their own land. Earlier, of the 84 churches in the province, only 35 churches had their own *sämon* but the rest 49 churches had possessed no land.²⁰³ As a result, functionaries of the church who had no *sämon* land suffered from economic problems for about twelve years. The problem came into being in line with the procrastination of implementation of the precept forwarded by Emperor Haile Selassie in 1962 to the churches that had no land in the province of Bale. This in turn happened because of the

²⁰¹Ketema, p. 63.

²⁰²*Ibid*, p.69.

²⁰³ADBZ, Folder No 505 Reference No 7867/12.

land measurement and investigation carried on the land of the province unable to complete on time.²⁰⁴ Due to this reason, the Arch Bishop of the Diocese had requested repeatedly to the patriarchal office and concerned government bodies so as to grant land for those churches that had no their own *sämon* land. As a result, in 1970 Emperor Haile Selassie had ordered the responsible government bodies grant twelve *gasas* of land for each churches that had no their own *sämon* land as was done in Käfa Province in 1962.²⁰⁵

In addition to this, based on the application of *Abunä Märqoriwos*, the Archbishop of Diocese of Bale out of the 49 churches that had no land, 27 churches given 327 *gasas* of land. The rest 23 churches promised land grant (*Sämon* land) when precept came from the Imperial office. Nevertheless, the twelve *gasas* of land earlier promised to these churches by the government not granted to them on time to enable serve their respective church's servants. As the information obtained from informants indicate, the remaining 23 churches which had no *Sämon* land were said repeatedly requested the patriarchal office and responsible government bodies so as to grant them land for the up keep of their functionaries. Finally, government of the period under discussion worked to grant land for the churches that had no *sämon* land in the years until the 1974 Revolution broke out.²⁰⁶

The church land given to the churchmen considered as the payment in return for the services rendered in the church. Some parts of the church land was cultivated by the church people themselves and the remaining land was rented to the peasants who pay a considerable proportion of their produce in kind in the form of taxes and tithes. Furthermore, in line with the growth of the number of Christian settlers and the spread of churches the burdens imposed by the church and the state on Oromos of Bale who were originally owners of their own land aggravated their sufferings in different ways. For instance, the *gäbbars* who worked on the church land were required to render services like woodcutting and grain grinding to the church.²⁰⁷ These and other grievances became some of the causes of insurrections in Bale from 1963-1970.

²⁰⁴WTMMA, Folder No 2137 Reference No 44/098/1/2/538.

²⁰⁵WTMMA, Folder No 2137 Reference No 44/090/7867., WTMMA Folder No 2137 Reference No 44/ 692/141/63., WTMMA, Folder No 596/63.

²⁰⁶Informants: Afäwäraq Dässälän and Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay.

²⁰⁷Almaze, p.16.

In 1974 in line with the coming to power of the *Därg* regime, the former strong marriage existed for centuries between state and the EOC was detached. This means state and religion separated. Furthermore, the 1975 land reform proclamation of the *Därg* had nationalized all rural lands including church land.²⁰⁸ As a result, as in other parts of Ethiopia in Bale also the EOC, which formerly possessor of vast lands and tax appropriator lost all its previous rights and privileges.²⁰⁹ For instance, the church lost its church land (*Sämon*) and the benefits it had gained from this land. In line with the implementation of the land reform, the functionaries of the church exposed for great economic problems and the church faced shortage of adequate budget for running its work. Therefore, since 1975 the church obliged to depend on the money collected from worshipers and the money generated through other ways.²¹⁰

At its early years, the *Därg* government had attempted to subsidize the church and solve its financial constraints. To this end, in 1975 the *Därg* had collected the data of number of functionaries of the church, their work and their monthly salary.²¹¹ Based on the data, the government subsidized the church by allocating a tentative budget for all dioceses in the country including the Diocese of Bale. Accordingly, in 1976 the diocese of Bale had received 24,484 Ethiopian Birr from the government through the EOC patriarchal office.²¹² To support it self and to become self-sufficient, from 1975 onwards the church has been working by designing other means of income generating activities for the up keep of the church's servants.²¹³

²⁰⁸Hussein Jemma, *The Politics of Land Tenure in Ethiopian History: Experience from the South*, (Norway, 2004), p.1.

²⁰⁹Addise, p.19.

²¹⁰Informants: Mängestu Yergu, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Afäwärq Dässaläñ.

²¹¹NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 12.4.

²¹²NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 16.06.

²¹³Informants: Afäwärq Dässaläñ, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

3.5. Administrative History of the Diocese of Bale

Beginning from the time conquered by forces of Emperor Menelik II up to 1960, Bale had no its own *Hägärä Sebkät* (Diocese) as well as Archbishop independently because, in this period; Bale was governed under *Harärgé Awraja Gezat* and later *Haräрге Täqalay Gezat* as one *wäräda gezat* and then as an *Awraja Gezat*. In church administration also the *Harärgé Awraja Gezat* or *Täqalay Gezat's* *Hägärä Sebkät* was administered the *Bale Wäräda/Awraja Gezat Bétäkehenät*. For instance, from 1948 to 1960 *Abunä Téwoflos* was the Archbishop of *Harärgé Täqalay Gezat* while *Liqä Kahenats* (higher priests) led the *Bale Awraja Bétäkehenät*.²¹⁴

Fig 7. *Abunä Téwoflos* who was the Arkbishop of Diocese of *Harärgé Täqalay Gezat*



Source: Photo in the office of the Arch Bishop of Diocese of Bale Zone

For the establishment of any Diocese (*Hägärä Sebkät*) prerequisites like the existence of domicile for bishop (*Mänbärä Pepesenna*), church that could renders religious services and offices used for running the day-to-day administrative activities of the church was needed. Until the *Bale Awraja*

²¹⁴ Afäwäraq Dässalän, *Bä Iteyopeya Ortodox Täwahedo Bétäkerestiyan yä Balé Hägärä Sebkät Mänbärä Pepesenna Qedmä Tarik* (Under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church the History of the Headquarter of the Diocese of Bale, (Goba, 2014), pp.1-2, Baeda Mareyam Ejegu Reta, *Short History of the Ethiopia Orthodox Tawahedo Church: The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Faith and Order*, (Addis Ababa, 2004), p.8.

Gezat officially separated from Harärgé Täqlay Gezat in 1960, the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* (diocese) do not fulfilled these all prerequisites. For instance, it had no well-organized office and resident houses. In 1955 during *Abunä Téwoflos*, the bishop of Harärgé *Täqlay Gezat* set out an official visit to Bale. During that time, the *Bétä kehenät* of Bale was suffered to get a house that was comfortable for the Archbishop. However, the problem was solved by the effort of *Grazmač Käbbäda Bereyyé* who requested repeatedly the local government officials of Gobba town to grant a house for the guest (*Abunä Téwoflos*) who was coming to visit the province. In addition, the representatives of each Orthodox *Tawahedo* churches found in Bale *Awraja Gezat* who came to Gobba to attend in the reception ceremony of the Bishop also asked the local officials to help them in granting the intended house. At the end, the effort of both *Grazmač Käbbäda Bereyyé* and the representatives of the churches in the province bore fruit and the needed house gained. Earlier, that house had been a drug store of the Red Cross Society of Gobba branch. Until his return to his diocese, Harärgé; *Abunä Téwoflos* had stayed in that house.²¹⁵

In addition to the absence of resident house for the Bishop, the Gobba *Mädehané'aläm* Church was also not comfortable for rendering full religious services because it was a *Mäqqaño* house (small hat). Earlier the Italian soldiers used that small hat for residence. After the evacuation of the Italians from the area it was said that *Abba Endalä Wälädä Hanna* who contributed his share in bringing the Holy Arch of *Mädehané'aläm* to that small hat. In line with this event, the Gobba *Mädehané'aläm* church was able to be established and started its function in this *Mäqqaño* (*tukule*) house from 1941 to 1947.²¹⁶

For brief years, the Holy Arch of *Mädehané'aläm* was transferred to Gobba St. Marry and St. Selassie churches which were believed comfortable for providing full services such as anointing and appointing large number of priests and deacons who came from each *waradas* of the Bale *awraja Gezat*. However, during their visit of Bale, in 1948 Emperor Haile Selassie had ordered that the Holy Arch of the church of *Mädehané'aläm* should return to the area where the today's Gobba *Mädehané'aläm* Church found. The Emperor had chosen this area for its location in the center of the town. Therefore, this quality of the area and the decision of the Emperor laid the base for the

²¹⁵Informants: Bäqqälä Mojo, Taddäsä Wälädä Tänsay and Mängestu Yergu.

²¹⁶Informants: Afäwäraq Dässälän and Taddäsä Wälädä Tänsay.

establishment of the *Mänbära Pepesena* of Diocese/ *Hagärä Sebekät*/ of Bale. Accordingly, the (*Mänbärä Pepesenna*) and the office of the diocese established in the years ahead.²¹⁷ In addition to this, as in other areas of the country, the *Säbäka Mänfäsawi Guba'ë* (spiritual congregation) also established in 1977 in each *wäradaṣ* of the province.²¹⁸

Fig.8. The Gobba Mädehané'aläm Church and the Office of Diocese of Bale Zone



Gobba Mädehané'aläm church _____ Office of diocese of Bale

Source: Photograph by the researcher

For the building of the Bale *Täqalay Gezat Hagärä Sebkät* (diocese), the contribution of *Abunä Téwoflos* was very great. The *Abun* had a conviction that the separation of Bale from Harärgé *Täqalay Gezat* as an independent *Täqalay Gezat* was inevitable. To this end, during his stay in Bale, his holiness had discussed with the head of the Bale *Bétäkehenat* (administrator of the Orthodox Täwahedo Churches of Bale), *Mämeher Särşä Habtä Gäbre'él* and agreed up on the building of a house for a Bishop in the compound of the Gobba Mädehané'aläm church. The *Abun* also requested the office of the patriarch render financial support for the construction of the house.²¹⁹

At the end, with the effort carried by *Abunä Téwoflos*, in 1961 the *Bétä kehenat* of Bale gained financial support for the construction of a domicile for the first Archbishop of Bale *Täqalay Gezat*,

²¹⁷Afäwärq, p. 2.

²¹⁸*Ibid*, p. 5.

²¹⁹Informants: Afäwärq Dässalän and Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay.

Abunä Märqoréwos. The total amount of Birr given for this purpose was ten thousand Ethiopian Birr. Of this, 5000 Ethiopian Birr gained from the head office of the EOC and the rest 5000 Ethiopian Birr was the aid came from Ethiopia’s Ministry of Finance.²²⁰ With this aid, in 1962 the construction of the house completed. The *Abun* named the place where the residence house built for the Bishop as the *Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm Monastery*. From that time on wards to the present the *Gobba Mädehané’aläm Church* where the Domicile of the Archbishop, the *mänbärä pepesenna* and office of the Diocese found is called *Yä Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm Gädam* (*Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm Monastery*). The *Abun* also requested the governor of Bale *Awraja Gezat* to help them in fencing the compound of the *Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm Monastery* no matter how the response of the governor was not known.²²¹

Fig.9.The compound of *Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm Monastery* and the residence of the Archbishop



Däbrä Tabor Mädehané’aläm ___ The former domicile of Arch ___ The current resident house of Monastery _____ bishops of diocese of Bale _____ Archbishop of Bale

Source: Photograph by the researcher

In his stay in Bale, *Abunä Téwoflos* did many things such as the appointment of large number of priests and deacons who came from each *wärädas* of Bale *awrwja gezat* to attend on the ceremony of the *Abun* arranged at the then *Gobba* airplane field.²²² Even though the *Abun* was unable to tour in all *wärädas* of Bale *Awraja Gezat*, he had visited *Ginnir Wäräda* and the historical place *Diré Sheik*

²²⁰NALA, Folder No 17.3File No 360.11.
²²¹Afäwäraq, p. 2.
²²²Informants: Bäqqälä Mojo, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Mängestu Yergu.

Hussein shrine that found in Gololča *wäräda* within ten days using airplane. After completed his visit of Diré Sheik Hussein, the *Abun* returned to his *Hagärä Sebkät, Harärgé*.²²³

It was in 1960 that the Bale *Awraja Gezat* separated from *Harärgé Täqlay Gezat* and became independent *Täqlay Gezat*.²²⁴ Since then to the present, eight Archbishops and many general managers successively assigned for the diocese of Bale one after another. The first Archbishop of Diocese of Bale was *Abunä Märqorewos*. Then, *Abunä Mäqariwos, Abunä Marqos, Abunä Sälama, Abunä Barnabas, Abunä Zéna Marqos, Abunä Yeshaq, and Abunä Yoséf*, the current Archbishop who successively served the diocese of Bale.²²⁵

Table 8: List of Archbishops of Diocese of Bale and the Duration of their services.

No	Name of the Archbishops	The duration of their service	Remark
1	<i>Abunä Märqoriwos</i>	From 1960-1975	For fifteen years
2	<i>Abunä Mäqariwos</i>	From 1976-1977	For one year
3	<i>Abunä Marqos</i>	From 1977-1978	For nine months
4	<i>Abunä Sälama</i>	From 1978-1982	For four years and two months
5	<i>Abunä Barnabas</i>	From 1982-1984	For two years
6	<i>Abunä Sälama</i>	From 1984-1997	For the second time(for thirteen years and nine months)
7	<i>Abunä Zéna Marqos</i>	In 1997	For four months
8	<i>Abunä Sälama</i>	From 1997-1999	For the third time,(for a year and nine months)
9	<i>Abunä Yeshaq</i>	From 1999-2011	For twelve years
10	<i>Abunä Yoséf</i>	From 2011 to the present	The current archbishop of Bale <i>Hagara Saekat</i>

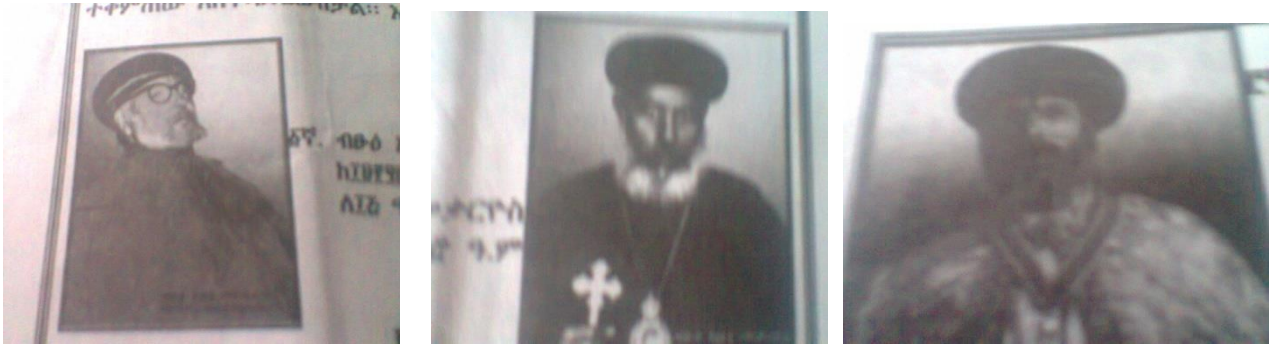
Source: Extracted from different letters written about Archbishops appointed for Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* (Diocese).

²²³Informants: Afäwärq Dässalāñ and Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay.

²²⁴Afäwärq, p. 2.

²²⁵ADBZ, Folder No 506 Reference No 1/978/69., NALA, Folder No 17.3File No 360.11, ADBZ Folder No 2060, ADBZ Folder No 1891, ADBZ, Folder No 501., ADBZ, Folder No 380-73., ADBZ, Folder No 502., See also Afäwärq Dässalāñ, p.3.

Fig.10.Archbishops of Diocese of Bale



Abunä Märqoriwos

Abunä Mäqariwos

Abunä Marqos



Abunä Sälama

Abunä Barnabas

Abunä Zénamarqos



Abunä Yeshaq

Abunä Yoséf

Source: Photos of Archbishops of Diocese Bale collected in the office of the Archbishop

With the exception of the present Archbishop of Bale, *Abunä Yoséf*; the rest Archbishops who were assigned and served the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* (diocese) had already passed away.²²⁶ Of the Archbishops mentioned above, it was *Abunä Sälama* who administered the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* for long years. In addition to diocese of Bale, *Abunä Sälama* had also served other *Hagärä Sebkäts*. For instance, in 1982 the office of the patriarch transferred *Abunä Sälama* to Jerusalem and made him the Archbishop of the Diocese of Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem. After serving there for two years, the *Abun* returned to his country and the patriarchal office assigned him to be the Archbishop of Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* for the second time.²²⁷

In 1997, the *Abun* transferred to diocese of Gondär. After they served there for about a year and nine months, based on his question the patriarchal office reshuffled him from Gondär to Bale *Hgärä Sebkät* and had served for the third time until his death in 1999.²²⁸ Even though all of the archbishops who led the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* contributed their own share in the spread of Orthodox Täwahedo faith and in other socio-economic activities carried in the region, the role played by Archbishop *Abunä Sälama* was very great.²²⁹

In addition to Archbishops, many general managers were assigned and served the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät*. However, it is difficult to mention the name of all these managers and the duration of time, they served the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* due to high rate of turnover of managers and unavailability of organized data. The three earliest successive managers of the *Hagärä Sebkät* during the early years of the diocese were *Ato Dämessé Wäldä Giyorgis*, *Abba Wäldä Mika'él* and *Abba Wäldä Tänsay*. During the *Därg* period, churchmen like *Kenfä Gäbre'él Tägän*, *Märiyéta Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay* and *Mäggabé Serä'at Afäwärq Dässalän* were also the other managers who have served the Bale *Hagärä Sebkät*.²³⁰

²²⁶Informants: Mängestu Yergu, Täšomä Wäldä Mayeyam and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²²⁷ADBZ: Folder No 1977, ADBZ, Folder No 1977.

²²⁸ADBZ, Folder No 1977 ADBZ, Folder No 131.

²²⁹Informants: Afäwärq Dässalän, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²³⁰Informants: Afäwärq Dässalän, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Däbbäbä Mälläsä.

3.6. Educational Activities of the Church

3.6.1. Traditional Church Education in Bale

What makes Ethiopia unique from the Sub-Saharan countries in Africa is having its own splendid and peculiar languages and letters that are using for writing since the ancient times. This enabled Ethiopia to have a long traditional and formal education that run and overseen by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. As a result, the EOC have been serving as the main institution that controlling, preserving and transmitting the amazing and very valuable cultural heritages accumulated since antiquity from generation to generation. In addition to this, the EOC served as the only institution that renders education in the country for centuries. However, the traditional church leaders and its functionaries had not held progressive ideas rather they were conservative that their teachings, the method of teaching they used as well as their activities largely inclined towards their beliefs, religious matters and its principles. The traditional church education provided for centuries in our country. Ethiopia mainly intended to produce men who could serve the church in strengthening and spread the faith as well as producing church servants such as priests, deacons and scribes. Even though their number was limited, the church also contributed a lot to produce intellectuals like judges, treasurers and administrative workers that worked in government offices at different levels. The reason why the church dominated the affairs of education in that, there were no any other options and institutions that provided education for the people until recent times. As a result, this made the EOC to be remained the main agent of education and the sole reservoir. Despite several traditional church schools existed in the country, most of them were not comfortable for the learners.²³¹

Traditional church education began in the province of Bale recently. It was a phenomenon that took place following Emperor Menelik II conquered the province. This church education was controlled by the EOC as in other areas of the country. Church education started in the highland Bale in line with the building of different churches in different parts of the province and increase in the number of Christian settlers. The first of this kind of school was the school opened at Baläwäld church that built in Bale - Gobba by *Däjjazmač* Asfaw Dargé in 1894. This church found at the lower part of the former center of Goba town. There was a priest known as *Aläqa* Säršä Berhan who had lived in the

²³¹Asefa, p.1.

area adjoining the Baläwäld church who started the first church education in Gobba town in the history of the province.²³²

Aläqa Särşä Berhan tried his best as much as he could to train and produce well-known educated men who rendered religious services in the church and other intellectuals who worked in the government offices. In addition to the Baläwäld church, another church school opened in Gobba in line with the construction of the St. Marry church. In this church, there was priests like *Aläqa* Alamerräw, *mämmeré* Gäbräyäsus, *Mämmeré* Haylä Gäbre’él and the likes were who engaged themselves in teaching the children of the local community. Gradually, however the number of church school grew in line with the growth in the number of churches in the highland Bale.²³³

The office of *Bétä kehenät* of Bale *awraja gezat* tried its best to open and spread church education in the province. According to the information obtained from the available archival source the patriarchal office and the diocese of Harärgé *Täqlay Gezat* had repeatedly requested the *Béte Kehenät* of Bale *awraja Gezat* to establish church schools in the province of Bale to send different books for the diocese. To this end, in 1954 the diocese of Bale had requested the governor of the Bale *awraja gezat* to support the diocese financially to build church schools in the province.²³⁴ From 1950s onwards, the diocese had worked a lot to spread church schools in the province. Due to absence of available organized data about the extent and number of church schools established in Bale, an attempt was made to describe some of the church schools established in the province from 1953-1967. With regard to this, the table below illustrates the church schools established in the province.²³⁵

Table 9. Church Schools Established in Bale from 1953 to 1967

No	Awraja	Wäräda (place) of establishment	Name of Church school	Year of establishment	Number of Teachers	Number of students		
						M	F	Total
1	Fasil	Gobba	Mädehané'aläm	1953	2	230	98	328
2	Gänalé	Serofta	Giyorgis	1958	1	77	2	79

²³² Afäwärq Dässalän, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²³³ *Ibid*, p.6.

²³⁴ ADBZ, Folder No 910.

²³⁵ ADBZ, Folder No 41-50.

3	“	Kokosa	Täklä Haymanot	1958	1	20	1	21
4	“	Wärqa	Abbo	1958	1	7	2	9
5	“	Dodola	Gäbrä Kerestos	1959	1	49	18	67
6	“	Adaba	Mädehané'aläm	1960	1	28	3	31
7	“	Adaba	Mika'él	1960	1	8	2	10
8	“	Qaçäma	Mareyam	1962	1	127	13	140
9	“	Nänsäbo	Gäbre'él	1967	1	54	4	58
Total					10	600	143	743

Source: Report of the Diocese of Bale Administrative Region, p.1.

Due to absence of even distribution and limited number of churches in Gobba and in other parts of highland Bale, these schools had not only provided education to children of their respective local community but also for children who came from other places. In addition to this, some priests had provided traditional education for small number of children in their own private houses because of unavailability of favorable houses in the church to render education. In highland Bale, there was also shortage of priests and deacons who provided religious services in the church. As a result, with the exception of the deacons trained and produced locally, majority of the priests and deacons had recruited by importing and inviting from the neighboring provinces like Arsi and Šäwa.²³⁶

The contents of education rendered in the different church schools in highland Bale include alphabet identification, reading selected extracts from the Holy Scriptures and prayer and the most popular being the psalms. The method of teaching used in the church schools of highland Bale was similar with the education given in other parts of Ethiopia. Mostly, students made and required to memorize the given educational materials. Furthermore, beyond the education given in their locality; students were also sent to other areas like Šäwa for further and higher education.²³⁷

Until the Italians occupation of Bale (1937), church education persistently given for the learners. As soon as the Italians conquered the province, they opened their own schools that provide formal education in Gobba town. Their education rendered in the Italian language. The school subjects given

²³⁶Asefa, p.6.

²³⁷*Ibid.*

in this school were Geography, History, Woodwork, Arithmetic and the Italian language. The methodology and approach of teaching-learning process based on modern way of instructional process.²³⁸

Even though such Italian influences existed in Bale, their influence up on education was not that much exaggerated because the educational system was going on both in towns like Gobba and the countryside of highland Bale during the period of Italian occupation. After the Italians cleared out of the country in general and Bale in particular the church education and formal education continued and strengthened than before. Therefore, in the province of Bale the number of church schools were reached 18 having student population of 1071 from 12,126 the total students enrolled in all schools (including government schools) in the province.²³⁹

3.6.2. Sunday Schools in Bale

In addition to the traditional church schools existed in Bale, there were Sunday schools that mainly the Youths have been attending. The number of Sunday schools established in Bale *Hagärä Sebkät* since 1975 are listed in the table below.

Table 10. Sunday schools established in Bale

No	District <i>/Wäräda/</i>	Number of churches	Churches that had Sunday school	Churches that had no Sunday school	Year of Establishment	Number of students		
						M	F	Total
1	Gobba	11	9	2	1975	310	434	744
2	Sinana	18	17	1	1977	600	800	1400
3	Gololča/Jarra	11	11	-	1977	322	371	693
4	Dodola	6	5	1	1977	267	430	699
5	Ginnir	15	14	1	1978	190	600	790
6	Dällo Männa	4	2	2	1978	114	83	197
7	Adaba	6	6	-	1978	200	190	390

²³⁸*Ibid.*

²³⁹Abera, p. 15.

8	Agarfa	8	7	1	1978	272	261	533
9	Bärbäre	2	1	1	1979	20	30	50
10	Gasära	8	5	3	1980	130	70	200
11	Goro	6	6	-	1981	181	222	403
12	Nänsäbo	7	3	4	1981	150	200	350
13	Dinšo	3	3	-	1981	25	38	63
14	Kokosa	2	1	1	1982	55	49	104
Total		107	90	17	-	2,836	3,780	6,617

Source: Report of the Diocese of Bale, p.1.

The source shows that out of 107 churches existing in Bale, in 90 churches Sunday schools opened. It was only in 17 churches that Sunday schools did opened. The number of learners of these Sunday schools reached around 6,617 in 1995.²⁴⁰ The Sunday schools found in the districts have been organized and guided by the Sunday schools organizing body found at the *Hagära Sebkät* level. This body forwarded guidelines as well as rules to the Sunday school organizing body hierarchically found at *wärädä* level. Accordingly, those Sunday schools found in the districts of the province have been operating their activities and providing several important services for the youth in particular and the church as well as the worshipers at large. Some of the services rendered by the Sunday schools were disseminating the Orthodox faith, shaping the conduct and the behavior of the youths along religious line, rendering voluntary services and the likes.²⁴¹

No matter how they do not have a budget allocated for them from the church, they have been helping orphans and elders who have no livelihood and who need the support of others using the money they generated through different methods. The support includes providing clothing, food and building shelter. In addition, the members of Sunday schools have also engaged in income generating activities for their up keep. They participate in works like planting trees, seedlings of different kinds, producing different agricultural products on the plot of land they gained from the church, preparing spiritual dramas and the likes.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ADBZ, Folder No 709.

²⁴¹Afäwäraq Dässäläñ, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁴²Informants: Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay, Afäwäraq Dässäläña and Bäqqälä Mojo.

3.7. The Orthodox Täwahedo Church in Bale during the Italian Invasion

Instead of supporting building of churches, Italians destroyed churches and killed many Christians in the country in general and in Bale in particular in the period under discussion.²⁴³ For instance, in Bale; some churches were attacked and others were destroyed by the Italians. One of these churches was the church of St. Mika'él which that was found in Gasära district, Gasära town. The church was said saved a little from destruction by the Italian airplane bombardment due to the bomb that fallen on the roof of the church became ineffective before destroying the church by God's miracle. For testimony, the cartridge of that bomb is found in the compound of Gasära St. Mika'él church suspended on a tree and the church is using it as a bell (for tolling purpose) until this days.²⁴⁴

Fig.11. The Gasära St. Michael church and the ineffective Italians bomb



Source: Photograph by the researcher

In Ginnir district the Italian invaders also attempted to bombard and destroy the Hulluqo Egzi'abehér Ab Church. However, the helicopter sent to accomplish this mission was attacked by the local patriots and fell down in the compound of the church before bombarding and destroying the church. In the church's compound, one can find the remains of the body of the crushed helicopter.²⁴⁵ According to informants, in Adaba and Dodola districts other churches were also destroyed in Bale by the Italians.²⁴⁶

Fig.12. The Hulluqo Egzi'abehér Ab church which is saved from Italian airplane bombardment

²⁴³Informants: Afäwärc Dässäläña, Bäqqälä Mojo and Mängesu Yergu.

²⁴⁴Informants: Mängestu Yergu and Asäffa Fäqqädä.

²⁴⁵Informants: *Atom* Ejjegayyāw Haylé and *Ato* Alämu Mändäré.

²⁴⁶Informants: Afäwärc Dässäläñ and Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay.



The Hulluqo Egzi'abeher Ab church an _____ The remain of body of Helicopter of Italians of attempt of attack carried on it by Italians in _____ crushed in the compound of Huluqo Egziabeher the 1930's. _____ Ab church.

Source: Photograph by the researcher

3.8. The Somali Intruders Attacks Carried on the Orthodox Täwahedo Church in Bale

As the information obtained from archival source indicates, in the 1970s from 119 churches found in Bale 77 churches were destroyed due to the attack of the Somali intruders. In this regard, of the five *awrajas* of the region, Mändoyyu *awraja* was the most affected *awraja*. In this *awraja* from 55 churches, 44 of them were destroyed. At district level, Sinana district was the most severely affected district in that it lost 12 churches out of 15 churches found in the district. Goba, Agarfa, Gasära, Goro and Dinšo districts were also lost 7,7,6,6 and 5 churches respectively by the attack of the intruders. Gännalé *awraja* was the other *awrajas* in Bale where large number of churches destroyed by the Somali intruders. Out of 30 churches existed in the *awraja* 15 churches were burnt and turned to ashes. Districts of the *awraja* namely Dodola and Adaba were lost five churches each while Nänsäbo and Kokosa districts lost three and two churches respectively. Similar demolition carried on churches found in Wabé *awraja* as well by the Somali invaders. To mention, out of the 24 churches found in the *awraja* 13 churches also burnt. Here, nine churches were in Ginnir district and four churches from Gololča district.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ADBZ, Folder No 503.

As in other *awraja* of Bale in Dällo *awraja* also four churches out of nine churches of the *awraja* were ruined and burnt by the invaders. One of the districts of the *awraja*, the Bärbärré district lost two churches while Männa and Wälabu districts lost one church each. Elkäre the most peripheral *awraja* of Bale unfortunately lost its two churches in the period under discussion.²⁴⁸

Even though the intruders carried indiscriminate attacks, in Bale in line with the attack of the intruders, large number of Christians were killed, lost their property and dislocated.²⁴⁹ As my informants narrate, in Gasära district a village called Abbu Qämädi alone 39 Šāwan Oromo Christians were killed by the intruders. Similarly, in this same district in a locality known as Ĉifaro over 30 Christians were killed.
250

3.9. Income Generating Activities of the Ortodox Tāwahedo Church in Bale

Under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahedo Church, the Diocese of Bale administrative region had been working a lot different income generating activities to support and rehabilitate functionaries of the church who suffered from several problems. Some of these activities were:

3.9.1. Establishing Sweater Production Machine House

The diocese of Bale administrative region has been supporting the priests and their family who were harmed by the attack of the Somali intruders and affected by natural problems like drought by establishing sweater production machine house in Gobba Mādehané'alām church in 1979.²⁵¹ The major reason why this sweater production house established was to rehabilitate the priests and functionaries of the church who lost their property and exposed for impoverishment due to the attack of the Somali intruders at different times occurred in the region. The sweater production machine house was started its work with four machines and four full time employed workers who could operate on the machine.²⁵²

²⁴⁸*Ibid.*

²⁴⁹Solomon, p. 30.

²⁵⁰Informants: *Atom* Abbäbä Mänker, *Ato* Berhanu Asäffa and Asäffa Fäqqädä.

²⁵¹ADBZ, Reference No 105/10/276., ADBZ, Folder No 2883, ADBZ Folder No 2056.

²⁵²ADBZ, Folder No 105, Informants: *Wüzäro* Xaytu Asäffa, Afäwärq Dässalāñ and Taddäsä Wäldätänsay.

To enhance the skill of the works and maximize the amount of sweaters produced as well as to gain more profit, training was also given for the workers who operate on the machines.²⁵³ Most of the time threads used for the production of sweater were gained through purchase from government thread distributing agents. At the beginning, the sweater production house was profitable and had achieved its objectives in supporting the priests and other functionaries of the church that highly affected by natural disaster and the attack of Somali intruders.²⁵⁴ However, gradually, the profit gained from the sale of sweater started to decline because of fluctuation in the profit gained from the sale of sweaters, the failure of the machines, the increase in the price of threads and poor management of the sweater production house.²⁵⁵

The reason that made the managers of the sweater production machine house ineffective was due to the diocese had given them other burdens or responsibilities. As a result, they failed to control the day-to-day activities of the sweater production house.²⁵⁶ In addition to this, the unfair tax imposed up on the production machine house by the Bale administrative region finance and domestic earnings office without taking in to consideration the amount of money the sweater production machine house had earned, problems like shortage of inputs like thread as well as unavailability of inputs on time.²⁵⁷ According to the information obtained from informants the other reasons that resulted in the reduction of the profit of the sweater production house was the introduction of salvage in to the area through smuggling. In line with this, the sweater production house failed to be competent especially in price with other private sweater production houses. The problem reached its peak in 1989.²⁵⁸

To alleviate the problem, the diocese of Bale administrative region taken different measures such as strengthening the management of the sweater production machine house by changing and substituting them by new ones. Changing the previous system of work/ production/ and had worked on how the huge tax imposed up on the sweater production machine house could be reduced. After these and other corrective measures taken by the diocese, the sweater production house made continued its

²⁵³ADBZ, Folder No 2056.

²⁵⁴ADBZ, Folder No 1682.

²⁵⁵Informants: Ṭaytu Asäffa, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Afäwäriq Dässaläñ. See also ADBZ, Folder No 2056/

²⁵⁶ADBZ, Folder No 2056.

²⁵⁷ADBZ, Folder No 2056. See Appendix III and IV.

²⁵⁸Informants: Xaytu Asäffa and Taddäsä Wäladätänsay.

activities.²⁵⁹ Nevertheless, in 1991 during government change carried two of its machines looted due to the instability created in the period under discussion.²⁶⁰ Even though different corrective measures taken by the diocese, the sweater production house proved to be incapable to achieve its objective due to the cumulative challenging factors it faced mentioned above. At the end, the sweater production house closed down.²⁶¹

3.9.2. Establishment of Bakery Houses

As commonly known, in the pre-1974 revolution there was a strong tie between church and state. This relation had also helped the church to play a crucial role in the socio-economic life of the society. During this period, the church had its own land known as *Sämon* that it used for the up keep of its functionaries. However, in line with the detachment of the marriage between church and state in the 1974 Revolution, the EOC had lost its former rights and privileges that it had enjoyed for long years.²⁶² As a result, following the revolution, the church obliged to solve its own problems for itself by designing and put in to practice different methods that enable it generate income to support and up keep its functionaries. Accordingly, since the revolution, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church, diocese of Bale administrative region has been working to overcome and solve the problems that the church's believers and its functionaries faced. Thus, to support and rehabilitate the priests and other functionaries of the church who were exposed for impoverishment due to natural disasters and the attacks of the Somali intruders occurred in the region the diocese was said to have established bakeries in different parts of Bale between 1981 and 1982. Some of these bakeries were the bakery established in Gobba town in the name of *Yä Säbatu Adebarat Dabbo Bét* (the bakery of the seven parishes).²⁶³

In Dodola district, Dodola town a bakery established for the churches found in the district in the name of bakery of *Mahedärä Qeddusan Gäbrä kerestos* Church. In Sinana district, Robé town and in Adaba district Adaba town other bakeries were established in the name of *Yä Amestu Adebarat Dabbo Bét* (the bakery of the five parishes) and in the name of churches found in the district

²⁵⁹Informants: Afäwäraq Dässalāñ, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqälä Mojo.

²⁶⁰ADBZ, Folder 2056.

²⁶¹Informants: Afäwäraq Dässalāñ and Taddäsä Wäldätänsay.

²⁶²Teshale Tibebu, *The Making of Modern Ethiopia 1896-1974*, (Lawrenceville, 1995), p.168.

²⁶³ADBZ, Folder No 507, ADBZ, Folder No 14-40. See Appendix V.

respectively.²⁶⁴ These bakery houses got inputs like flour, sugar and tea monthly from the government commodity-distributing agents based on the quota assigned for them.²⁶⁵ These bakeries had carried out their work by their own full time workers. For instance, the bakery of the seven parishes had six workers.²⁶⁶

As cited by the informants, these bakeries were able to generate enough money. The profit gained from these bakeries highly contributed its own share in the rehabilitation of the priests and their families who were affected by drought in 1980s and who lost their property by the Somali intruders. In addition, the local community benefited from the service rendered by these bakeries.²⁶⁷ However in line with the implementation of free market economy since 1991, the bakeries that were established by the diocese of Bale were unable to compete with other private bakeries that they began to face deficit. As a result, the diocese closed these bakeries.²⁶⁸

3.9.3. Forestry and Establishment of Seedling Station

Forestry is one of the major development works carried out and gained great concern by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church since the antiquity. In this regard, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church diocese of Bale also working for long years in planting indigenous as well as other species of trees in the compound of each churches. The church not only plant trees but also known in preserving them for the next generation by using them wisely. As written sources indicate, in 1974 the diocese of Bale had possessed around 1323 *gasas* of land and gained around 15,210 Birr from the sale of trees.²⁶⁹

As informants cited, with the exception of the newly established churches most of the churches found in the diocese of Bale has forest in their respective compounds. Thus, the church contributed a lot in the protection of the natural environment by having protected forest. Currently, in 1990 the diocese of Bale administrative region has established a seedling station in a locality known as Šayya along the side of Šayya River. As the information obtained from informants the aim of the establishment of the station was to enable, the local communities engage in the work of forestry and benefit from

²⁶⁴ADBZ, Folder No 1977. See also ADBZ, Folder No 150.

²⁶⁵Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁶⁶ADBZ, Folder No 14-40.

²⁶⁷Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁶⁸*Ibid.*

²⁶⁹Leykun, p.33.

it.²⁷⁰ Accordingly, the diocese of Bale region had been employed workers who run the seedling station of Šayya since its establishment. Archival sources explained that the worker of the station was paid 60 Birr per month and a salary increment was also made for him from 60 Birr to 115 Birr per a month since 1991.²⁷¹

The Šayya seedling station has benefited the local people by distributing seedlings since its establishment both on grant and on fair payment. As information obtained from archival sources, in 1991 alone, 5000 seedlings distributed by the diocese for the local people with no payment. According to informants, the diocese did this activity so as to encourage the society engage themselves in the work of forestation and reforestation.²⁷²

3.10. Social Services Deserved by the Church

3.10.1. Supporting Orphans by Establishing Child Caring Institution

The Diocese of Bale administrative region had also been serving the people of the region by opening a center where children who have socio-economic problems grew in. The diocese had established two institutions for the service of child caring in Dodola and Gobba towns. In this child caring institutions, it was only children (especially orphans) that had serious socio-economic problems were supported and attended their education. This type of service was not existed during the imperial period. Rather the service started to render in Bale administrative region since 1987.²⁷³

The Dodola child caring institution had several problems such as absence of facilities like pure water, electricity; furniture and standardized house comfortable for the children grew there. As a result, the office of Bale administrative region had requested the Gännalé *awraja* children's affairs alleviate the existed problem discussing with the diocese of Bale region by building houses for those destitute children in the standard of the houses build in Gobba town.²⁷⁴ Accordingly, the problem that the institution had alleviated in 1985 after passing through four years of hard times when the wide compound found in Ddola town that called *Hezbawi Nuro Edegät* (Development of Public Life) which

²⁷⁰ Afawärq Dässalāñ, Tadasä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁷¹ ADBZ, Folder No 3097.

²⁷² Informants: Bäqqälä Mojo and Taddäsä Wäldätänsay.

²⁷³ Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ and Tasäw Wäldäsämayat.

²⁷⁴ ADBZ, Reference No k3791/1/2/384., See Appendix VI.

had more than 13 classes. No matter how the Dodola child caring institution faced different problems, the center had admitted and served more than forty orphans annually.²⁷⁵

On the other hand, the Gobba child caring institution was a center that had better and comfortable houses. Facilities such as bed, furniture and the likes were fulfilled for this institution. It also backed by different government offices. The office of Bale administrative region, the Bale administrative region children's affair, Office of Women Association, Agricultural Office, education office and churches like EECMY and the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church Holy Synod Development and Inter-church Aid Department had also contributed their great share by participating actively and backing the building of the institution.²⁷⁶

Sources witnessed that there were about 79,000-80,000 destitute children in Bale administrative region in 1980s. However, the Gobba child caring institution admitted and supported only limited number of children based on the capacity of the institution. It was about 200 children that had no family gained support in the Gobba child caring institution annually.²⁷⁷ Selection of children carried, based on the criteria already set by the government. The selection performed by giving priority for those orphans who had serious socio-economic problems and had no family that supports them. Children who got this opportunity were those children their age was between 5-12 years. Concerning children below five years, sources said nothing.²⁷⁸

There was a board called the Bale Child Caring Board that runs the children caring institutions. The board established in 1988 with eight members. The head of the board was the governor of Bale, *Guwad* (comrade) Godana Tuni. *Guwad* Denqu Gäbrä Mariyam, the head of educational office was secretary and member of the board. *Abunä* Sälama, the Arch Bishop of the diocese of Bale region, Abba Gäabrä Selasé Mulu, the general manager of the diocese of Bale region, *Guwad* Goytom Abräham, agent of the EOTC Children's Affair & others were members of the board.²⁷⁹ The election to the board had its own criteria that set by the government. To this end, the EOTC council of Affairs

²⁷⁵ADBZ, Folder No 1759.

²⁷⁶ADBZ, Ref. No አ3791/1/2/385, ADBZ, Ref.No አ3791/1/2/456., ADBZ, Ref.No አ3791/1/2/451., ADBZ, Ref.Noአ6-ጠ6/3/17.

²⁷⁷ADBZ, Reference Noአ3-796/1/2/439.

²⁷⁸ADBZ, Ref. No አ3791/12/457., See Appendix VII.

²⁷⁹ADBZ, Ref. Noአ3791/12/485., See Appendix VIII.

of Child Care had examined whether the election carried based on the criteria of election forwarded. The council had also the authority of approving the election.²⁸⁰ Here, one can understand that every activity carried out in the child caring institution, influenced by the existing government bodies. Decision maker was the government itself. Because, the *Därg* officials were who dominated the board. To mention the head and the secretary of the board were top government officials of the region. According to the informants, the children growing center was became center of corruption. The fund and the budget allocated in the name of the children did not properly used by the children rather it was the then government officials of the region who used it to benefit themselves.²⁸¹

Although the child caring centers found in Bale had such problems, they had rendered other services for the children grew there. For example, in 1990 the diocese of Bale administrative region had opened boarding school in Gobba child caring institution. This school was established by the relentless effort and activities of the then Archbishop of the diocese Bale, *Abunä Sälama*. With 200,000 Ethiopian Birr, the aid gained from the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department the school constructed and started its function. In this school, it was children who were in the child caring institution and some other children who came from the locality had attended their education. According to informants, all school subjects learnt in government schools studied in this school. For those children who wanted to attend religious education, a special class was arranged for them out of the regular schooling time.²⁸²

Expenditures for the provisions like food, clothing, health care, educational materials, and salary of workers that served the orphans was covered by a certain German nongovernmental organization. However, in 1990s this NGO terminated its support. After wards, supporting these children was fall on the shoulder of the diocese. Nevertheless, due to shortage of adequate budget and absence of another aid from other bodies, the child caring institutions that helped double orphan children of Bale administrative region were obliged to close down. Children of the institution also made returned to their respective locality. After wards, the diocese of Bale has opened a kindergarten and elementary

²⁸⁰ ADBZ, Ref. No ስ305/35/6/1/81.

²⁸¹ Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ, Tadasä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁸² Informants: Täšomä Wäldämareyam, Däbbäbä Mälläsä and Taddäsä Wäldätänsay.

schools in the former child caring institutions. This school is serving the children of the local community until these days.²⁸³

Fig.13. Partial view of the former the Gobba Child Caring Institution and the today's Mädehané'alām Kindergarten and Primary School



Source: Photograph by researcher

3.10.2. Relief Service

For long years, the EOC has been rendering holistic services for the people of Ethiopia. Of these services, relief service is the major one. For instance, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church Holy Synod Development and Inter- Church Aid Department has been working different development works and relief service in Bale administrative region in collaboration with the diocese of Bale region. To mention, in Agarfa district established a relief station for providing relief-distributing services for different sections of the society. In the Agarfa relief station they were those residents of the district who were affected by the drought occurred in the area were given different aids. In addition to this, those church servants who lost their property due to the attack of the Somali intruders, nuns and monks of monastery and destitute also supported.²⁸⁴ The Agarfa relief distribution center was established and started to carry out its function in 1985. The service was a contract lasting for two years (from 1985-

²⁸³Informants: Afawärq Dässalañ, Tadäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁸⁴ADBZ, Ref. No TS-52/6/78.

1986).²⁸⁵ It was the diocese of Bale that in collaboration with the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department render relief service in Agfa in contract. The regional diocesan committee was the responsible body for distributing the relief, monitoring and reporting the work done by the diocese in the Agarfa relief distributing station.²⁸⁶

The Diocese was the body that employed the workers who served in the Agarfa relief distribution station. Accordingly, it had employed four workers in contract and other guards as well.²⁸⁷ Employment of the contract workers carried out through selecting those individuals who scored best result in the exam prepared by the diocesan committee. The selection process carried was said transparent even though there was some compliant from the competitors.²⁸⁸

In Agarfa between 1985 and 1986 within two phases, more than 7000 people had been supported by the grain distributed in the station.²⁸⁹ In addition to grain, other things such as dried food and the likes were also distributed. From the relief service given in Agarfa relief station, the people of the district affected by drought highly benefited even though the problem occurred in the area did not alleviated. As a result, to rehabilitate the severely drought affected residents of the district and catch up with others, the district's administration and the districts disaster prevention office had worked a lot for the continuation of the relief service that had been rendered in Agarfa. To this end, they had communicated with letter with the Diocese of Bale region on how the relief service carried out in the district continued to enable habilitate the people of the district who affected by drought.²⁹⁰

Albeit the contract that the diocese of Bale had with EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department completed, the diocese of Bale that deeply knew the problem existed in the area, had requested the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department continued the relief service rendered in Agarfa. The diocese also said requested the concerned bodies rendered aids like oxen, seed grain, clothes, farming equipment and other items for the total rehabilitation of the

²⁸⁵ADBZ, Ref. No ከጣ/ሠክ/አጠ7/29.

²⁸⁶Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ, Tadäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁸⁷ADBZ, Folder No 1346 File No__.

²⁸⁸Informants: Afawärq Dässalāñ, Tadäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁸⁹ADBZ, Folder No 305 File No__, See Appendix XI.

²⁹⁰ADBZ, Folder No 226.

people of the district that were under sever condition.²⁹¹ As cited by my informants the diocese of Bale had rendered a relief service not only for the drought affected people of Agarfa district but also for monasteries, parishes and destitute in Bale. The amount of grain distributed for the different sections of the society was not the same. It differs based on the number of family the individual had possessed. Accordingly, based on the rule forwarded from the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department, the diocese of Bale had distributed grain for monks and nuns in monastery at a rate of 25 kgs per person a month. Parish priests with families 50kgs given per family per month. Destitute with families also received 50 kgs per family per month and destitute without families had received 25kgs per person a month.²⁹²

As many informants witnessed, the diocese of Bale region in collaboration with the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department highly helped the people of Agarfa district in particular and the people of Bale in general in saving their life from the famine occurred in the area.²⁹³ The diocese also contributed a lot in the total rehabilitation of the drought-affected people of the region as well as functionaries of the church and their families their number was about 3035 who lost their property due to the Somali intruders attacks occurred in the area at different times.²⁹⁴

3.10.3. Infrastructure Building

The role played by the Diocese of Bale region in expanding infrastructure was very little. For instance, during the reign of Emperor Menelik II and Emperor Haile Selassie I nothing was done in this area. It was around the end of the *Därg* regime that the church showed some sort of progress and entered into the work of expanding infrastructure.²⁹⁵ According to available archival source indicates, the first venture of the church in the infrastructure building was the bridge that it had constructed in Gännalé *awraja*, Adaba town using the financial aid gained from the EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department in 1986.²⁹⁶ In addition, to alleviate the problem of road existed in Dällo district, in 1989 in the areas between Šawwé and Hangétu; the diocese of Bale administrative region

²⁹¹ADBZ, Folder No 305.

²⁹²Informants: Taddäsä Wäldätänsay, Afäwärq Dässälän ang Täšomä Wäldämareyam.

²⁹³Informants: Bäqqälä Mojo, Däbbäbä Mälläsäand Tadäsä Wäldätänsay.

²⁹⁴ADBZ, Folder No 1682.

²⁹⁵Informants: Däbbäbä Mälläsä, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Afäwärq Dässälän.

²⁹⁶ADBZ, Folder No 14-40.

had constructed 35 kms of road through a safety net program in collaboration with EOTC Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department.²⁹⁷

3.10.4. Capacity Building

Since the conquest of Bale by forces of Menelik II, different churches were built in Bale. There was also problem of preachers in the area until recent times. The church also said to have given little attention in the spread of the gospel by giving training for preachers of the faith. As a result, the church has lost the good opportunity it had to spread the gospel and enable others accept the faith.²⁹⁸ It was around the eve of the 1974 revolution that the EOC started to render trainings for priests. In 1970s, the EOC had about 200,000 priests at national level. However, earlier; without providing spiritual services these priests had not get any training which improved and changed their economic life at large and serve the worshippers effectively. To improve their spiritual and their way of life the church had arranged different short term-trainings. To mention, a six months course was rendered into two phases for more than 200 priests who recruited from each province including Bale in 1973 and 1974. The church also planned to give holistic trainings for its priests in the years ahead.²⁹⁹

The Diocese of Bale Administrative Region also worked to provide some short term-trainings for priests and other functionaries of the church to enhance their knowledge as much as it could largely after the 1974 Revolution. Between 1988 and 1993, fifty-eight priests were gained training lasted for three months.³⁰⁰ As informants also cited, the diocese of Bale had prepared a plan to train preachers by allocating quota for each district. The quota of the trainee decided by the number of churches and believers found in the district. Accordingly, in 1990 Sinana district had gained quota of three trainees while Ginnir district given quota of two trainees. The rest districts namely: Gololča, Gasära, Goro, Agarfa, Dinšo, Adaba, Dodola, Nänsäbo and Männa districts given quota of one trainee each.³⁰¹ Available sources cited that in 1989 the diocese of Bale administrative region had given trainings that lasted for fifteen days for selected priests from each *awrajas*/sub provinces/ of Bale to enable them provide church ministry in their respective districts.³⁰² Trainees who participated in the training were

²⁹⁷ADBZ, Folder No 1977.

²⁹⁸Informants: Afäwäraq Dässaläh, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

²⁹⁹NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 12.4.

³⁰⁰ADBZ, Folder No 3163.

³⁰¹ADBZ, Folder No 904.

³⁰²Informants: Afäwäraq Dässaläh, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

certified for their following the training. For instance, priest Zäwgä Wäldä Mädehen and *Märiyéta* Sirak Hayilu residents of Gololča district were among those who attended the training and received certificate.³⁰³

The trainees who received training were assigned in the districts to spread the gospel. In addition to this, the diocese also employed itinerant preachers who preach the gospel traveling in the villages of the district. In line with the new administrative restructuring, the Diocese of Bale region assigned fourteen itinerant preachers employed by the diocese. The monthly salary of each employee was 30 Ethiopian Birr. That was done to make the work of evangelization in Bale administrative region possible and to reach the people with gospel. Accordingly, for Mändoyyu awraja three itinerant preachers assigned. On the other hand, for the Hora/Agarfa/, Gasära, Gololča, Ginnir, and Gännalé *awrajas* two priests for each *awrajas* assigned and for Dällo, Goro and Nänsäbo *awrajas*, one preacher for each assigned to make effective the work of evangelization carried in the Administrative region.³⁰⁴

According to the information obtained from informants, the diocese of Bale was working to spread the Orthodox faith in an organized manner after 1991. Why the diocese started organized evangelization work after the downfall of the *Därg* regime was seems to overcome Protestantism that engulfed the region. To this end, the diocese has given great emphasis for providing transformational courses and training for priests and preachers by giving education opportunity based on the quota annually given to it from the EOTC Patriarchal office. Accordingly, to make the church ministry carried in the diocese effective, priests and preachers were sent to the theological training institutions of the EOTC that were found in different parts of the country. The training was given at certificate, diploma and degree level. Therefore, since the downfall of the *Därg* to the present, the diocese of Bale employed and assigned such trained preachers in most of the districts of Bale to make the evangelization work effective and spread the Orthodox Täwahedo faith.³⁰⁵

Beyond spiritual matters, the diocese Bale also worked on keeping the health of the local people by giving short term trainings on health care albeit failed to establish clinics. With regard to this, the

³⁰³ADBZ, Reference No 81/8/63/82.

³⁰⁴ADBZ, Folder No 904 File No__.

³⁰⁵Informants: Afäwärq Dässaläh, Taddäsä Wäldä Tänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

information obtained from available archival sources indicates in 1988 the diocese of Bale administrative region had selected thirty priests from each districts and made participate on the training arranged at Addis Ababa by the Addis Ababa health Bureau.³⁰⁶ The EOTC Development and Inter-Church Aid Directorate was appreciated the diocese of Bale region for it carried careful selection of trainee priests.³⁰⁷ As informants cited, the diocese of Bale had also continued the work started on health care and HIV/AIDS after 1991.³⁰⁸

3.11. Monastery and Monastic Life in Bale

Oral traditions collected from elders of Bale explain that there were Monasteries in Bale during the medieval period of Ethiopia. One of these monasteries was the today's shrine of Sheik Hussein. These monasteries destroyed during the war of Ahmed Grañ and these ruined monasteries had never reestablished later.³⁰⁹ Beginning from the defeat of Imam Ahmed to 1985 also no new monasteries founded in Bale. However, from 1986 onwards three monasteries founded in Bale namely the Gobba Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery, the Čančo Selassie Monastery in Ginnir district and the Jarra AbunäTäkla Haymanot monastery that in Gololča district. Of these three monasteries, the last two monasteries established after 1991 but the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery founded around the eve of the collapse of the *Därg* regime.³¹⁰

3.11.1. Physical Settings of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery

The Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery founded by his holiness *Abunä Sälama*, the Archbishop of Diocese of Bale Administrative Region in 1986.³¹¹ Up until 1974, the place now became monastery was owned by individuals who engaged in animal breeding.³¹² This monastery found in Oromia National Regional State, Bale zone, Gobba district, Gobba town, *qäbälé* 01. It is 430 km away from Addis Ababa and 2.5 km North West of Gobba town.³¹³

³⁰⁶ADBZ, Folder No 1991File No__.

³⁰⁷ADBZ, Folder No 1991File No__.

³⁰⁸Informants: Afäwäraq Dässaläñ, Taddäsä Wäldätänsay and Bäqqälä Mojo.

³⁰⁹Informants: Aklilu Dañé, *Abba* Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam and *Abba* Wäldämika'él Mulu.

³¹⁰Informants: *Abba* Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos, *Abba* Qäšäla Giyorgis and Alämayyähü Bäqqälä.

³¹¹ADBZ, Folder No 1088 File No__, See Appendix X.

³¹²Informants: Qäšäla Giyorgis, *Abba* Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos and *Abba* Kenfägäbre'él Wäru.

³¹³Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, *Bešu Abunä Sälama Tarikačäw, Temehertačäw enna Seračäw* (The Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery: History, Teachings and Works of his holiness Abunä Salama), (Addis Ababa, 1998), p.71.,ADBZ, Folder No 579 File No_, ADBZ, Folder No 308 File No__.

The climatic condition of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery is *Däga* (highland) and received high amount of rainfall. Its topography is somewhat sloppy. There are two rivers flowing into the monastery. One of these rivers is the Bamo River that entered into the monastery from the southern direction. This river cross the monastery in the North direction and out let to the east. The other river is the Genfello River that also enters to the ambit of the monastery and crossing it in the easterly direction.³¹⁴

There are two churches in this monastery. One is the church of righteous Abunä Täklä Haymanot that situated on the hilly area surrounded by the Bamo and Gefello Rivers and the trough around the monastery. This church was built in 1994 eight years after the monastery was founded. Due to absence of standardized church in the monastery in those eight years, the Holy Ark of St. Abunä Täklä Haymanot stayed in tent and *mäqaño* (small) house.³¹⁵ The second church found in the monastery is the St. Kerestos Sämra Church that used for female residents of the Monastery.³¹⁶

Fig.14.The two churches found in the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery



The church of Abuna Takla Haymanot _____ The Church of Kerestos Samra

Source: Photograph by the researcher

The Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery is endowed with a very attractive forest that consists of age old trees of different kind which are evergreen..³¹⁷

³¹⁴Informants: Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos, Qäşäla Giyorgis and Kenfägäbre’él Wärqu.

³¹⁵*Ibid.*

³¹⁶Informants: Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos, Qäşäla Giyorgis and Kenfägäbre’él Wärqu.

³¹⁷Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p.72.

Fig.15. Partial view of forest coverage of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery



Source: Photograph by the researcher

The land of the monastery covered with rocks that are easy to dig caverns. As a result, of this, the ascetics who came to the monastery were able to dig more than 18 caverns.³¹⁸

Fig.16. Some of the caverns found in the monastery



Source: Photograph by the researcher

³¹⁸*Ibid.*

3.11.2. The Establishment of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery

The availability of spa contributed for the establishment of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery. Some monks observed through revelation the gush out of spa. These monks and local worshipers told the issue repeatedly to *Abunä Sälama* to sanctify the spa and opened it for service. Even though the news was very interesting and acceptable, *Abunä Sälama* never hurried to sanctify the spa and opened it for service. Because the *Abun* believed that, it would be difficult to accept all revelations are from God. No matter how questions forwarded to him frequently, *Abunä Sälama* kept the issue patiently. First, he visited the place where the spa gushed out on 20 July 1985. He understood that the area where the spa was found was not only comfortable for providing spa service but also comfortable for founding monastery.³¹⁹

Abunä Sälama determined to take time and stayed in prayer to get the willing of God instead of hurrying to benedict the site.³²⁰ Accordingly, *Abunä Sälama* went to the site where chosen for founding monastery on 7 December 1986. This day, it was said many people including three patients were followed him to observe what the Archbishop was doing in the spa area. As soon as they reached the surrounding of the spa, the three patients who suffered from ghoul started to cry. The *Abun* sprinkled their body with the spa and the patients were able cured from their illness. Those who observed the miracle, admired with the good things God did with the hands of the *Abun*.³²¹ The next day on 8 December 1986, his *Abunä Sälama* again went to the area where the spa found. He stayed in prayer for seven days. After completing his prayer, he decided a monastery founded in the area where the spa gushed out because he believed got the willing of God. Finally, the Mäkanä Hiwot Abuna Täklä Haymanot monastery was founded by *Abunä Sälama*, the Arch bishop of diocese of Bale on 1 January 1986. The Arch bishop also named this monastery the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery.³²² To enable the monastery accomplish its day to day activities a stamp also carved by the name of the monastery.³²³

³¹⁹Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p. 73.

³²⁰Informants: Kenfägäbre'él Wäru, Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam and Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos.

³²¹ Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p. 73.

³²²*Ibid*, p.74.

³²³Informants: Abba Kenfägäbre'él Wäru, Abba Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam, Abba Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos.

The monastery used the name Mäkanä Hiwot (Place of life) only for five years. Because of the *Abämenét* (administrator) of the monastery was disappeared from the area taking the stamp of the monastery. To avoid any crimes might done by the name of the monastery, the worshipers met together and decided to change the name of the monastery and its stamp. After the discussions carried, agreement reached the phrase “*Golä Behensa*“ added on the former name of the monastery. Accordingly, the name of the monastery became the *Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot* monastery. The stamp of the monastery also carved with this name for second time. Even though name change made, still the monastery known by many by its former name, Mäkanä Hiwot.³²⁴

The meaning of ”*Gol*” is residence while “*Behensa*” is sheep (righteous believers). Therefore, “*Golä Behensa* “means residence of righteous believers. The reason why the phrase *Golä Behensa* chosen was that in the Christian faith and Biblical teachings; righteous people usually synonymized as sheep.³²⁵

3.11.3. Challenges Faced during the Establishment of the Monastery

From the very beginning, the establishment of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery faced opposition from some pensioners of Gobba town. The protest started from the time that the site of the monastery was chosen and sanctified. The opposition became serious against the construction of the church of Abunä Täklä Haymanot and the entrance of its Holy Ark. According to the opinion of the pensioners, the monastery should not have its own church rather administered under St. Selassie church that found near to the vicinity of the monastery.³²⁶

In addition to the pensioners, other opponents of the monastery accused *Abunä Sälama* to the *Därg* cadres saying the *Abun* had organizing opposition political party and selling water in the bush. Due to this reason, the *Därg* secret agents sent to the monastery and observed what *Abunä Sälama* was doing behaving like worshiper. After investigating all things done by *Abunä Sälama*, the *Därg*'s cadres understood that the reality they observed was quite different from the prosecution presented to them by the opponents of the monastery. Because they realized that, the *Abun* always engaged himself in preaching gospel, healing patients who suffered from devil and baptizing the worshipers. Finally, the

³²⁴Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p.74.

³²⁵Informants: Kenfägäbre'él Wärfu, *Abba Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämäreyam* and *Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos*.

³²⁶Informants: Wäldä Mika'él Mulu, *Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämäreyam* and *Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos*.

Därg's cadres believed the prosecution of the protesters had no truth. As a result, they returned and reported to the *Därg* officials the result of their investigation.³²⁷

When the opponents realized their prosecution could not work, they designed another case in which they accuse the *Abun*. Accordingly, they started to oppose saying the spas did not gushed out in the monastery rather they gushed out from the compound St. Selassie church. Even more, they accused *Abunä Sälama* to the patriarch. The patriarch, who saw the prosecution of the accusers, set up a committee that investigate the problem and gave just decision and solution. The committee members who assigned to discharge this duty sent to the monastery. The local community, the accusers and large number of worshipers who had information about the coming of the committee were attended the meeting. The committee members asked the Archbishop *Abunä Sälama* how far the distance between the monastery and St. Selassie church. *Abuna Salama* responded only saying, as we shall see later. They also forwarded the same question to the accusers of the Archbishop. The accusers, instead of giving response and justification they started to complain each other's.³²⁸

The committee understood as the prosecution had no truth. They also understand that the place where the spa was found 1.5 km away from St. Selassie church. At the end, the committee decided that the administrators of the monastery have the right to build churches in the monastery, render spa and other religious services.³²⁹ *Abunä Sälama* who faced several difficulties succeeded in defending his opponents and continued his former activities such as baptizing worshipers, healing sick peoples, backing and strengthening the monastery repeatedly travelling with their foot from Gobba town.³³⁰

3.11.4. Spas Existing in the Monastery

Many spas gushed out in the compound of the monastery. The three earliest spas were the spa of Egzi'abeher Ab, the spa of St. Marry and the spa of Angel Michael. Using these earliest spas that *Abunä Sälama* had baptized eight thousand worshipers and cured large number of patients who came from different areas of Bale from December 1986 to January 1986 alone.³³¹ In addition to the three earliest spas, other spas gushed out in the monastery one after another in the years ahead. In 1987, the

³²⁷Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p.76.

³²⁸Informants: Kenfägäbre'él Wärqu, Gäbrä Mäsqäl Wäldämareyam and Qäşäla Giyorgis.

³²⁹Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p.76.

³³⁰Informants: Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos, Qäşäla Giyorgis and Gäbrä Mäsqäl Wäldämareyam.

³³¹Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, p.77.

number of spas of the monastery reached eight.³³² Currently there are about 17 spas in the Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery.³³³

Including the first three earliest spas the spas found in the monastery from the earliest to the present are as follows: the spa of Egziabeher Ab, St. Marry, St. Michael, Madehané'aläm, St. Giyorgis, Abunä Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus, St. Fanu'él, St. Kerestos Sämrä, St. Ura'él, St. Arséma, Ledäta, Gäbrä Kerestos, Mätemeqä Mäläkot Qedus Yonannes and others. Of the above mentioned spas, the spa of St. Marry, St. Yohannis, Ledäta, Gäbrä Kerestos, Täklä Haymanot, Egezi'abér Ab, St. Selassie and St. Gäbre'él had water spout while the spa of St. Kidanä Meherät, St. Ura'él, St. Rufa'él, St. Kerestos Sämrä, Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus, St. Michael, St. Giyorgis, Mädehané'aläm and St. Arséma still has no water spout.³³⁴

Fig.17. Some of the spas found in the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery



Source: Photograph by the researcher

3.12. Life in the Monastery

3.12.1. Administrative History of the Monastery

The Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery administered by monks living in the monastery. The administrators of the monastery are always male monks. For female monks such responsibility was not given. According to the rule of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo

³³²ADBZ, Folder No 590.

³³³Informants: Abba Wäldämika'él, Abba Gäbrämasqäl Wäldämareyam, Abba Gäbräyyasus Wäldäqirqos.

³³⁴Geremew Mebratu and Habtamu Sime, *Yä Gobba Abunä Täklähaymanot Gädam (The Goba Abuna Tekle Haymanot Monastery)*, (Robe, 2000), p. 9.

Church, male administrators of monastery called *abämenét* while the female one known as *emämenét*.³³⁵ Since its establishment to 1991 the *abämenéts* who successively administered the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery were *Qomos Abba* Haylä maryam, *Qomos Abba* Wäldä Tänsay, *Qomos Abba* Gäbrä Şadiq, *Qomos Abba* Wäldä Giyorgis, *Qomos Abba* Wäldä Şadiq, *Qomos Abba* Gäbrä Mädehen, *Qomos Abba* Wäldä Şadiq, *Qomos* Täklä Wäld, *Abba* Wäldä Mädehen and *Qomos Abba* GäbräMädehen. Of these *abämenéts*, *Qomos Abba* Wäldä Şadiq and *Qomos Abba* Gäbrä Mädehen got the opportunity to administer this monastery twice.³³⁶

3.12.2. The Livelihood of the Monastery

In the Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery different kinds of works been done by the residents of the monastery. The major ones are prayer, looking after the cattle of the monastery, mowing crop, selling in the shop, baking bread, hewing caverns, grinding grains with mill and the likes.³³⁷

With regard to farming, the Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Hauymanot monastery has no enough farmland but on the small plot of land of the monastery grains of different kind and vegetable is cultivated. In addition to this, the monastery had rented farmland from individuals and produced different cereals. But now day's' the monastery had stopped renting farmlands from individuals due to the rate of land rent going increasing from time to time.³³⁸

Another source of income of the monastery is the money that derived from the grain mill in which the monastery has in the North of Gobba town. The monastery has also a bakery house in Gobba town. By baking bread and distributing it for the community of the town, the monastery has generating income for its up keep. In addition, the monastery has shops in Gobba town as well as in the compound of the monastery that are serving the monastery in generating additional income. Some of the items/materials sold in these shops include religious books, clothes related to the faith and the likes.³³⁹

³³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 15.

³³⁶ *Ibid*, p.16.

³³⁷ Informants: Qäşla Giyorgis, Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos and Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam.

³³⁸ Informants: Wäldämika'él Mulu, Qäşäla Giyorgis and Kenfägäbre'él Wäru.

³³⁹ Geremew Mebratu and Habtamu Simé, p.16.

The Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery also practicing breeding of cattle especially improved species of cows. By selling milk for the residents of Gobba town, the monastery has earning more money for the up keep of residents of the monastery. The monastery has been distributing improved highbred heifers to the local people with fair payment.³⁴⁰

Fig.18. Cattle Breeding in the monastery



Source: Photograph by the researcher

To support the monastery with money the Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church allocated around eleven thousand Ethiopian Birr annually.³⁴¹ For instance in 1988 the monastery has received 17,960 Ethiopian Birr in support from the EOC Holy Synod.³⁴² This financial support has contributed a lot the monastery in fulfilling the demands of the residents. No matter how there was some tardiness in releasing the allocated budget on time, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church Holy Synod has continued rendering financial support for the monastery until this days.³⁴³

As any other institutions, the Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery had paying annual income tax for the government. The annual tax paid by the monastery reached around 8000-9000 birr. After the monastery's administrators appealed to the government officials that the

³⁴⁰Informants: Gäbrä Mäsqäl Wäldämareyam, Kenfägäbre'él Wäru and Wäldämika'él Mulu.

³⁴¹Informants: Kenfägäbre'él Wäru, Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam and Gäbräyäsus Wäldäqirqos.

³⁴²ADBZ, Folder No 1977.

³⁴³Informants: Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam, Kenfägäbre'él Wäru, and Wäldämika'él Mulu.

tax the monastery required to pay is beyond its earnings, the annual tax paid by the monastery would reduce to 2000-3000 birr. Generally residents of the monastery are industrious, hardworking, who gave great respect for work and have great interest to enhance the economy of their monastery. Still lack of enough farmland continued as the major problem of the monastery. If the monastery could get enough farmland and its industrious residents engaged in farming the monastery can serve not only its residents but also others.³⁴⁴

3.12.3. Education

The religious education given in the Golä Behensa Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot monastery include *fidäl Nebab*, *wudasé Mareyam*, *Mälka Mareyam*, *Mälka Eyyasus*, *Sere'atä Qedasé*, *Ge'ez Nebab*, *Aquwaquwam*, *Se'atat*, *Qené*, *Degwa*, *Gebrä Deqqunna*, *Zemaré*, *Mäswasit*, *Me'eraf*, and the likes. Based on the rule and regulation of the monastery no resident of the monastery allowed to stay without attending either of the education provided in the monastery.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴Mekane Hiwot Gole Behensa Abune Tekle Haymanot Monastery, P.17.

³⁴⁵Geremew and Habtamu, P.15.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROTESTANTISM, CATHOLICISM AND INTER-RELIGIOUS INTERACTIONS IN BALE

4.1. Protestantism in Bale

In the province of Bale, Protestantism has a short history. It is the phenomenon of the end of the first half of the 20th century. For instance, the Qalä Hiwot Church, the EECMY and the Mulu Wängél (Full Gospel) Churches have started holistic ministry during Haile Selassie regime whereas the Mäsärätä Kerestos Church has begun rendering its function around the end of the *Därg* regime. Therefore, with the exception of these four Protestant Christianity churches other sects of protestant Christianity churches introduced to the area and started their function after the downfall of the *Därg* regime. Nowadays, the number of protestant Christianity churches found in Bale increased and reached thirteen including the Qalä Hiwot, the EECMY, the Full Gospel and the Mäsärätä Kerestos churches.³⁴⁶ This study also focused only on these four earliest Protestant churches mentioned above.

4.1.1. The Establishment of the Qalä Hiwot Church and the Spread of the

Faith in Bale

The Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) that changed its name in 1973 to the Society of International Missionaries contributed a lot for the establishment of the Qalä Hiwot Church.³⁴⁷ Currently, the Church has possessed more than half of the total evangelical believers in Ethiopia (about 6.2 million) as of the 2007 census report.³⁴⁸

As available archival source indicates, as soon as arrived in Bale the SIM missionaries had established their mission stations in Gobba, Ginnir and Adaba towns.³⁴⁹ In these stations, the SIM missionaries had been giving holistic services for the people of the area. In all these three stations, the SIM had opened schools and clinics. Besides, the clinic and school works the missionaries

³⁴⁶Informants: Ato Lämna Gota, Ato Abäbayyäu Gärrämäu and Paster Sälämon Boggälä.

³⁴⁷BQHCA, Folder No 2015.

³⁴⁸BQHCA, Folder No K/1.

³⁴⁹BQHCA, Folder No K/1. See Appendix XI.

preached the gospel and backed the establishment of Qalä Hiwot Churches in different parts of the province. The Qalä Hiwot Church founded in Bale province for the first time in 1947 by the SIM missionaries who came to the area.³⁵⁰ Through their evangelization work, the SIM missionaries were able to succeed in getting some converters. These few converters had taken responsibility of spreading Biblical Christianity to the people after the SIM missionaries evacuated from the area by the *Därg* around 1978.³⁵¹

It was after the downfall of the *Därg* regime that the Qalä Hiwot church spread and the Christian faith showed progress nationwide in general and in Bale in particular. As a result, currently the Bale Qalä Hiwot church has more than 35 local churches, 11 small local church beginnings and 20 outreach sites. These churches found in Bale zone as well as the former four *wärädas* (districts) of Bale namely Dodola, Adaba, Kokosa and Nänsäbo districts currently made part of west Arssi Zone. Therefore, presently the Bale Qalä Hiwot Church has administering all the Qalä Hiwot Churches found in Bale zone and the Qalä Hiwot churches found in the four districts of West Arssi zone mentioned above.³⁵²

Many SIM missionaries were come to Bale at different times. Some of the first SIM missionaries who arrived in Bale, Gobba and started preaching the gospel were Mr. Kaiser, Miss. Kaiser, Miss. Land, Miss. Newfield, Mr. Waldek, Miss. Waldek, Mr. Edgier, Miss. Edgier, Mr. German, Miss. German, Mr. Bond and Miss Bond.³⁵³

Of the SIM missionaries who came to Bale, Gobba were Mr. Kaiser and his wife Miss. Kaiser who played great role in preaching the gospel for the local people by paying great sacrifice traveling from place to place. The SIM missionaries and local converters strengthened and expanded their evangelization work and able to increase the number of believers. This success necessitated the establishment of Qalä Hiwot church. To this end, with the help of the SIM missionaries living in

³⁵⁰BQHCA, Folder No K/1 File No__.

³⁵¹*Ibid.*

³⁵²Informants: *Mäggabi Täfäri Bäzzabeh, Lämma Gota and Šäläqa Telahun Dämessé.*

³⁵³Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, *Yä Qalä Hiwot Bétäkerestiyān Tarik: Lämājämmäriya Gizé Yätägajjä* (By Gospel Believers Association the History of Kale Hiwot Church: Prepared for the First Time), (Addis Ababa, 1978), P.62.

Goba and preachers who came from Wälayita Qalä Hiwot Church, the first Qalä Hiwot church established in Bale, Gobba town in 1956.³⁵⁴

Ethiopians like Bäqqälä Wärqu, Yohannis Anšebo, Ešétu, Goradé and Ambolé were those who had served the church in preaching the gospel. These individuals paid great sacrifice for spreading the gospel and gaining more believers. No matter how faced challenges in the evangelization work, the church able to convert men like Webešét Dässalāñ, Dubbalä Tākättäl, Seyyum Gäbrä Mädehen, Telahun Haylé, Yoséf Wäldä Mäsqäl, Telahun Dämessé and Bällehu Guwaddé from the village around Gobba town. Gobäzé Gota, Lämna Gota, Gobäna Guta and many other residents of Gobba town both female and male embraced the faith.³⁵⁵

According to informants the SIM missionaries and the local preachers were used several methods to preach the gospel, convince the local people and attract them towards the faith. To mention, the missionaries were said arranged weekly program of Bible learning at night for both the members of the church and everybody who want to attend the program. In summer, when schools closed; missionaries were arranged religious education for students. To motivate students, the missionaries awarded them with materials like Bible, pencils decorated with the words of God, Mirrors and the likes. The other methods used by the missionaries and the Gobba Qalä Hiwot church was that, every Sunday after prayer; gospel was preached for the believers in the church as well as the people around using loud speaker. In annual holidays, they used gusts (preachers) invited from Addis Ababa and elsewhere to evangelize the people. The missionaries were also used slides /projector/ to reach with gospel the government employees and other town dwellers by showing spiritual /religious/ films in area where large number of people found.³⁵⁶

To strengthen love and respect among each other's, the missionaries and the believers of the faith every Sunday after prayer, study Bible and participate in meal in the home of any volunteer worshiper of the faith.³⁵⁷ To maximize the dissemination of gospel, the churchmen advised the

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.63.

³⁵⁶ Informants: Lämna Gota, Lämna Ennefraw and Täfäri Bäzzabeh.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

worshippers to listen the Bible teaching transmitted in Amharic language from Monrovia, Liberia through Elwha Radio. In addition, spiritual theatres also prepared and presented for the believers.³⁵⁸

Baptism of new converters carried along the rivers flowing in Gobba town to demonstrate their practice and attract others towards the faith.³⁵⁹ In the work place, the church such as in the waving skill-training center of the church, gospel was preached for the youths, girls and women who were training there. In addition, on the wedding ceremony of worshippers of the faith, they preached gospel to reach the people attending the ceremony.³⁶⁰ Preachers were also went out to private houses and teach the children the Amharic letters/alphabets/ and told them about gospel. Using such method, the early preachers and missionaries of the SIM spread the faith in their three centers namely Gobba, Adaba and Ginnir.³⁶¹

The missionary activity started by the SIM missionaries and local converters resulted in the demand of building a prayer house for the worshippers their number was increasing from time to time. Accordingly, using the money collected from believers on voluntary bases and the aid gained from Diasporas, additional prayer house built in Gobba town in 1965. Building of church and prayer house started in Gobba town spread to other parts of Bale such as in Sinana district, Robé town and Ginnir district, Ginnir town.³⁶²

As in Gobba and around, the SIM missionaries stationed in Ginnir town also contributed a lot in spreading gospel and the establishment of the Qalä church in Ginnir district and around. It was the SIM missionaries like Mr. Waldek, who preached the gospel in Ginnir town since 1955. He started preaching the gospel in the tent he had planted under a tree found in the center of Ginnir town. The mission work he begun in tent continued even after he had built his own resident house. When Mr. Waldek returned to his country, Mr. Peter substituted him. In 1961, the third SIM missionary Mr. Dampart came to Ginnir by substituting Mr. Peter. The other missionaries came to Ginnir and contributed their share in the spread of gospel in the area were Miss Ferguson, Mr. John Kaizer, and

³⁵⁸Informants: TelahunDämessé, Lämna Gota and Lämna Ennefraw.

³⁵⁹*Ibid.*

³⁶⁰*Ibid.*

³⁶¹Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association: *Wängél Enna Balé* (Bale and Gospel) Prepared in collaboration with the Bale Qala Hiwot Church), (Addis Ababa, 2010), p.9.

³⁶²Informants: Evangelist Asfaw Dämessé, Täfäri Bäzzabeh and Lämna Gota.

Mr. Davin. The well-known evangelist in Ginnir, Asfaw Dämessé and Mr. Dampart were also contributed their share in expanding the gospel in the area.³⁶³ The other SIM missionaries who had resided in Ginnir town since 1963 and served the community by providing holistic services were Mrs. Frieda Horn, Miss. Williams, Miss Christine Land and Mr. James Williams.³⁶⁴

As in Gobba and around, due to the evangelization work carried by the SIM missionaries residents of Ginnir town and its around such as Ayyälä Wäyyéssa, Asfaw Dämessé, Mälläsä Kasa, Alämayyähu Boggalä, Boggalä Mäkuriya, and Käbbädä Čéko, Jämbäré Mäbraté, Alämayyähu Gäbré and Hayilu Wändemmu became the first to embrace the faith.³⁶⁵ In Gololča district, Haylé Tola and Mäbraté Kasa were the first to join the faith.³⁶⁶

To spread gospel and serve believers in Ginnir town the first Qalä Hiwot church established in 1956. Nevertheless, the church faced problem of land on which standardized church and prayer house could built. As informants narrate, believers of the faith were said tried their best to get the wanted land by requesting the local government officials. However, they got no response from local government officials. As a result, believers of the faith contributed 300 Ethiopian Birr and bought land from individual. Unfortunately, the believers were unable to possess that land due to mal-administration. Therefore, the believers obliged to buy another land by collecting 600 birr. On this land, the believers had built their prayer house. Nevertheless, the new Ginnir town's master plan made that prayer house situated in inappropriate place. To this end, the prayer house obliged to cease rendering function.³⁶⁷

According to informants, because of financial constraints believers were unable to build another prayer house and forced to return to the prayer house built by the SIM and continued their religious activities until the problem totally alleviated.³⁶⁸ The well-known evangelist, Asfaw Dämessé tried his best to get financial support. He attended on the All Ethiopian Qalä Hiwot Church's Council held at Langanno and made a persuasive speech for the participants of the conference. Convinced

³⁶³Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.78.

³⁶⁴BQHCA, Folder No 650 File No.

³⁶⁵Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.78.

³⁶⁶Informants: *Ato* Haylé Tola and *Ato* Čifra Tolera.

³⁶⁷Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.78.

³⁶⁸Informants: AsfawDämessé, Lamma Gota and Telahun Dämessé.

by the Saw's speech participants of the conference immediately collected some amount of money and granted for Asfaw Dämessé in order to solve the problem that the Ginnir Qalä had.³⁶⁹ As archival sources indicate, after repeated request of Asfaw Dämessé the problem of land the church had solved in 1976 due to the municipal office of Ginnir town legally granted 1000 care meters of land for the Ginnir Qala Hiwot Church.³⁷⁰ In addition to the aid gained from the participants of the All Ethiopian Gala Hiwot Church's Council, believers of the faith lived in Ginnir town and around contributed some amount of money on voluntary bases able to build a prayer house in 1977 and started function.

Fig.19. The Ginnir Qalä Hiwot Church



Source: Photograph by the researcher

The services rendered in Wabé *awraja* by the church strengthened and spread to Dällo Säbro, Jarra and Qäbbänna areas.³⁷¹ In other districts of Bale, there was also similar problem such as in Gololča district Jarra town believers of the faith were obliged to worship in private houses. In this regard it was said Mäbraté Kasa who allowed his private house for the believers of the locality for prayer purpose.³⁷² In 1972 Evangelists like Yohannis Anšébo, Bäyyänä Bäqqälä and Yohanis Lénjébo who sent from Dilla Qalä Hiwot church to Ginnir for the first time able to baptize around 11 new

³⁶⁹Informants:Lämma Gota and TelahunDämessé .

³⁷⁰BQHCA: Folder No 1215 File No__, See Appendix XII.

³⁷¹Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.9.

³⁷²Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.79.

converts. Until the SIM missionaries left the country in Ginnir the number of believers was reached around 50.³⁷³

After 1977, the Ginnir Qalä Hiwot Church was able to exercise church ministry independently without need of much support from other sister churches as before and the church also started to give religious services by its own churchmen. Accordingly, evangelists like Asfaw Dämessé, Tariku Aggonfer, Täfärra Lalato, Dane'él Wäyyéssa, Argaw Amtataw and Alämu Tasäw. These evangelists were said preached the gospel not only in Ginnir district but also preached in the other districts of Bale found in Wabé *awraja* to strengthen churches established in these districts. Due to extensive evangelization work, the number of believers of the Qala Hiwot church in Bale province increasing year after year. For instance, in Ginnir town alone the number of believers was not more than 70 reached 150 during the *Därg* regime.³⁷⁴

4.1.2. Challenges and persecutions that the Bale Qalä Hiwot Church and its Believers Faced

According to informants, the Bale Qalä Hiwot church reached to the today's status passing through several difficulties. The first challenge that the SIM missionaries and the church encountered was the negative attitude held by the local people towards the faith. Most of the people of the province perceived the missionaries as heretic.³⁷⁵

In the early years of evangelization work, the SIM and the Bale Qalä Hiwot church had shortage of evangelists who could reach the people of Bale with gospel. At this time, due to shortage of preachers, it was government employees who preached the gospel for the local community by some early believers of the faith who were civil servants were not permanently lived in the area because of transfer or promotion. To alleviate the shortage of preacher, the Bale Qalä Hiwot church was using evangelists who came /sent/ from Gédé'o province, wälayta, Kāmbata and Addis Ababa Qalä Hiwot churches. For instance, evangelist Jäbičo Bamira who came from the Gédé'o Qalä Hiwot church had beenpreaching the gospel in Ginnir district, at Qäbbänna village and Dällo Säbro town.

³⁷³Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.9.

³⁷⁴*Ibid.*

³⁷⁵Informants: *Atom* Gezaw Käbbädä, Lämna Ennefraw and Täfäri Bäzzabeh.

They also evangelized the people in Gololča district, Jarra town and Goro district. Evangelists who came from Kāmbata and Hadiyya Qalä Hwot church were Yohannis Anšébo and Yohannis. They rendered church ministry in Gololča district.³⁷⁶

The other major challenge that the SIM missionaries and evangelists of the Bale Qalä Hiwot church faced during their evangelization work was absence of facilities and services like, telephone, health center and transportation in the province. With regard to transportation problem, missionaries and preachers were obliged to preach the gospel traveling a long journey that took more than 100 km on foot and pack animals in the area they did not know its terrain.³⁷⁷ For example, Mr. Garzan (an Australian missionary), evangelists Lämna Gota and Bäqqälä Wärqu (from the Kāmbata Qalä Hiwot church) had been preaching the gospel travelling on foot from Gobba town to Goro town.³⁷⁸ In 1970 the SIM missionary, Mr. German and Wärqu had travelled a journey took more than 120 kms on horse from Gobba town to Gololča district, Jarra town to preach the gospel. These missionaries lost their horses in Jarra town by the action deliberately taken by the opponents of the faith.³⁷⁹

As in other parts of Ethiopia, in Bale also extensive persecution carried on the believers of Qalä Hiwot church during the *Därg* regime. In this period, in Bale believers of all sects of Protestant faith including the worshipers of the Qalä Hiwot church suffered from torture, beat, imprisonment and other several hardships.³⁸⁰ To mention, in 1979 and 1980 in Ginnir district, Ginnir town Christians like Asfaw Dämessé, Berhanu Asäfa, Yäši Asfaw and many others were beaten, tortured and imprisoned by the *Därg* officials. Surprisingly, being because they celebrated Christmas, a holiday that celebrated at national level these believers made to travel on a rocky road on their knee for long hours.³⁸¹ In addition, the well-known evangelist of the Qalä Hiwot church, Asfaw Dämessé repeatedly imprisoned and beaten. For instance, in Gololča district, around Gololča River on his way to Jarra town to preach the gospel he was beaten by certain opponents of the Qalä Hiwot

³⁷⁶Bewengel Amagnoch Andennet Maheber, p.79.

³⁷⁷Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.16.

³⁷⁸Informants: Telahun Dämessé, Lämna Ennefraw and Täfäri Bäzzabeh.

³⁷⁹Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.9.

³⁸⁰Informants: Täfäri Bäzzabeh and Lämna Gota.

³⁸¹Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.10.

church and a little saved from death. He beaten around by unknown individuals in a village called Bäräkät on his way back to Jabra town after completed the missionary work.³⁸²

During the *Därg* regime, the then governor of Bale, Ali Mussa launched a campaign to persecute Protestants in the province. Especially, the persecution carried out in Gobba town against the believers of Protestant faith in general including worshipers of the Qalä Hiwot church was very serious and harsh. In 1980s, Ali Mussa ordered his militias to detain all Protestants including believers of Qalä Hiwot church found in the town. Accordingly, the militias had detained large number of Christians who were in their prayer house. Even more, the soldiers tortured, beaten them with damp stick and imprisoned them more than a month. One of the victims of such persecution was Preacher Adenäw Arsélom.³⁸³

According to informants, not only the *Därg* officials but also some churchmen and worshipers of the Orthodox Täwahedo church were participated in the persecution carried on the believers of Qalä Hiwot church. Similarly, persecution also carried in other districts of Bale such as Goro, Gasära Agarfa, Adaba, Sinana, Robé town and the likes. For instance, Mäsäsa Gezaw detained and imprisoned by the *Därg* cadres in Jabra town. Later, he was transferred to Ginnir prison house. In this prison, Mäsäsa Gezaw stayed more than a month. Haylé Tola, who lived in Gololča district, the village called Bäräkät was imprisoned by the *Därg* cadres being because he was believer of the faith. Surprisingly, in addition to the torture and beat he faced, the *Därg* officials had confiscated his property.³⁸⁴

The other problem in which the Bale Qalä Hiwot church and its worshipers encountered was the problem of burial ground. Everywhere, the church had no its own burial ground because the *Därg* government perceived the church and its believers as they were against the sovereignty of the county. To this end, the regime bitterly hates the followers of the Protestant faith. The regime did not grant burial ground for the protestant churches in Ethiopia including Bale. In addition, due to differences in the biblical teachings and bad relation between the Orthodox Täwahdo Church and

³⁸²*Ibid.*

³⁸³Informants: Lämna Gota, Lämna Ennefraw and Täfäri Bäzzabeh .

³⁸⁴Informants: Çefra Tolera and Haylé Tola.

the protestant churches, the Orthodox Täwahedo church was not cooperate with protestant churches. Due to this problem, believers were unable to bury the relic of their family at the right time. For instance, in 1980s during a certain child whose family was the believer of Qalä Hiwot church died while treated in Ginnir health center, the church suffered a lot to get burial ground from the local government officials. Due to their sufferings brought no result; the believers of the church forced to bury the relic of the child along the prayer house of the Ginnir Qalä Hiwot church.³⁸⁵

Similarly, in Ginnir town during sister Alämwärq who was the worshiper of Ginnir Qalä Hiwot church died, the church again attempted to get burial ground from the local officials. However, their effort became futile for the second time due to the officials the government refused to grant them burial ground. As a result, the churchmen and some believers buried the relic in secret at night. Unfortunately, the news reached the ears of the officials. Due to this reason, the Qala Hiwot churchmen ordered and obliged to excavate the buried relic. It was after long dialogue and bargain carried with local government officials, the officials allowed the excavated relic buried in the area far away from the vicinity of the town.³⁸⁶

According to informants, in Jarra town a child whose family was believer in Qalä Hiwot church was said sick and brought to Ginnir health center for higher treatment. Unfortunately, the child died while treated there. As usual the issue of getting burial ground became problem. The Ginnir Qalä Hiwot church requested the officials of Ginnir town repeatedly in order to grant them a place in which they could bury the relic but they got nothing. Even more, individuals like Mälaku Telahun and others who discussed with the officials detained and imprisoned. The family of the deceased child and believers of the faith suffered with the relic stayed for three days and started to smell bad. Finally, the worshipers determined to bury the relic even though the local officials denied them grant burial ground. Therefore, they boldly started to dig the grave to bury the relic with no permission. However, the local officials made them to stop digging the grave. Dialogues and discussions continued between believers of Ginnir Qalä Hiwot church and the municipal

³⁸⁵Informants: Asfaw Dämessé, Lämna Gota and Lämna Enneferaw.

³⁸⁶Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.11.

authorities. Finally, the churchmen and believers of the faith succeeded in getting the wanted burial ground. Therefore, the relic able to buried after staying three days.³⁸⁷

In 1975 in Goro district, Goro town as well, Yaši Bālačāw suffered a lot because of the towns authorities ignored her a burial ground for her deceased son only because she was follower of the Qalä Hiwot faith.³⁸⁸ However, the relic of the child buried after Yaši and believers of the church passed through two misery days.³⁸⁹ In Adaba, wārqa, Nānsābo Čäbbi areas attempt to kill the followers of the Qalä Hiwot church made by the opponents of the church. In this hazardous phenomenon, around 18 people were highly injured. Of these, two of them were lost one of their limbs and unfortunately, one believer of the faith lost his life.³⁹⁰

4.1.3. The Role Played by the Bale Qalä Hiwot Church in the Socio-Economic Life of the Society

4.1.3.1. Education

In Bale province, the Sudan Interior Mission had played a great role in benefiting the society by opening schools in its three centers namely Adaba, Gobba and Ginnir towns. The SIM had been using these stations as a center for spreading both missionary works and expanding social services in the province.³⁹¹

The SIM had opened elementary schools in Adaba, Gobba and Ginnir towns. In the mission school opened in Gobba town, Mr. Newfield served as a teacher and director of the school. Concerning the school opened by SIM, the letter written to the governor of Bale administrative region reads as follows:

. . . ቀድሞ የእኛ የኤስ አይኤም ድርጅት በባሌ ጎባ ከተማ ለብዙ አመታት ትምህርት ቤት ከፍቶ በአካባቢው ለሚገኙት ወጣቶችና ትምህርትን ለተጠሙ ኢትዮጵያኖች አገልግሎቱን ሲያበረክት ቆይቷል። ለአሁንም ሆነላ ወደፊት ያበረክታል። ስለዚህ ተጠቃሹ ቦታ ማለት የሚሰዩናዊያን ጣቢያ ውስጥ ከዚህ ቀደም ሚሰዩናዊያን ይኖሩባቸው የነበሩትን ሁለት የመኖሪያ ያቤቶች በዚያው ግቢ

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ Getachew Belete, *Elohé enna Hallé Luya: Elohé enna Halléluya YäQalä Hiwot Bétäkerestiyān Tarik* (Elohe and Hale Luya: The History of the Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church), (Addis Ababa, 1992), p.265.

³⁸⁹ Informants: Asfaw Dämessé, Lämna Gota and Lämna Enefrāw.

³⁹⁰ Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.17.

³⁹¹ Informants: Lämna Gota, Täfäri Bāzzabeh and Lämna Ennefrāw.

ለሚያስተምሩት ኢትዮጵያውያን መምህራናች እንዲቀመጡባቸው የፈቀድንላቸው መሆናችንን እንገልጻለን፡፡...³⁹²

---Our former SIM's organization that found in Gobba town opened school and served the youths of the locality and Ethiopians in need of education by rendering education for many years. Now it is giving similar service and has a plan to continue the service in the future as well. Therefore, we allowed Ethiopian teachers who teach in the station to use the two former missions' resident houses that are found in the noted place meaning in this SIM station---

In the mission school opened in Ginnir town, Mis Frida Horn and Mr Dam Part had served as a teacher as well as being the director of the school.³⁹³ Students of the area who had completed their schooling up to grade six recruited and employed by the SIM and assigned them to teach in these schools students of the local people. For example, Abäbäyähü Gärrämäw, now who is living in Gobba town had been teaching for many years in the Gobba mission school. The school had well-organized library which had enough reading materials both for teachers and the learners. At that time, the librarian of the school was Lämman Gota who is still living in Gobba town.³⁹⁴

Based on the then educational curriculum of the government, students were attended all school subjects given in government schools such as English, mathematics, Amharic, Geography, biology, history and moral education. Of the school subjects Music was not given in these schools. Instead, Bible as a compulsory subject promotion or failing determined by the result students scored in Bible study.³⁹⁵

In all schools opened by the SIM in Bale, children of the local people had attended their schooling regardless of their religion, race, culture, sex and the likes. In these schools, quality education was rendered for students. As a result, large majority of students who had been attending their schooling in these schools achieved very well and reached at a better level. Most of the students who learnt in these schools had reached at good level; they have been serving their family and their country.³⁹⁶ Besides the formal education provided in the mission schools of the SIM, Bible schools also opened

³⁹²BQHCA, Folder No K/1.

³⁹³GQHCA, Folder No 650 File No___.

³⁹⁴Informants: Täfäri Bätzabeh, Telahun Dämessé and Ato Adduñä Ayyané.

³⁹⁵Informants: Lämman Gota, Telahun and Abäbäyähü Gärrämäw.

³⁹⁶Informants: Lämman Ennefraw, Gezew Käbbädä and Adduñä Ayyané .

in the three centers of the SIM. In the Bible schools, great emphasis was given for women and girls to maximize their knowledge up on Bible, family management and other social life of the society. It was and still the church was working to scale up the ability of women at all levels by breaking the old tradition “women are for the Kitchen”. After the fall of the *Därg* regime, scholarship opportunity was given for women in different foreign countries.³⁹⁷

4.1.3.2. Clinic

The Sudan Interior Mission not only opened schools but also clinics in its stations found in Adaba, Gobba and Ginnir towns. By establishing clinics in these three stations, the SIM missionaries were served and benefited the people of province of Bale. Among the SIM missionaries who had served in the clinics established in Gobba and Ginnir town were Mis.Land and Mis. Christine land respectively.³⁹⁸ The clinic opened in Ginnir district by the SIM missionaries in 1958 had its own timetable in which it treated patients. Archival source indicate, emergency cases seen on Friday and Sunday. In the rest days, the clinic had served patients of all kinds of diseases.³⁹⁹ In 1975, the SIM was obliged to close the clinic it had in Ginnir station due to shortage of nursing staff.⁴⁰⁰

As archival source indicates, in the clinics opened by the SIM; gospel was preached for the people who were coming to the clinics. For instance, in the clinic it had in Gobba town, the SIM had employed evangelist Dawit Batamo to reach the people who came to the clinic with gospel. The SIM had also dismissed those workers who had bad conduct. Such as Dawit Batamo was dismissed from his work by the SIM due to he had repeatedly troubled different government officials found in Gobba with calls.⁴⁰¹

However, all protestant churches in Bale including the Qalä Hiwot churches, the mission schools and the clinics opened by the SIM which had benefited a lot for the people of Bale; unfortunately closed by *Därg* officials in 1977. The properties of these schools and the clinics were also nationalized and confiscated by the regime. The buildings of the missionaries such as the schools

³⁹⁷Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.19.

³⁹⁸Informants: Telahun Dämessé, Lämna Gota , Lämna Enefraw, BQHCA, Folder No 650

³⁹⁹BQHCA, Folder No G1/1204 File No__.

⁴⁰⁰BQHCA, Folder No K/1 File No__.

⁴⁰¹BQHCA, Folder No K/1 File No___.See Appendix XIII.

and clinics made *qäbälé* offices, different local government offices and storehouses.⁴⁰² In Bale, most of the buildings that built by the SIM and the compounds of the schools and the clinics that were the possession of the SIM confiscated by the *Därg* regime not returned for the church until these days.⁴⁰³ The buildings of the SIM found in Gobba town confiscated in a verbal order of the local government officials with its all properties including 25000 meter square of land and five buildings returned for the Ethiopian Qalä Hiwot Church and Gobba Qalä Hiwot church recently in 2010 after stayed thirty-three years in the hand of the government. With regard to this, the archival source obtained from the archive of the Bale Qalä Hiwot Church reads as follows:

---በደርግ መንግስት አንባገነናዊ አስተዳደር በጎባ ከተማ የSIM ሚሽን ጣቢያ የነበረው ግቢ ከነንብረቶቻቸው በ1970 ዓ.ም በቃል ትዕዛዝ ተወስደው ለ33 አመታት በእግዚአብሔር ተዓምራት ተጠብቀው ከቆዩ በኋላ እግዚአብሔር ቦታውን እንድናስመልስ በልባችን አስቀምጦ እንቅስቃሴውን በጀመርን በአንድ አመት ውስጥ እነሆ ጥቅምት 17/2003 ዓ.ም ቦታው 25000 ካሬ ወይም 2.5 ሄክታር ስፋት ያለው ቦታ እና በውስጡም ካሉት ቤቶች/5ቤቶች/ ጋር ለኢትዮጵያ ቃለህይወት ቤተክርስቲያን እና ለጎባ ክ/ማ/ህ አገልግሎት እንዲውል የመንግስት ባለስልጣናት በተገኙበት ርክክቡ ተፈጽሞ ቦታው ተመልሶልናል::---⁴⁰⁴

---The SIM station that was found in Gobba town was confiscated by the dictatorship government of *Därg* with its all property in 1977 in a single word order. However, the place was kept for 33 years with safeguards of God’s miracle. God kept the case in our heart formerly and inspires us to take the place again. We returned the place, which covers 25000 meter square or 2.5 hectare and five houses found in the compound for the Ethiopian Qalä Hiwot church and to the Gobba union’s associations to utilize the place for the purpose of worship within a year. The submission of the place was conducted in October 2010 in the presence of government officials---

According to informants, the rest of buildings and the compound of the former SIM found in Ginnir and Adaba districts did not returned for the Bale Qalä Hiwot church and remained in the hand of the government until these days. However, leaders of the church never stopped discussions and dialogues to regain the church’s property.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰²BQHCA, Folder No K/1/ File No__.

⁴⁰³Informants: Täfäri Bāzzabeh, Telahun Dämessé and Lämna Gota.

⁴⁰⁴BQHCA, Reference No 01/04/02/2003., BQHCA, Folder No 364 File No __., BQHCA, Folder No 364 File No __., See Appendix XIV.

⁴⁰⁵Täfäri Bāzzabeh, Lämna Gota and Telahun Dämessé.

4.1.3.3 .Other Development and Social Works Performed by the Church

From its establishment to the present, the Bale Qalä Hiwot church performed different development and social activities that benefited the people of the region.⁴⁰⁶ Especially after the dawn fall of the *Därg* regime besides spreading schools and clinics, the church has helping orphans and deep poor individuals of the region in providing clothing, food, shelter and the likes.⁴⁰⁷ After the dawn fall of the *Därg* regime, the holistic development work carried by the church diversified. To mention, to improve the economic life of the people of the area, the church was helping the people in giving credit service and distributing improved seeds, fertilizer, seedlings of apple. Short-term trainings were given for the local community by the Bale Qalä Hiwot church. The training was mainly focused on the impacts of HIV/AIDS and bad traditional practices.⁴⁰⁸

4.2. The Mekane Yesus Church in Bale

4.2.1. History of Establishment of the Church and the Spread of the Faith

The establishment of the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Bale coincided with the advent of the Danish Evangelical Mission (DEM) in to Dodola. The DEM sent the first missionaries to Dodola in 1952 namely Mrs. Marianne and Mr. Hjalmar Anderson. These missionaries were given different responsibilities to accomplish. Of these responsibilities, finding a comfortable place that used the mission for a station was the first. Before they got a permanent station, they were lived in a house they rented at the center of Dodola town.⁴⁰⁹

With regard to the activities of the missionaries, the demand of the then officials of Imperial governments was the mission launched educational and medical service for the local community not evangelization. Whatever was the demand of the government, the mission had started providing holistic service including spreading gospel in areas where they established their stations.⁴¹⁰

It was the governor of Dodola, *Fitawrari Wäldä Mika'él Bu'i* who was known for his eating only meat and drinking milk who had helped the DEM in granting the land which used for establishing

⁴⁰⁶BQHCA, Folder No K/1 Reference No ባሌ/ከ/ሰ/01/04/57/42

⁴⁰⁷Bale Qale Hiwot Church Association, p.19.

⁴⁰⁸Informants: Täfäri Bāzzabeh, Lāmma Gota and Lāmma Ennefraw.

⁴⁰⁹Dawit, p. 31.

⁴¹⁰Informants: *Ato Käffāñ Nägāš*, *Ato Nägāš Dägäfu* and *Ato Mulugéta Šāwarägga*.

station for the missionaries. At the beginning the interest and plan of the missionaries was not to establish their station in Dodola town. Because there was no open, land which is suitable to establish station. Therefore, they wanted to establish their station southwest of Dodola town at Hébäno. Nevertheless, the governor, Wäldä Mika'él who was not Christian (Orthodox) previously told the missionaries to remain in Dodola for Hébäno is too far and the unavailability of facilities and service like roads, telephone and electricity in the area.⁴¹¹

As my informants expressed, the reason why the governor wanted the missionaries not to go to Hébäno was due to his great ambition that the missionaries modernize Dodola town. Because the governor had observed how missionaries modernized different areas in other places and benefited the local people by providing interesting social services.⁴¹² Therefore, *Fitawrari* Wäldä Mika'él along with his coworker, *Qäñazmač* Talämma Yedängetu and other local chiefs discussed deeply up on the issue and agreed to persuade the missionaries to remain in Dodola. Finally, the governor granted a permanent land for the missionaries at a locality called Lénšo which is 2 Kms away from Dodola town an area that Mr. Anderson had chosen.⁴¹³ The missionaries moved to Lénšo after their stay six months in Dodola. Mr. Truets Christensen hired the area for 110 Ethiopia Birr for a contract lasted for 30 years. Within a year in 1953, they had built different houses in the station. In this same year, the first EECMY inaugurated in Lénšo. Then after, the mission work started at Dodola, Lénšo continued and expanded in to different parts of Bale.⁴¹⁴

Accordingly, after they succeeded in getting land in Dodola, the missionaries demanded to establish another station at Hébäno. However, the missionaries faced challenges as well as difficulties in their effort to get land at Hébäno. When the missionaries Dr. Fride Hylander moved to visit Hébäno area to find a comfortable place for a station of the missionaries; the residents of a village called Dulla were refused his visit because they perceived that the missionaries might take their land which they have been using for raring of animals for long time. Consequently Dr. Hylander went to Dodola and applied to *Fitawrari* Wäldä Mika'él Bu'i about the issue so that he would be given a land at

⁴¹¹Dawit, p. 29.

⁴¹²Informants: Käffän Nägaš, Nägaš Dägäfuand Mulugéta Šäwarägga.

⁴¹³Dawit, p. 31.

⁴¹⁴Berhanu Dibo, "The Need for Contextualized Mission Focused on South East Area Work" (BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Theology, 2002), p.29.

Hébäno. Finally, the governor granted land for the missionaries at Hébäno on condition that they pay tax for the government.⁴¹⁵

The evangelists of DEM had been preaching the gospel in Hébäno area. Mr. Mirant a parish missionary also remembered for his establishing a sub district in Hébäno in 1964. In the work of evangelization, the DEM had also faced problem of absence of evangelists in Hébäno. To solve the problem, in 1955 Mr. Magnar Mageroy, a Norwegian missionary in Yergaläm brought Tomas Sodano from Yergaläm so as to serve in evangelizing the people in and around Hébäno. In addition, 1963 Mr. Mageroy brought Argo Fitcé from Yergaläm. This evangelist also preached the gospel at Hébäno area for many years.⁴¹⁶

The other mission station established by DEM in Gännalé *awraja* was the Mission station of Wärqa found in Kokosa district. This station established in 1964. The factor that contributed to the establishment of the Wärqa mission station was the spread of small pox disease in the area in 1958. It was Dr. Truels Christensen went to the area along with Tomas Sodano to give small pox vaccination and vision to establish mission station in Wärqa. The other DEM missionaries who contributed their share for the establishment of the Wärqa mission station were Dr. Truels, Nurse Ethel Peterson and Dr. Millant. With the effort of these missionaries, the Wärqa mission station established in 1964.⁴¹⁷

As in Lénšo, in Wärqa a missionary church also established. The founder of this church was Gäbrä Selassé. In Wärqa, church ministry was rendered by Tomas Sodano. Gäbrä Selassé and Tomas Sodano served as a spearhead that encouraged other missionaries to continue missionary work in other areas of Bale.⁴¹⁸ On the conference arranged at Dodola town in 1957, Christians who came from wärqa and attended the conference created a fellowship with the Dodola center. Wärqa also gained the status of center. Since Wärqa became a center, Tägäné Wäldé who had led the center for long years.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁵*Ibid.*

⁴¹⁶Dawit, p. 30.

⁴¹⁷*Ibid*, p.31.

⁴¹⁸*Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹Informants: Käffän Nägaš, Nägaš Dägäfu and Mulugéta Šäwarägga.

The DEM, NLM, NLC and other missionaries were too late to reach the other parts of Bale province especially east Bale, as the current administrative structure of the ECMY which means Bale other than districts in Gännalé *awraja*. As compared to the works that the missionaries performed in Gännalé, the mission work done in east Bale was very insignificant. They were too late in establishing the church and spreading the gospel. For example, the first church of EECMY found in Gobba town was not established by missionaries rather founded by Christians who worshiped in the Gobba Qalä Hiwot church and assisted by the Sudan Interior Mission.

According to my informants, it was Abäbayyāhu Gärrämāw, Zäwdé Yänénäh, Tomas Sodano, Nägaš and other believers who refused a second baptize requested by priests of the Qalä Hiwot church break away from the Qalä Hiwot church and determined to establish another church after failed to reach agreement with the leader of the Qalä Hiwot church of Gobba. Finally, these limited individuals added others who support their case and applied to the office of EECMY at Addis Ababa allow them to establish a church in Gobba town. The office allowed them to do so by giving immediate response. Accordingly, in 1973 the first Mekane-Yesus church established in East Bale (Gobba town).⁴²⁰ It was after this church established that the Norwegian Lutheran Church (NLC) came to Gobba and established its station in 1980.⁴²¹

As many informants, the reason for the procrastination of the coming of Norwegian or other missionaries in East Bale was due to the few believers in Gobba and other parts of the province failed to congregate and the fear of the harassment carried by the *Därg* officials up on the Christians in the area. The Norwegian missionaries Mr. Haraldur Olafsen and Mr. Tobias Salmelid, who contributed for the establishment of the station in Gobba in 1980 and who supervised the construction of the present residential houses and the large store house which has been used as a church for many years since 1980. The NLM also extended its help through coordinating activity of OdOge Ogdal who was a Norwegian missionary to East Bale. The contribution of Wädajo Wäldä Sänbät in the expansion of the work into east Bale was also very great.

⁴²⁰Informants: *Ato* Abäbayyāw Gärrämāw, *Ato* Zäwdé Yänénäh and *Ato* Germa Jämbäru.

⁴²¹Berhanu, p. 32.

Due to the Bale ECMY churches were under the South Ethiopia Synod, the synod had been working a lot to enhance the spread of gospel. The establishment of new churches as well as congregations in the province of Bale until the Wabé Batu synod replaced the South Ethiopian synod. The Synod workers employed an evangelist Telahun from Hagärä Sälam area and brought him to Agarfa town. Tilahun contributed his share in the area in spreading the gospel. In addition, Dilla district also sent Gäbäyyäw Gano to east Bale. This evangelist also served in evangelizing the people in the area for more than four years. It was Asäffa Bäyyänä who had been running and coordinating mission works in the province up until 1980. In such a way that the mission works became effective and preaching centers able to established in different parts of the province such as Robé (Sinana), Agarfa, Gasära, Hisu (Sinana), Dällo, Männa, Ginnir, Oborso and Hangétu districts.⁴²²

Fig.20. The Gobba and Ginnir Evangelical Church Mekana Yasus Churches



Source: Photograph by the researcher

The number of EECMY in entire Bale, were five during the regime of Haile Selassise. Gradually, grew to nine during the *Därg*. After the downfall of the *Därg* regime the number of the churches of ECMY in Bale dramatically increased and reached more than 43 in the 22 *wärädas* of Bale Zone

⁴²²*Ibid.*

and in the *fourwäradas* of west Arsi zone.⁴²³ The Contribution of the Evangelical Church Mekane-Yesus in Socio-Economic Life of the Society

4.2.2. The Contribution of the Evangelical Church Mekane-Yesus in Socio-Economic Life of the Society

4.2.2.1. Education

Development and attitudinal change in the population achieved through education. It is obvious that through education, people could broaden their understanding about their environment, community, potential and their outlook. Based on this reality the EECMY has launched a literary campaign in 1962. The campaign continued up to 1975. As a result, it opened several schools in different parts of the country and subsidizing them by allocating large amount of money annually.⁴²⁴

In Bale ECMY started opening schools in 1950s in collaboration with foreign missionaries. It was the Danish missionaries tried their best to spread formal education to benefit the people of Bale. These first missionaries started schoolwork in 1953. Accordingly, they opened the first formal school in Gännalé *awraja* in Dodola at a locality known as Lénšo. This elementary school was the only school in Gännalé *awraja*. Because before this time, there was no government school in the area with the exception of the traditional church school of the Orthodox Täwahedo church in Dodola and other areas of Gännalé *awraja*. In this elementary school, it was children who came from different areas around Lénšo attended their education. Beyond academic subjects, Bible teaching also carried in the school.⁴²⁵

As my informants depict, students who learned in this school had a nice conduct and behavior as well as effective in their school performance. As a result, surrounding people and students liked the school very much. This might be due to the schoolteachers and workers grew the students by shaping using moral and ethics through Bible study.⁴²⁶

⁴²³Informants: Abäbäyyäw Gärrämäw, Zäwdé Yänénäh and GermaJämbäru.

⁴²⁴Lucha, p.10.

⁴²⁵Berhanu, p. 29.

⁴²⁶Informants: Käffälän Nägaš, NägašDägäfuand *QesMuddé* Bati.

The missionaries also established elementary school in Lénšo a village near to Dodola town. This school also had been benefiting large number of children who are coming from Dodola and around. Most of students who had been learning in this school reached at good level and today they are helping their family and their country as well.⁴²⁷

Besides the formal education provided by the church, there was also a Bible school in Dodola town. The school started its function in 1967 and serving until today. This school has been giving training for evangelists who came from Dodola and around. This in this school, the training was given for one year. The aim is enhancing the knowledge of evangelists up on Bible to enable them effectively evangelize the people.⁴²⁸

Fig.21. S/r Janne Pedersen’s Memorial Bible School in Dodola



Source: Photograph by the researcher

⁴²⁷Berhanu, p. 29.

⁴²⁸Informants: Käffälän Nägaš, Nägaš Dägäfu and Mulugéta Šawarägga.

The missionaries also built another elementary school in Koksa district, at wärqa. When the school built and started to give service, the people of the area said very happy due to they got the opportunity that the people of their neighbor got earlier. As in other schools opened in Gännalé areas, the missionaries preached gospel for the local people in the wärqa elementary school.⁴²⁹

In Hébbäno and East Bale, the DEM as well as NLM did not establish schools. The reason why the missionaries failed to do so was the existence of government schools in the area. The case of East Bale was not clear. The holistic services the missionaries were restricted in Gännalé and they neglected the rest parts of Bale. This might due to shortage of capital or political factor. In general, they were 16 elementary schools and one Junior schools of EECMY subsidized in the South Ethiopia Synod in which included Bale. Of these schools, EECMY has only four elementary schools in Bale until 1980s.⁴³⁰

4.2.2.2. Health Care

One of the activities that the first missionaries of DEM under the EECMY had given great emphasis was providing health services for the local community. To this end, DEM had established clinics in different parts of Bale especially in Gännalé area. The missionaries who came to Gännalé area had established their first clinic in 1952 in Dodola town. This clinic served the people of Dodola town and those who came from other areas around until these days. Due to better services given in the clinic, Muslims of the area had given great respect to it even though they disliked and refused the expansion of the faith in their locality.⁴³¹

As they did in schools missionaries used to preach the gospel or read the Bible for those who came to the clinic whether he/she is Muslim, Christians or the follower of any kind of religion. Therefore, missionaries and evangelists of the ECMY used the clinic to preach gospel.⁴³² In addition to Lénšo and Dodola, missionaries had established two clinics in Hébbäno 1954. It was Nurse Brithe Jensen substituted Elise due to she went to her country Denmark.⁴³³

⁴²⁹Informants: Muddé Bati, NägasDägäfu and MulugétaŠäwarägga.

⁴³⁰Lucha, pp. 20-22.

⁴³¹Berhanu, p. 29.

⁴³²*Ibid.*, p.30.

⁴³³Dawit, p. 30.

As in other clinics in the Gännalé area missionaries used these clinics as a ground opportunity to reach the people with gospel. By doing so, missionaries of the time were able to attract many people to the faith. As a result, most of the believers found in Hébbäno are the fruit evangelization work carried by the missionaries both at parish and at the clinic.⁴³⁴

Wärqa is also the other place in Ganale *awraja* where missionaries founded clinic. For the establishment of this clinic the contribution of Ethel Peterson was this very great. It was Ethel Petersen and Tomas Sodano who was leading the clinic work until the station founded. A long with her sister Ninna Peterson, Ethel gave clinic service in a small hut until the construction of the clinic completed in 1964. In addition to these nurses, Bent and Lydia Christensen had also been working in Wärqa clinic in 1970s for more than six years. The people of Wärqa and around are happy with the service rendered in the clinic since its establishment to the present.⁴³⁵

4.3. The Bale Mulu Wängél/Full Gospel/ Church

4.3.1. The Establishment the Church and Dissemination of the Faith in Bale

The pioneer and contributor for the establishment of the full gospel church in Bale was the then evangelist the today pastor, Şadiqu Abdo who have a Muslim background and came from Arsi to the capital of Bale province, Gobba town in the eve of the demise of the rule of emperor Haile Selassie.⁴³⁶ Before the establishment of the church, evangelist Şadiqu Abdo searched for friends who could help him in his missionary work in Bale. To this end, he started to find some protestant Christians previously who were in Arssi and later came to Bale due to employed in government office. Evangelist Şadiqu Abdo never knew them physically but he knew them in name only. After several difficulties, he could find Ayyana from Agarfa and Abatä Wälanéwos from Robé town. After they met together, they discussed on how they could spread the gospel and establish the full gospel church in Bale, Gobba. Finally, they agreed to realize their dream by renting a prayer house in Gobba town. Therefore, they rented a prayer house situated along the bank of Togona River with

⁴³⁴Informants: Käffän Nägaş, Nägaş Dägäfu and Mulugéta Şäwarägga.

⁴³⁵Berhanu, p. 31.

⁴³⁶Bale Goba Full Gospel Church, *Haya Ammestäna Amät Bä'al: Mannem Liyatäfaw Yämmaçel Esat* (The Bale Goba Full Gospel Church believers, 25th Year Aniversery: A Fire No One Could Disappear it), (Addis Ababa, 1999), p. 3.

10(ten) Ethiopian Birr in Gobba town and started to prayer there.⁴³⁷ After accustomed evangelist Şadiqu Abdo with the locality and the people around, his friends returned back to their respective work place. Then after, evangelist Şadiqu Abdo continued preaching and his prayer with other new friends who embraced the faith.⁴³⁸

Fig. 22. Paster Şadiqu Abdo, the founder of Gobba Full Gospel Church



Source: Bale Goba Full Gospel Church, p.5.

Within few weeks, the number of believers who accepted the faith increased and reached around 120. The increase in the number of believers necessitated the establishment of a church. Finally, in Bale Gobba, the first Full Gospel church established in 1973 with the relentless religious activities of evangelist Şadiqu Abdo and the todays pastor Doctor Badäg Bäqqälä.⁴³⁹

Fig.23. The Gobba Full Gospel Church



Source: Photograph by the researcher

⁴³⁷Informants: Paster Sälämon Boggalä, Ato Iyyasu Abatä and Atom Mäsäša Gezaw.

⁴³⁸Dereje Belayneh, *Yämmaytäfaw Isat (A Fire Not Disappear At All)*, (Addis Ababa, 2015), pp. 23-25.

⁴³⁹Bale Goba Full Gospel Church, p. 3.

Evangelist Şadiqu Abdo and Badäg Bäqqälä performed strong evangelization work. As a result, individuals like Sälämon Gäzzahän, Sälämon Bogalä, Negusé Şibäşi, Alämayyähü Mäkonen, Täsfayé Seyyum, Mäşäşa Gezaw, Wayzäro Almaz Täsämma, Abäbäyyähü Lämna, Gännat Täfarra, Şädalä Gezaw, Mulunäş Haylä Giyorgis, Fantu Nägaş, Aynaläm Taddäsä, Webitu Tarräqañ, Bezunäş Asfaw, Harägwa Waläleñ, Bälaynäş Taddäsä, Endalä Bongär, Täsärra Märkäbu, Mängestu Admasu, Abbäbä Aşagré and Marta Alämu were able to join the faith. Later, most of these believers became well-known preachers and reached the level of pastor who contributed a lot in spreading the gospel in Gobba town and the rest parts of Bale. Generally, the gospel seed sown by evangelist Şadiqu Abdo and others grew up and gradually became a shade for many.⁴⁴⁰

Between 1976 and 1987 during *Edgät Bähebrät Zämäča* (Development Through Cooperative Campaign) carried in Bale, the government sent students who attended their education in the Azmaç Dägälähan secondary school, the only secondary school in the districts of the province so as to participate in the campaign.⁴⁴¹ As a matter of chance, most of these students were followers of the Mulu Wängél faith. This opportunity helped them to disseminate the faith in the province. This phenomenon helped the church got more new believers join the faith and contributed for the establishment of other new Full Gospel churches in district like Dodola, Adaba, Goro, Ginnir, Agarfa, Robé town and so on.⁴⁴² With regard to administration, Evangelist Şadiqu Abdo, Badäg Bäqqälä, Täsfayé Seyyum, Bällätä Habtä Giyorgis and many others were who led the Bale Full Gospel church in the early years of the church.⁴⁴³

4.3.2. The Difficulties the Church Passed Through

As information obtained from informants, in the process of evangelization and spreading the gospel in province of Bale, the Full gospel church has passed through several adversities and many atrocities. The first challenge the church faced was the opposition, which encountered from the local peoples, especially from the Orthodox Täwahedo Church and its believers. The reason why they opposed this church was as the other protestant Christianity, they perceived the faith as Mäté Haymanot (alien religion) which doping their religion and led their children to heretic. They had

⁴⁴⁰Dereje, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁴¹Bale Goba Full Gospel Church, p. 3.

⁴⁴²Informants: Mäşäşa Gezaw, Sälämon Boggalä and *Atom* Gamme Gaari.

⁴⁴³Informants: Mäşäşa Gezaw, Gamme Gaarii and Iyyasu Abatä.

also opposed against the church because of their prayer and madrigal carried aided by loudspeaker became a new thing that is distributing them. As a result, the orthodox churchmen and its believers in general started to oppose and segregate the full gospel believers as the other protestant church believers in Bale. Accordingly, believers of the full gospel church segregated in all social lives of the society. The Orthodox Täwahedo churchmen started to teach and told their believers not to communicate with the believers of the Full Gospel church, not to participate in social issues like “Eder” not to participate in meal with them, not to share materials even fire and not to form marriage with them and the likes.⁴⁴⁴

In 1991 in Héréro town that is situated between Adaba and Dodola towns, campaign carried by the dissidents of the Full Gospel church to remove any Full Gospel church believers from the area. To this end, the gang of dissidents at night came to the home of Telahun Täsfayé and started to hammer up him and his family. Unfortunately, Telahun Täsfayé lost his one eye and his wife, Azéb Bäqqälä also trashed badly by the dissidents. It was their neighbor a Muslim called *Haji* Kädär Bilal saved their life from death by making a cry for help to the local people. In addition to this, Täfärra Bäqqälä the follow worker of Telahun Täsfayé also the other individual (believers) who was beaten and injured by the dissidents of the church that day.⁴⁴⁵ In addition, in area known as Gärrämbabo attempt of assassination carried on Telahun Haylu by opponents of the church. His house with all its properties also burnt.⁴⁴⁶

During the *Därg* regime, the Bale Full Gospel Church also faced problem of burial ground as the other Protestant churches in the region. Due to this reason, the relic of deceased believers of the Church was obliged to stay for several days without buried on time. Such kind of problems happened in different parts of Bale. To mention, in Adaba district a certain child whose family were the believers of the Full Gospel church died. The local government officials asked to grant the church a burial ground to bury the relic of the child. However, the officials refused to do so. Finally, discussing with other believers of the church in Dodola, the relic buried brought to Šašämäné after five days passed. Again another child whose family was the believers of the full gospel church died

⁴⁴⁴Informants: Mäsäša Gezaw, Ato Tesfaye Gemeda and Iyyasu Abatä.

⁴⁴⁵Dereje, p. 82.

⁴⁴⁶Bale Goba Full Gospel Church, p. 5.

in Adaba. The fate of the relic of the child was become the same. Due to the church unable to get burial ground in Adaba town, the relic of this child also brought to Šašämäné and its burial ceremony carried out there.⁴⁴⁷

The other miserable occurrence happened in Adaba district for the third time. The atrocity carried on the grandmother of the today's pastor Germa Waqé. Germa's mother was one of the believers of the Full Gospel church in Adaba town. Unfortunately, she was died a natural death. As usual, the churchmen of the Full Gospel church in the area requested the local government officials grant them a burial place for the dead mother. After several difficulties, the church gained burial ground. The burial ceremony also carried properly in the presence of many believers but unfortunately, opponent of the church at night dug the grave, put out the relic from the grave and thrown it for savage.⁴⁴⁸

The other series hardship that the Bale full gospel church encountered was the persecution carried up on its believers by the *Därg* officials. The regime was a socialist oriented which emphasized the dissemination of Marxist-Leninist ideology. It was also a regime that ignored the people of the country the right and freedom to worship. As in other parts of Ethiopia, during this regime, the Bale Full Gospel church believers severely persecuted. As compared to the other protestant churches' believers in Bale, the believers of the Bale Full Gospel Church were the most persecuted one.⁴⁴⁹ As many informants depict, it was able to say that no believers of the faith barred from the torture, beat and imprisonment of the *Därg* officials. Even more everybody who were suspected the relatives of the believers of Full Gospel Church were imprisoned, beaten and tortured by the *Därg* officials.⁴⁵⁰ Although the persecution carried out upon the believers of the church was very serious, evangelists and leaders of the church were the most severely persecuted by authorities of the regime. To mention, in Gobba town alone evangelists and churchmen like Šadiqu Abdo, Negusé Šibäši, Zäwdé Negatu, Sälämon Boggalä, Sälämon Gäzzahän, Badeg Bäqqälä, Yelma Waqé, Alämayyähu Mäkonen, Bällätä and the likes were persecuted while they preached the gospel to the people.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁷*Ibid*, p. 20.

⁴⁴⁸*Ibid*.

⁴⁴⁹Getachew, p. 153.

⁴⁵⁰Informants: Iyyasu Abatä, Sälämon Boggalä and Mähšäša Gezaw.

⁴⁵¹Informants: Mähšäša Gezaw and Sälämon Boggalä.

Of the protestant Christianity churches that have been operating in Bale administrative region during the *Därg* rule, believers of the Bale Full Gospel Church were suffered a lot from the persecution of the *Därg* officials because the regime believed that Pentecost's were minions of CIA and compliant of imperialists which weakened the regime. As a result, of this, in Bale to remove them the *Därg* carried a mass imprisonment on the believers of protestant Christianity in general and the Full Gospel believers in particular.⁴⁵²

As informants narrate, not only believers of the church but also everybody suspected the relatives of the believers of Full Gospel Church imprisoned and beaten by the *Därg* officials.⁴⁵³ For instance, in Ginnir town, believers like Azéb Feqrä sellasé, Täsärra Märkäbu, Berähanu Asäffa and Ayyäläč Täfärra imprisoned beaten and badly injured on their head. Even more their body pierced with bayonet.⁴⁵⁴ In 1977 residents of Gobba town such as Astér Dawit, Berqé Käbbäda, Sälämon Bäzzabeh, Şegé Denqu, Feqertä Takkälä, Täsärra Märkäbu, the today's Professor Boggalä Wärru, engineer Mulugéta Mäkonen, Takkälä Sahlé, Däbbäbä Wäyyéssa, Surur Muhammäd, Negusé Şibäşi, Şadiqu Abdo, Endaäl Bongär and others detained and imprisoned by the *Därg* officials while they studied Bible. These prisoners suffered from beat of the soldiers of the regime ordered by the then governor of Bale, Ali Musa. Especially, the torture carried on women was very harsh that the soldiers beaten their burst with oyster to terrorize them and abandoned their religion. In addition, these prisoners made to swim in a big hole filled with mud for long hours.⁴⁵⁵

During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie all missionaries including the believers of Pentecostal faith (believers of the Full Gospel church), had some right to practice their religion based on the rule and regulations passed by the government. As archival source obtained from Ginnir Full Gospel Church indicates, the believers were allowed worshipping only in the area that had granted by the government. Preaching the gospel moving around the village the house of individual residents made forbidden. The local government officials, received order given by the government

⁴⁵²Dereje, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁵³Informants: Sälämon Boggalä, Iyyasu Abatä and Mähşäsa Gezaw.

⁴⁵⁴Dereje, p. 36.

⁴⁵⁵*Ibid*, pp. 52-54.

worked to control those believers and preachers who did not obey the rule and regulation of the government.⁴⁵⁶

However, around the final years of the regime; the decision passed and the measure taken by the government became serious. For instance, the office of general secretary of the municipality of Ginnir town notified that the chief of *Mäsgid Säfar* (village around the mosque) should close the prayer house of the believers of Pentecostal faith starting from September 1967, strictly controlled and protect the believers of the faith from preaching the gospel moving around the village.⁴⁵⁷

Furthermore, the *Därg* regime that followed the socialist ideology and against to religion, totally closed all protestant churches in Bale including the Full Gospel church. In the history of protestant churches of the province, the Full Gospel church was the first to close down by the authorities of the regime. As informants explained, not only the *Därg* officials but also the influence of some Orthodox churchmen had contributed for the ban and the close of the church.⁴⁵⁸

After wards, the fate of the believers of the Full Gospel church became worshipping in unobtrusive way until things were relaxed by forming small groups. Believers were also used to worship in Mekane Yesus church and Qalä Hiwot church until they also closed by the *Därg* officials.⁴⁵⁹ The other method the believers of the Full Gospel church used was worshipping in unobtrusive way in Orthodox Church. Concerning this, it was said to have that some believers of the Full Gospel church who were ignored freedom of worship by the *Därg* officials, requested the then Arch bishop of the diocese of Bale, *Abunä Märqorewos* permit them participate in Bible study carried out weekly in Gobba Mädhane'äläm church. These youth convinced the Arch Bishop of the Diocese that they returned to their former faith, orthodox Christianity. The Arch Bishop reacted positively observing the eagerness of the youth and permitted them attend in Bible study carried every Sunday in the church. Those who had benefited from this opportunity were Youths like Sälämon Bäzzabeh,

⁴⁵⁶GFGCA, Folder No 28 File No__.

⁴⁵⁷GFGCA, Folder No 135 File No__.

⁴⁵⁸Informants: Iyyasu Abatä, Sälämon Boggalä and Täsfayé Gämmäda.

⁴⁵⁹Informants: Abäbayyäu Gärrämäu, Evangelist Astateqé Telahun and *Atom* Zäwdé Yänénäh.

Täsärra Märkäbu, Boggalä Wäru (the today's Professor), Negusé Šibāši (today pastor), Lāggäsä Märğiya, Mulugéta Mäkonen, Héwan Käbbädä and many others.⁴⁶⁰

In other parts of Bale such as in Dodola, Adaba and Ginnir, these and other believers had worked to maintain and sustain their faith using different methods. At the end, especially; believers of Orthodox Täwahedo Church found that the youth's act and behavior contradicted with the religious practices of their church. As a result the believers of the Full Gospel were church banned from worshipping in the Mädehané'aläm church and most of these youths were became the victim of imprisonment. For example, youths like chanter Täsfayé Gabbiso, Mänegestu Ademasu and Täsfayé Habté imprisoned more than two years in Ginnir.⁴⁶¹

4.4. The Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos Church

4.4.1. Establishment of the Church and Spread of the Faith in Bale

Of the four sects of protestant churches that have established and operating their missionary work before the demise of the *Därg* regime in Bale, the Mäsärätä Kerestos church (MKC) is the youngest and the last to be established. The first MKC founded in the then capital of Bale administrative region, Gobba town in 1987. This church founded by the relentless activities of believers who came to Bale from other areas. Some of the believers who contributed their share in this regard were Andargačaw Gezew, Mäkkätä Alämu, Ambärber Alämayyāhu, Tegest Seyyum, Sälämon Feqré and the likes. With the steady evangelization work of these pioneers, more believers that are new joined to the faith within short period. Some of the first fruits of gospel were Emmäbét Täšomä, Aynaläm Seyyum, Abbäbbäč Bädasa, Gétačaw Rāggasa, Dawit and others.⁴⁶²

The evangelization work started in Gobba town and around spread to the other district of Bale. In line with this another new churches able to established namely in Sinana district, Robé town. This church was the second church that established in Bale administrative region before the downfall of *Därg*. After 1991, the church continued its evangelical work and able get many believers in other areas of Bale. Due to this reason, another new churches established in districts like Agarfa, Goro,

⁴⁶⁰Dereje, p. 44.

⁴⁶¹Informants: Sälämon Boggalä, Mäsäša Gezew and Iyyasu Abatä.

⁴⁶²Kefle Mulugeta, *Yä Kerestenna Fätänawoč (Challenges of Christianity)*, (Awasa, 1999), p.56.

Ginnir and the likes. Therefore, currently the Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos church has 23 churches in 13 districts of Bale zone.⁴⁶³

4.4.2. Challenges the Church Encountered

The believers of Mäsärätä Kerestos church passed through several difficulties during the *Därg* regime as the other protestant churches found in Bale in the period under discussion. The first opposition/ challenges/ against this church was said the challenge came from the local community especially from the Orthodox Täwahedo church and believers. As was done on the other sects of protestant churches found in Bale, the believers of the Mäsärätä Kerestos church suffered from segregation in social issues like “*Eder*”.⁴⁶⁴ It was also said that the local people were did not rent their house to the believers of this church. Even more, they obliged to leave the house they rented unexpectedly. In addition to this, mates also forced to split up. For instance, Tekekel Räggsa was one of the believers of Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos church who divorced by her husband in this case.⁴⁶⁵

The other great challenge the church faced was from the *Därg* officials. By the order of the then governor of Bale Ali Musa the churchmen and believers of Mäsärätä kerestos church were imprisoned. *Därg* also closed the church and persecution became series and series. Evangelists were discouraged and obliged to flee to another areas where situations were somewhat relaxed. The rest had been worshipping in Bale Mekane Yesus church, the least affected church during the *Därg* regime while others worshipping in small groups in unobtrusive way in private houses with great caution to escape from imprisonment, torture and beat of the *Därg* officials.⁴⁶⁶

4.4.3. The Administrative Structure of the Church

The Mäsärätä Kerestos church has a head office at Addis Ababa. The church carried out its religious ministry and other services by organizing these churches under regions. Accordingly, Bale zone and Arssi zone categorized under one region. The head office of the bale and Arssi region found at Asälla. This region again divided in to two sub- regions namely the Arssi and Bale sub-

⁴⁶³Informants: Astateqé Telahun and Paster Abräham Alämayyäu.

⁴⁶⁴Kefle, p. 57.

⁴⁶⁵Informants: Astateqé Telahun and Abräham Alämayyäu.

⁴⁶⁶Kefle, p. 61.

regions. Under the Bale sub region, there were only two Mäsärätä Kerestos churches namely the Gobba and Robé Mäsärätä Kerestos churches before 1991.⁴⁶⁷

4.4.4. The Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos Church and NGOs

The only NGO that had been working in cooperation with the Bale Mäsärätä kerestos church on evangelical work in the brief time of the church during the *Därg* regime was the World Vision Ethiopia. This organization supported the church in providing training for evangelists to spread gospel in Bale until it terminated its services. After the downfall of *Därg*, the church continued its contact with NGOs like Compassion Ethiopia, TDMM (Transformational Discipleship Making Ministry) and Christian Horizon. These NGOs had worked to benefit the local people by providing health care services, giving material support like food, clothes, educational materials and covering expense of schooling for Children, especially who are orphan and those children who came from deep poor family and mothers. Handicaps are also the other section of the society supported by these NGOs.⁴⁶⁸

4.4.5. Livelihood of the Church

The Bale Mäsärätä kerestos church has been running its religious and other activities using the money collected from the worshippers in the form of “*Asrat*”, “*Bäkurat*” and voluntary donation of the believers. The church also collected money from local believers and Diasporas. After the downfall of *Därg*, partners like compassion Ethiopia, TDMM and Rift valley vision are those NGOs supporting the church in solving social problems of the local community.⁴⁶⁹

4.4.6. Conflict Resolutions Method of the Church

Conflict is natural and normal. It might occur between and among people in one way or another. In the Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos Church, conflicts solved based on the degree of severity of the conflicts. Accordingly, simple conflicts that occurred between individuals solved through discussion made between the two individuals. Complex conflicts seen by the herdsman section of the church while those beyond this section seen by leaders’ council and got final solution there.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁷Informants: Astateqé Telahun and Abräham Alämayyäu.

⁴⁶⁸Kefle, p. 43.

⁴⁶⁹Informants: Astateqé Telahun and Abräham Alämayyäu.

⁴⁷⁰Informants: Astateqé Telahun, Gezaw Käbbädä and Abräham Alämayyäu.

4.4.7. Development Works Performed by the Bale Mäsärätä Kerestos Church.

Concomitantly with the establishment of the first Mäsärätä Kerestos church in Bale, the church has opened an elementary school in Gobba town to benefit the local people. In this school, children of the local people have been attending their education regardless of their religion race, sex and so on. The teaching learning process carried in this school carried out based on the educational curriculum of the government. The church had no the tradition of teaching religion in the school.⁴⁷¹

Fig. 24. The Gobba Mäsärätä Keretos Church Primary School



Source: Photograph by the researcher

4.5. Catholicism in Bale

Catholicism is also a recent phenomenon and has a short history in Bale. It introduced in the area in the last quarter of the 20th century. Before the establishment of the Catholic Church in Bale, the Ethiopian Catholic Church has been working in rendering relief service in the area through the Catholic Relief Service. The church had planned to support 63, 650 people by distributing 84, and 720 quintals of food in Bale in 1985. However, the plan failed to be put into practice due to the

⁴⁷¹Mamo Arega, *Lemat Bä Mäsärätä Kerestos Bétäkerestiyan* (Development Activities in Meserae Kerestos Church), (Addis Ababa, 2011), p. 13.

existence of problems related to administrative in Bale. In addition to this, the church has also continued its effort to establish its own Church in Bale.⁴⁷²

With the support of the Ethiopian Catholic Church the first Catholic Church, the Emanuel church established in Bale, Robe in 1986. The initiative for the establishment of this church was came from some individuals who were formerly Catholic origin and who came to Bale for the sake of work from different areas like Guragé. It was said to have that Tegestu Dässalāñ and Balča, who was the head of Robé post office, a certain individual who was the manager of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Gobba branch and others were who contributed a lot of establishment of Catholic church and the spread of Catholicism in Bale administrative region. These believers started their effort first with searching for other believers of the Catholic faith who were resided in Robe and Gobba towns. These worshipers succeeded in getting additional believers of the faith and consequently they organized them. Tegestu Dässalāñ made their representative.⁴⁷³

Afterwards, they continued their effort to get land in which they could build their church. After repeated request, the then mayor of Robé town, Haylé Zägäyé granted them land on a prerequisite that the church should built not only church but also school which could benefit the children of the local people. Accordingly, using the financial support gained from the head office of Ethiopia Catholic Church and the fund gained from abroad by the effort of *Abba* Abräha Baraki the first Bale Catholic Primary school was constructed and opened in 1986. Then the construction of the church followed.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷²BZAA, Folder No 1-53 File No__.

⁴⁷³*Ato* Tegestu Dässalāñ, and *Baša* Amarä Wärqenäh

⁴⁷⁴Informants: Tegestu Dässalāñ, Amarä Wärqenäh and *Wäyzäro* Wärqé Yadäté.

Fig.25. *Ato Tegestu Dässaläñ* one of the founders of the Bale, Robe Catholic Church



Source: Photograph by the researcher

Fig. 26. The Gobba and Robe Catholic Churches



Source: Photograph by the researcher

Until the construction of the church completed, believers were used to prayer and practiced other religious activities with in a tent in the Mother Theresa residence compound. For brief years,

believers were obliged worshipping in private rented from individuals. The problem solved after the completion of the construction of the church.⁴⁷⁵ Following the establishment of the Catholic Church in Robé town and the evangelization work carried, several new believers were able to join the faith. In the early years of the church, *Abba* Haylu Zäwdé a priest who was working in the Mother Theresa Charity organization preached the gospel and rendered religious services for the few believers of the time. After *Abba* Haylu transferred to another area, *Abba* Abräha Baraki was assigned in their place continued the work of strengthening the spread of gospel, constructing new churches and administrating them.⁴⁷⁶

Concerning the spreading the Catholic faith in Bale churchmen like *Abba* Mulat, *Abba* Gäbre'él, *Abba* Yettaḡäsu Šänquté, *Abba* Šähay, *Abba* Iyasu, *Abba* Täsfa Gäbru, *Abba* Yohannes Amonké, *Abba* Gobäzé, *Abba* Tebäbä Gälču and the likes were those who played great role. However, *Abba* Abräha Baraki's effort and activities was the most renowned, decisive and which brought progress in the spread of the faith and establishment of other new Catholic Churches in Bale later on.⁴⁷⁷

In line with the evangelization work carried, many people including men like Berhanu Alämu, Abärä Disasa, Tasäw Gäbäyyähu, Semé Däbäla, Tägänu Yami, and others were joined the faith and contributed their share in the spread of the faith not only in Robé and Gobba towns but also in other districts in the province. As a result, the number of believers of Catholic Church gradually increased and reached around 500 in 1990. This figure was raised more than before in the years ahead during the FDRE regime.⁴⁷⁸

4.5.1. Gospel and the Catholic Church

Evangelization work to expand the faith of a religion in a given society is not an easy task. It demands sacrifices, passing through many difficulties. Several difficulties might also encounter churchmen, evangelists and the believers as well. With regard to this, my informants narrate that even during the Derg regime in the process of spreading the catholic faith in Bale the challenges the

⁴⁷⁵Informants: Tegestu Dässalän, Amarä Wärqenäh and Ato Tägänu Yami.

⁴⁷⁶Tomas Zerihun, *Yä Balé Katolik Bétäkerestiyän Aç'er Tarik* (A Short History of the Bale Catholic Church), (Addis Ababa, 2010), P.12.

⁴⁷⁷Informants: Tegestu Dässalän, Amarä Wärqenäh and Wärqé Yadäté.

⁴⁷⁸Tomas, p. 13

churches and its believers faced was not difficult as the persecution and challenges other protestant Christianity believers of Bale namely, the Full Gospel, Qalä Hiwot Churches and others faced. However, this did not mean that the church had never encountered any challenges. Therefore, the Bale Catholic Church and its worshippers also face some challenges especially at the beginning of the establishment of the church and the introduction of the faith in to Bale. some of these challenges were said to have that the segregations worshippers of the Catholic Church faced in social affairs such as ‘Eder’ and others for short period of time especially from the Orthodox Täwahedo Church and its worshippers. As usual, as the other protestant Christianity believers, believers of the Catholic faith regarded as heretics as well.⁴⁷⁹

However, the former segregation existed in the early years of the church gradually curbed as the attitude of the local people held against the faith improving. The major factor that contributed for this progress and change was that the equitable social services rendered by the church be in school, in relief services and the likes. In addition to this, the missionary work the church carried has been accomplished as to not to provoke other religious groups against the Catholic Church. Thus, these factors to have been contributed a lot for the church and its worshippers to have harmonious relation, with others and to spread their faith without much difficulty.⁴⁸⁰

Although the Catholic Church started to establish in Bale since 1986, the church and its worshippers faced easy challenges from the *Därg* regime that had ruled the country through the ideology of scientific socialism. The degree and extent to which the Bale Catholic Church and its believers affected by this regime was also quite different as compared to the sever times that the believers of other religions passed during the period under discussion.⁴⁸¹ For instance, the Robé Emanuel church, the only Catholic Church in Bale during the *Därg* regime was not closed when other protestant churches closed by the church. Believers of the Catholic faith also not suffered from beat, torture and persecution of the *Därg* officials as the believers of other churches. However, believers of the Catholic faith in Bale had been in a great fear because they feared that the actions carried out on the worshippers of protestant Christian believers might encounter them. To this end, worshippers

⁴⁷⁹Informants: Tegestu, Amarä Wärqenäh and Ato Berhanu Alämu.

⁴⁸⁰Tomas, p. 24.

⁴⁸¹Informants: TegestuDässaläh, Amarä Wärqenäh and Wärqé Yadäté.

of the Bale Catholic Church were tending to hide all their religious practices until those miserable days passed.⁴⁸²

4.5.2. Administration

Until the Diocese of Mäqi and Kofälé separated, the Bale Catholic Church ruled under the Diocese of Mäqi. Currently, the Bale Catholic Church administrated under the Diocese of Kofälé whose office found at Kofälé itself. However, the *Mänbärä Pepesenna* (seat of the Bishop) found in Robé town at Emanuel church. The Dioces of Kofälé had been led by *Abunä Yohannes* while *Ababa Abräha Baraki* was led the Bale Catholic Church. Currently the Bale Catholic Church has administering all its churches found in Dodola and *Adaba* districts in west Arssi zone and the churches found in Bale zone namely Dinšo, Sinana, Gobba and Dällo Männa districts.⁴⁸³

4.5.3. The Bale Catholic Church and Education

Education is a base for the development of a given country. It also helped to change the way of life of the society. Based on this reality, the Bale Catholic Church has been providing education since 1980s by opening schools in different districts of Bale to benefit the local community. According to informants, education is one of the major issues that the church has given great emphasis and priority. As a result, the church has opened schools both in rural and urban areas of Bale before establishing churches. For testimony, the todays Robé Catholic Primary and Junior School opened in 1986 before the church constructed its church building. After the Demise of the *Därg* regime also the school which are opened in Dodola, Adaba, Alämgäna, Dinšo, Dällo Männa towns and Awušo village opened in a similarly way.⁴⁸⁴ Here, one can easily understand that the Bale Catholic Church has worked a lot in spreading formal education beyond its age and history it has in Bale. Because other age-old churches found in Bale has no such number of schools the Bale Catholic Church possessed currently.

⁴⁸²Tomas, p. 27.

⁴⁸³*Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁴Informants: Tegestu Dässalän, Amarä Wärqenäh and Tägänu Yami.

Fig.27. The Goba Catholic Primary School



Source: Photograph by the researcher

The instructional process carried in these schools was and still carried out based on the educational curriculum designed and implemented by the government in all government schools. Thus, there is no tradition of giving Bible course in the school. Students have been learning only academic subjects. In these schools students who came from different localities has been attending their education regardless of their religion, ethnicity, sex and other issues.⁴⁸⁵

The church has also been supporting deep poor children, orphans (both double and single orphans) and handicaps in finance, material, shelter, clothes, health care and school expenditures as well as other necessary things enable them follow their education without quitting their education and also follow them until succeeded in their education.⁴⁸⁶

4.5.4. The Role of the Bale Catholic Church in Health Care

Until recently, the Bale Catholic Church has opened no clinics or hospital that could benefit the local people as the school opened in different parts of Bale benefited a lot the children of the people of Bale in particular and the country at large. According to informants, the health sector was the

⁴⁸⁵Tomas, p. 28.

⁴⁸⁶Informants: Tegestu Dässalāñ, Tägānu Yami and Berhanu Alāmu.

sector that the church had given little attention. No clinics established in Bale by the Church before 1991. However, currently the church has starting constructing a huge hospital in Bale zone, Robé town that estimated to serve not only the people of Bale but also others.⁴⁸⁷

4.5.5. The Bale Catholic Church and NGOs

The Bale Catholic Church has been working with different NGOs on providing relief service. To mention the church had been working on distributing food aid in cooperation with the Catholic relief service. The relief service rendered for people of Bale focused on people who faced problem caused by human and natural disasters. The services rendered were included food aid, material and financial support. Especially, the Mother Theresa Charity Organization that found in Gobba town has served deep poor mother, orphans and handicaps for long period of time before 1991 and still the present.⁴⁸⁸

4.6. Inter –Religious Interaction in Bale

4.6.1. Muslim – Christian Relations in Bale

There are different religious group and people in Ethiopia. These people had` long tradition of peaceful coexistence between and among themselves in time of peace and conflicts. Ethiopians were and still known in granting asylum for underprivileged people. For instance, in the 7th century during Muslims (followers of Prophet Mohammed) in Saudi Arabia, Mecca faced persecution of the *Qurayish* tribe; Ethiopia hosted the family of the prophet and treated them well until they returned to their country.⁴⁸⁹

In Bale, Muslims were not enjoyed the privilege and freedom that enjoyed by the Christian Amhara, especially, the believers of Orthodox Täwahedo Church since the conquest of the province by Menelik until the Italian invasion. It was a time when Muslims degraded and hated by the Christian Amhara settlers. With regard to this, Mendaye in his work stated as follows:

In most cases, particularly, in the immediate aftermath of the conquest the settlers never ate with the local people from the same dish “ it is unlawful

⁴⁸⁷Informants: Tegestu Dässalāñ, Amarä Wäraqnäh and Lämman Tayé.

⁴⁸⁸Informants: Tägänu Yami, Amarä Wäranäh and Wäraqé Yadäté.

⁴⁸⁹Shiferaw Bekele, *Bahel Enna Lemat Bä Iteyopeya (Culture and Development in Ethiopia): A paper Presented in Forum of Social Studies*, (Addis Ababa, 2011), p.124, Spencer Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia*, (London, New york, Toronto, 1952), pp. 44-45, See also Tony Karbo, Religion and Social Cohesion in Ethiopia: *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, (Addis Ababa, 2013), p. 44.

for Christian to eat with the infields” but it was said that this kind of relationship had been improved through time with increasing economic inter-dependence between the two groups.⁴⁹⁰

According to the information obtained from informants, no matter how such segregations were carried against the Muslim Oromos of Bale by the minority Christian Amara chiefs and officials, the degraded and exploited Muslim Oromo’s of Bale did not retaliate against the Christian Amhara settlers.⁴⁹¹ Instead, the Muslim Oromo of Bale gave asylum for the Christians during the time of crisis and war that took place in the area at different times. Therefore, in Bale province Muslim and Christians has been living in peace and love for long time to these days. Informants also narrate, during the Italian invasion Muslims of Bale gave protection for the Christian settlers of province from the attack of Italians by hiding them as Muslims. The Muslim Oromos of Bale also gave the Christian of Bale Muslim Oromo traditional clothes like *gufta* (a headdress often used by women Arssi Oromo) and Amhara the Christians escape from the assault of Italians. With regard to this, the role played by the functionaries of the shrine Diré *Sheik* Hussen was also interesting one. It was said that large number of Christian Amhara notable were appealed to the Imam of the shrine Dirré *Sheik* Hussen Said Mohammed so as to give them asylum in the Shrine. The Imam had done so positively taking their request and granted asylum to Christian notables with their family from the Italian attack.⁴⁹²

Some religious wars also took place and carried out in some areas of the province. In these wars and conflicts, both Muslims and Christians of the province were never been the cause of these wars. Rather, the conflicts and wars were intentionally initiated by insurgents and intruders who came from outside to create hostility between the two groups to achieve their own mission. To mention in 1917 a religious war carried between Muslims and Christian settlers of Bale in a particular locality known as Mägalo, which is located between Ginnir and Goro districts. This war, initiated by the Turkish and Arab intruders and because of this war, large number of people lost their life. Large amount of property also destroyed from both sides no matter how the figure is not mentioned due to scarcity of sources. In 1935 a little before the Italian Invasion another religious war was took

⁴⁹⁰Mendaye, p. 61.

⁴⁹¹Informants: Asäffa Fäqqädä, Abäbbä Mänker and *Ato*Sirak Zärihun.

⁴⁹²Mendaye, p. 75.

place in Bale by some forced led by Mohammed Gadaa Qallu in Dällo *awraja* in this war also the life of many resident of the province was lost and properties were destroyed. Again, for the second time from 1940-1942 Mohammed Gadaa Qallu was initiated a religious war in Dällo area. Nevertheless, the government captured him and a sentence of twenty years imprisonment passed up on him. Finally, he died while he was in Bale, Gobba prison. During the Somali invasion and the Bale peasant uprising that was led by Mohammed Rubé and Waqo Gutu, the intruders victimized Christians of Bale at different times.⁴⁹³

The major reason was that as in other parts of the country, especially; in Bale the word Amahra was also associated with Christian. Even, the Christian Shawn Oromos who settled in Bale at different times regarded as Amhara because they are Christians. On the other hand, the word Galla[Oromo] was regarded by the settlers as Muslims. As a result, intruders attempted to use these conditions to create animosity and conflict between the two groups to achieve their hidden agenda.⁴⁹⁴

During the above mentioned crisis and wars took place in the province Christians and Muslim of the province had passed a harmonious relationship. Muslims had been helping the Christians settlers in disguising them and escape from the attack of intruders and some their collaborates who made the Christians as a target by associating with the Amhara chiefs had been saved the life large scale attack and an d destruction could be reach in the province.⁴⁹⁵

Concerning different social, cultural and economic issues the enter relationship existed between Christians and Muslim of Bale was becoming strong especially after the Italian invasion. Accordingly, the ignorance against Muslim that was existed up until 1941 was relaxed in the post liberation period. For instance, Muslims invited by the Christians to their home in annual holidays, season and other festivities in their meal with the exception of meat and some other drinks which are not allowed by the faith. The Muslim for their part also did the same practice that continuing to these days. In addition to this, when Christians build churches there was an occasion that Muslim granted them financial aid similarly the Christians were also helped the Muslim with financial

⁴⁹³*Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴NALA, Folder No 17.1.5 File No 19.09.

⁴⁹⁵Informants: Sirak Zärihun, Zäwdé Yänénäh and Astateqé Telahun.

support for the construction of mosques. Even more, in Bale one can encounter couple who lead their life have tie up with marriage after the former ignorance against the Muslim removed.⁴⁹⁶

4.6.2. The Relationship Existed Between the Orthodox Täwahido, Protestant and the Catholic Faith Believers in Bale

The introduction of Protestantism and Catholicism into Bale province is a phenomenon of the second half of 20th century. Since its introduction to the downfall of the *Därg* regime, there was great religious tension between the believers of Orthodox Täwahedo faith and the worshipers of protestant churches namely; the ECMY, Qalä Hiwot, Full Gospel (Mulu Wängél), Mäsärätä Kerestos and the Catholic churches. One of the reasons resulted in this religious tension was ideological and doctrinal differences. For instance, missionaries, believer of protestant and catholic faith perceived the Orthodox Täwahedo church as tradition oriented while they believe in a Bible alone doctrine. The difference in biblical teaching between Orthodox Täwahedo and protestant churches as well as the Catholic Church led to the prevalence of separations and segregations among them in all socio- cultural life of the society.⁴⁹⁷

As in other areas of the country in Bale also the Protestant and Catholic faith believers were segregated until recent times albeit the situations somewhat relaxed after 1995. According to informants, in Bale; believers of different sects of protestant church and the believers of Catholic faith faced large-scale segregation in social services like “*Edder*”. The believers of these faiths not allowed burying their family relics in the burial places of the Orthodox Tewahedo church. During fasting’s, seasons and other festivities believers of Orthodox Tewahido churches have been refrain from participating meal with protestant or Catholic believers. As was common in other parts of the country, in Bale also protestant as well as Catholic believers were labeled as “*Mänafeqan*” (heretic), “Mission”(Catholic), “*Mäte*”(alien) religion, “*Şärä Mariyam*” (anti-marry), “*pénté*”, “*yäsälvaghaymanot tükättay*” (followers of second hand religion) and the likes. These derogatory names had been used by believers of Orthodox Täwahido church to segregate the believers of others churches from social relations.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶Informants: Abäbayyäu Gärrämäu, Lämna Tayé and Sälämon Boggälä.

⁴⁹⁷Addise, p. 16.

⁴⁹⁸Informants: Telahun Dämessé, Käffälän Nägaş and Mäsäşa Gezaw.

In Bale, the issue of psychology was the other factor that created a hostile relation between Orthodox Täwahedo church on one hand and the different sects of Protestant churches and Catholic Church on the other hand. It is obvious that the major objective of every church is preaching the Christian faith, getting more believers and retaining them in the faith. However, in the process of spreading gospel during believers of a certain church abandon his/her former religious institution and join to the new one, the psychology of the church the gained more new converts up graded. In contrary, the losers' morale degraded. The "sheep stealing" performed by evangelical work came the major source of disintegration of unity between churches and their believers. In line with this, from 1960s to 1991 in Bale, extensive segregations carried out by the believers of Orthodox Täwahido church against the worshipers of the Qalä Hiwot Church, the Full Gospel Church, to some extent the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, the Mäsärätä Kerestos Church. To some extent, the Catholic Church had operating its religious practice peacefully in the period under discussion.⁴⁹⁹

Political and economic factors were also the reasons that caused tension, disagreement and hostile relationship between the Orthodox Täwahido church and the protestant churches as well as Catholic Church in Bale during the Imperial period and the *Därg* regime. During the Imperial period, due to church and state had strong ties the EOC gained supported and got protection from the state while other religious groups marginalized. During the *Därg* rule, all religious groups devoid of freedom of worship no matter how the extent of persecution carried on protestant and Catholic faith followers was very harsh. In the period under discussion, especially Protestant churches totally banned from carrying out their religious practices and made to loose members due to absence of protection from the state.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁹Informants: Amarä Wärqnä, Abrahäm Alämayyāw and Gezaw Käbbädä.

⁵⁰⁰Addise, p. 19.

CONCLUSION

In Bale, Christianity began to spread and different churches established since 1890s. Especially, in building churches and spreading of the Orthodox Tewahedo faith, the contribution of the then officials of the regime was very great. In contrary, the work done by the church to spread the faith was very weak. The church's cadres did not work hard to penetrate the lowland areas of Bale, spread Christianity and gain converts. Thus, the Orthodox Tewahedo faith and churches remained spread in the highland areas of Bale. The evangelization work carried in the area was not able to convert to Christianity the dominant Muslim population of the region.

Protestantism and Catholicism that introduced into Bale since the second half of the 20th century was not liked by the Orthodox Tewahedo church and its followers. This phenomenon created hatred between the two. Believers of the different sects of protestant church and the Catholic faith regarded as heretics. As in other areas of the country in Bale, segregation was carried on the believers of Protestant and Catholic faith believers in different social affairs of the society. Gradually, the hostile relation existed between the Orthodox Tewahedo church and the protestant church as well as the Catholic Church improved and relaxed especially since the eve of the dawn fall of the *Därg* regime. The good relationship existed for long years between Christian and Muslim communities of Bale also continued as was before.

Even though the extent and degree of their contribution differs, the Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the different sects of Protestant Church and the Catholic Church have been contributed a lot in rendering holistic services that could benefit the people of the area in the period under study and to the present. For instance, the school and clinics they opened in different parts of Bale still serving the people of the area.

Generally, the findings of this study will encourage the different churches found in Bale to spread different social services for the local community besides spreading their faith. It also paves the way for other researchers who want to carry out further study up on this topic and other related issues.

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3. List of Oral Informants

S. No	Name of informants	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Remark
1	Abäbayyāhu Gärrāmāw (Ato)	75	May 13/2016	Gobba	Fonder of the Gobba ECMY. Formerly Served in different government offices, teacher in the Gobba mission school of the SIM, head of the ECMY of Gobba, now pensioner
2	Abbäbä Mänker (Ato)	50	June 20/2016	Gasära	Born and grew in the historical place, Guranda (one of the earliest military camp of Menelik's force) and who knows much about how Menelik conquered the area and the Orthodox Tewahedo churches established in Bale. He has been teaching in different schools in Bale
3	Abrāham Alāmayyāhu (Mäggabi)	43	July 14/2016	Gobba	He is steward of worshipers in the Gobba Mäsärätä Kerestos church and knows about the history of the church
4	Adduña Ayyané (Ato)	67	July 3/2016	Gobba	One of earliest believers of the Gobba Qalä Hiwot church who knows much about the history of the church
5	Afāwārq Dässalāñ	67	April	Gobba	He was the General

	(<i>Mäggabi</i>)		23/2016		Manager of Diocese of Bale. He is one of the churchmen in Bale who knows the history of the Bale Orthodox Tewahedo church very well. Now he is pensioner
6	Aklilu Dañé (<i>Ato</i>)	90	July 20/2016	Gololča	A <i>däbtära</i> who had been serving in Jarra St. Michael church. He knows much about the history of Orthodox Täwahedon church in Bale. Now pensioner
7	Alämayyāhu Bäqqälä (<i>Ato</i>)	51	July 20/2016	Gololča	Born in Gololča district, Jarra town. He knows much about the history of the Sheik Hussein shrine and the history of the Orthodox Täwahedo church in Bale. He was one of the <i>Därg</i> soldier. He has been teaching in different government schools in the in Bale. Now serving in the government office.
8	Alämu Mändäré (<i>Ato</i>)	60	June 30/2016	Ginnir	Born in Dällo Säbro area and who knows much about the history of Orthodox Täwahedo churches in the area
9	Amarä Wärqenäh (<i>Baša</i>)	66	July 22/2016	Gobba	He was soldier during the <i>Därg</i> regime, now he is the head of issues of law in the Gobba Catholic Church
10	Asäffa Fäqqädä (<i>Ato</i>)	92	June 29/2016	Gasära	He was lived in the historic place Guranda and around for long time. He has been rendered diaconal service in the Orthodox Täwahedo Churches in the area. He knows much about the history of Bale and the church. He is also a well-known farmer.
11	Asfaw Dämessé (<i>Evangelist</i>)	70	June 30/2016	Ginnir	One of the early believers, founders of the Ginnir Qalä Hiwot church and

					knows much about the church's history
12	Astateqé Telahun (<i>Ato</i>)	39	July 21/2016	Gobba	He is preacher in the Gobba Mäsärätä Kerestos church and knows the history of the church
13	Baheru Husén (<i>Ato</i>)	65	July 20/2016	Gololča	Well informed elder who knows about the history of Christianity in Bale
14	Bäqqälä Mojo (<i>Ato</i>)	75	July 2/2016	Dodola	Served at different offices in the Diocese of Bale. He knows much about the history of the Orthodox Tawahedo church in the region, now pensioner
15	Berhanu Alämu (<i>Ato</i>)	52	July 22/2016	Robé	He is well known farmer and one of individuals who contributed his share in the establishment of the Robé Catholic church
16	Berhanu Asäffa (<i>Ato</i>)	52	July 22/2016	Gasära	He is one the people who lost his relatives by the attack of the Somali intruder in 1970s and who could witness the situation of the time. Currently he is a teacher teaching in one of the high school in Gasära district
17	Çefra Toléra (<i>Ato</i>)	68	July 20/2016	Gololča	Formerly served in different government offices. He also the early worshiper in Jarra Qalä Hiwot church who knows much about the history of the church. Now pensioner
18	Däbbäbä Mälläsä (<i>Priest</i>)	74	April 23/2016	Gobba	He is well known farmer, a priest who has been serving in many Orthodox Tawahedo churches in Bale and still serving in Gobba St. Selassie Church
19	Ejgegayyähu Haylé (<i>Ato</i>)	80	June 30/2016	Ginnir	Born in Ginnir district, a well-known elder in the area and also knows much about the history of Bale
20	Gäbrämäsqäl Wäldämareyam (<i>Abba</i>)	49	July 20/2016	Gobba	Formerly he was the Secretary of Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery, now

					head of plan and development section in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo church the Diocese of Bale
21	Gäbräyyäsus Wäldäqirqos (<i>Abba</i>)	37	May 14/2016	Gobba	He is one of the fruit of youths who were studied church education in the Gobba Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery and now a priest who is serving in Gobba St. Michael church
22	Gämmé Gari (<i>Ato</i>)	42	June 30/2016	Gobba	He is the early believer of the Full Gospel church in Gobba and a well-informed informant about the history of the church
23	Gärrämäw Käfyäläw (<i>Ato</i>)	37	June 30/2016	Ginnir	Born in the vicinity of Dällo Säbro area, knows much about the Orthodox Tawahedo church in the area
24	Germa Jämbäru (<i>priest</i>)	42	July 5/2016	Gobba	He is priest of the Gobba ECMY Church and the head of East Bale ECMY Churches
25	Gezaw Käbbädä (<i>Ato</i>)	67	July 4/2016	Gobba	He was one of the students who learnt their education in the Gobba SIM school and who knows much about the SIM and Bale Qalä Hiwot church. He also served in teaching in different government schools in Bale. Now pensioner
26	Hasän Abdi (<i>Ato</i>)		July 20/2016	Gololča	Well-known farmer. Longtime resident of Jarra town who knows much about the history of Bale and the Sheik Hussein shrine
27	Haylé Tola (<i>Ato</i>)	70	July 20/2016	Gololča	He is tailor, farmer and one of those early believers of the Qalä Hiwot church who is passed through several hard times during the <i>Därg</i> regime being he is the

					follower of protestant faith
28	Iyyasu Abatä (<i>Ato</i>)	45	June 14/2016	Gobba	He has been serving in different Full Gospel churches in Bale and still serving as a preacher in Gobba Full Gospel Church
29	Jämal Aman (<i>Ato</i>)	54	June 17/2016	Gasära	Born and grew in Ginnir district around one of the Oromo Gadaa center, Odaa Robaa who he knows much about the history of Bale. He has been working in different government offices. Now he is Librarian in Gasära Secondary School
30	Käffälän Nägaš (<i>Ato</i>)	52	July 2/2016	Dodola	General Secretary of the ECMY of Dodola. He has been serving the church since the <i>Därg</i> regime and knows much about the history of the church.
31	Kenfägäbre'él Wäru (<i>Abba</i>)	42	July 12/2016	Gobba	He is Mäggabi in the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery and knows about its history
32	Lämma Enefraw (<i>Ato</i>)	65	July 3/2016	Gobba	Well known farmer, early believers of the Bale Qalä Hiwot church and knows much about its history
33	Lämma Gota (<i>Ato</i>)	91	July 3/2016	Gobba	One of early converts who had been working with the SIM missionaries in Gobba and knows much about the history of the SIM and the Bale Qalä Hiwot church. He is also librarian in the mission school of the SIM. Now he is pensioner
34	Lämma Tayé (<i>Ato</i>)	80	July 23/2016	Goro	Formerly Farmer, then merchant, knows much about the history of Bale
35	Mängestu Yergu (<i>Ato</i>)	95	June/28/2016	Gasära	He was one of the known deacons serving in different churches in Gasära district. He knows very well about the history of Bale and the history of

					the Orthodox Tewahedo church in particular. He was well-known farmer and lawyer in Gasära district, now pensioner.
36	Mäsäsa Gezaw (<i>Ato</i>)	61	June 15/2016	Gobba	Formerly was teacher. He is one of early believers of the Full Gospel church who suffered from persecution during the Därg rule. Now he is pensioner
37	Muddé Bati (<i>priest</i>)	63	July 2/2016	Dodola	Priest of the ECMY at Dodola and knows very well about the history of the church and currently he is the president of the Wabé Batu Synod.
38	Muhammäd Ali (<i>Ato</i>)	81	June 21/2016	Gobba	He is a well-known merchant and an elder who knows much about the history of Bale
39	Mulugéta Šäwarägga (<i>priest</i>)	72	July 2/2016	Dodola	Priest in the EECMY at Dodola. He knows much about the history of the church.
40	Nägaš Dägäfu (<i>Ato</i>)	75	July 2/2016	Dodola	Well-known farmer in Dodola area. The first converters of DEM missionary who knows about the history of the Bale ECMY.
41	Qäšäla Giyorgis (<i>Abba</i>)	38	June 14/2016	Gobba	He is one of the monks who lived for long years in the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery and now he is <i>Mäggabi</i> of the Monastery
42	Sälämon Boggalä (<i>Pastor</i>)	60	June 14/2016	Gobba	He had been serving in different government offices. He is one of the believers of the Full Gospel Church in Gobba town who suffered from the persecution of the <i>Därg</i> and knows much the history of the church. Now he is preacher in the Gobba Full Gospel church.
43	Sirak zärihun (<i>Ato</i>)	65	June	Robé	He is one of the earliest

			30/2016		believers of the Full Gospel church in Bale. He has been leading the church at different posts
44	Taddäsä Wäldätänsay (<i>Märiyéta</i>)	65	May 12/2016	Gobba	Formerly he was serving in the Orthodox Täwahedo church in teaching liturgy and he was the head of the <i>Säbäka Guba'é</i> of Diocese of Bale Zone. He knows much about the history of the church. Now he is pensioner
45	Täfäri Bäzzabeh (<i>Mäggabi</i>)	45	July 5/2016	Gobba	He is the head of the Bale Qalä Hiwot church who is serving the church for long years and knows much the history of the church
46	Tägänu Yami (<i>Ato</i>)	50	July 22/2016	Robé	He is one of the founders of the Bale-Robé Catholic Church. He was a teacher. Currently, he is member of administrative staff of Mädda Wälabu University
47	Tasäw Wäldäsämayat (<i>priest</i>)	85	July 2/2016	Dodola	A priest who has been serving the church for long years in the former Gännalé awraja of Bale Province. He is one of the priests participated in the evangelization campaign carried in Bale by <i>Abunä Téwoflos</i> , the patriarch of the EOC. Still he is serving in Dodola Gäbrä kerestos Church.
48	Täsomä Wäldämareyam (<i>Abba</i>)	90	April 23/2016	Gobba	Formerly he was a priest serving in the different Orthodox Täwahedo churches in Bale but now he is pensioner
49	Täsfayé Gämmäda (<i>Ato</i>)	49	July 22/2016	Gasära	He is one of the early believers of the faith and passed through several challenges being because he is protestant Christianity believer. Currently he is a high school teacher
50	Taytu Asäffa (<i>Wäyzäro</i>)	45	July 1/2016	Gobba	Worker in the archive of

					diocese of Bale zone who knows the day today activities of the church and its history
51	Tegestu Dässalāñ (<i>Ato</i>)	65	July 22/2016	Robé	He is one of the founders of the Bale-Robe catholic church. Formerly he was an educational radio transmission controller at Robé town but now pensioner.
52	Telahun Dämessé (<i>Šalāqa</i>)	80	July 3/2016	Gobba	He is one of the early converts of the SIM in Gobba town and rendering a full time service in preaching gospel in the Qalā Hiwot church. He was served in the police force in different parts of the country and now pensioner
53	Wäldāmikaʼél Mulu (<i>Abba</i>)	45	June 14/2016	Gobba	He is the <i>Abämenét</i> /Governor/ of the Mäkanä Hiwot Abunä Täklä Haymanot Monastery and knows much about the monastery
54	Wärqé Yadäté (<i>Wäyzäro</i>)	55	July 22/2016	Robé	She is a teacher in the Robé Catholic primary school and one of the founders of the Robé Catholic church and knows much about the history of the church
55	Zäwdé Yänénäh (<i>Ato</i>)	92	July 4/2016	Gobba	One of the founders of the Gobba Evangelical Mekane-Yesus Church and who has served in leading the church for long years, now pensioner

APPENDIXES

Discription of Appendixes

Appendix	Date	Highlight	Remark
I	August 1960	A letter written by director of Bale Awraja Gezat to Ministry of Interior.	
II	March 1976	A letter written by Bakafa Haileyesus to Ministry of Information.	
III	September 1986	A letter written to Commodity distributing agency of southern region by Office of Bale Administrative region	
IV	June 1993	A letter written by General Manager of diocese of Bale region to Bale zone domestic earnings and Goba Town administrative office	
V	April 1985	A letter written by Tasaw Engeda to the bakery of seven Parishes of the diocese	
VI	August 1987	A letter written by governor of Bale Administrative Region to Ganale Awraja Committee of children's Affairs	
VII	August 1988	A letter written by Governor of Bale Administrative Region to Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church Office of Children's Administration congregation	
VIII	October 1988	A letter written by Governor of Bale Administrative Region to Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church Office of Children's Administration Congregation	
XI	September 1986	A letter written by Abba Salama, Arch Bishop of Diocese of Administrative Region to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church Holy Synod Development and Inter-Church Aid Department	
X	June 1992	A letter written by General Manager of Diocese of Bale to the Patriarchal Office of Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo Church	
XI	November 2009	A letter written by Peter Burt, Acting Administration Director of SIM Ethiopia to Fikre Mamo	
XII	May 1976	A letter written by Ato Ambarber Wandemaganaw mayor of Ginnir town to Ato Asfaw Damese	
XIII	April 14/1975	A letter written by Robert Ratzliff Goba, Ginnir SIM Stations Manager to the Provincial Military Government of Ethiopia Bale-Goba	
XIV	September 2010	A letter written by the office of the Bale Qala Hiwot Church to the Head Office of the Ethiopian Qala Hiwot Church	

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ለገብረ ተበበክ ዊት ኢትዮጵያ
ጊዜያዊ ወታደራዊ መንግሥት
የግብርና ደንብ ማሻሻያ ሚኒስቴር
አዲስ አበባ፣

23/24683

መጋቢት 26, 1969

በፍርድ ቤቱ አድልዎ አስተዳደር ውስጥ ተራራዎችና ከተቆኙ አገላለጽ
የፍርድ ቤቱ አድልዎ አስተዳደር ስሜት መጠይቅ ስም አገላለጽ ከየወረዳው
የገብረዎች ግንባር በቀረበው ሃሳብ መሠረት፤

የደብዳቤ ክፍለ ትምህርት ተገቢነት የደርግ ጉዳይ በሙሉ ስር
ገራ መሠረት የላላ በኢትዮጵያ ገብረ ተበበ ላይ ለረጅም ዘመናት ተገብረዎቹ
የተገኘውን የረዕይና ስሜቶችን በገብረ ተበበ ታሪክ መሰሪያ ስላለባት፤ የደ
ርግ ጉዳይ ከዚህ በታች የተዘረዘረውን የስም ለውጥ ያወጣት መሆኑን ከባሉ
ክፍለ ትምህርት አስተዳደር ስሜት ተቆኝ 2 የገ 1969 ዓ.ም በቀጥታ 2/
22/45/22 በተባረ ደብዳቤ፤

- 1ኛ. የፍርድ ቤቱ አድልዎ አስተዳደር ስሜት መጠይቅ የርዕይ የወጣት
አድልዎ አስተዳደር ስሜት፤
- 2ኛ. የፍርድ ቤቱ ተራራ መጠይቅ የርዕይ የአባር ተራራ፤
- 3ኛ. የዓለም ጤና ከተማ መጠይቅ የርዕይ ባህቢት ከተማ፤
- 4ኛ. የዓለም ገና ከተማ መጠይቅ የርዕይ የአባራ ከተማ፤
- 5ኛ. አዘግኝ ደገላህን 2ኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት መጠይቅ የርዕይ የበተ
ተራራ 2ኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ተበበ አገላለጽ መወሰኑን የተገለጸውን ስላሆነ፤
ሕዝቡ አገላለጽ በመገናኛ ዘዴዎች አገላለጽ አናበሰባለገ።

ኢትዮጵያ፡ ትቅደም፡

17:87
26/7/69
712

26/7/69
በዓ. ጊዜያዊ መንግሥት
የግብርና ደንብ ማሻሻያ ሚኒስቴር

ገ. 01/01



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ወ.ሮ. 968/2056/25...
16/10 ነገ 1985 ዓ/ም.


ለባሌ ዞን ለስተዳደር የሰጠ ገቢ ደ/ቤተ
ለገቢ ከተማ ለስተዳደር ጸ/ቤተ ✓
ጸ/ቤተ

በሀ/ስብስብ ጸ/ቤተ ለካባቢ ለካህናት ወይም 4 የገጠመ መሪዎች የሆኑ
አገልግሎት ይታዩ በመሆኑ በ1983 ዓ/ም በተፈጸመ ገርገር ገር 30 ተገ
85 ዓ/ም ካሉት የገጠሞች ውስጥ 2 ተገ ባሉበት ለባ መሪዎች መገለጻቸው ገሰጸ
ው በዛገታ ወይም የገረ አገ የሌሎች ከር በቅተት ከገጠረረዎች ለግገንት ባሉበት
ከገንዳ ለየተዘጋ ለመሰረተ ከገበያው ጋር ለመጻፍ ባሉበት ከገገት ከ2 ተገ
ውስጥ አገልግሎት በግብር ሠረዳው ለተገኙት 1 ነገ 1984 ዓ/ም ደብዳቤ በግ
በናበት ምረቃ ለ ቅለል በመሆኑ አገልግሎት የሆኑ ለስተዳደር ሲገቡ ከገገት በ
ጋራ በአጠቃላይ የምረቃ ወይም ቢታዩ በሀ/ቤተ ላይ ከፍ ተኖሮ ከሃገሩ ገደብ ሲገደር
ቸለሰ ።

በሌሊት ይህን ሁኔታ ሀ/ስብስብ በመገገም ለመረጠው ወይም የሌላው
ሆኑ በግገናዎች የራሳቸው አገልግሎት የሆኑ ከገንዳ 1 ነገ 1985 ዓ/ም ደብዳቤ ምረቃ
በአጠቃላይ በግብር ሠረዳው ለገጠሙት የተገረገ ለሌሊት ይህም አገልግሎት
አናባባላገ:://=====

ገለባጭ
ለሀ/ቤተገቢ ህገብ ወጪ
ጸ/ቤተ

.. ለስተዳደር ጋር ..

የገጠሞች ደብዳቤ
15.10.85



ቁጥር 205/29
 1979 ዓ/ም

አኢት/ሥርዓ/ተ/በተ/ዘር/የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ/ደ
አ ኢ ባ ኦ ባ

ገንዘብ አርዳታ ወረዘቶ ገንዘብ: _____

ይህንኛ ለአኢት/ሥርዓ/ተ/በተ/ዘር/የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ/ደ ሥር በአገር
 ርፋ የአርዳታ ባቢያትን ከመስሪያ 1978 ዓ/ም የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር 1979 ዓ/ም
 ደረሰ በተገኘ የአርዳታ አይነት/የሥር በደመዳይ 2500 ልዩ ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ አርዳ
 ታ ሲገኝ ወይንት የሚታወቅ ነው::// _____

ይህ በአገሪቱ አገልግሎት የዘረዘረ የአርዳታ ባቢያት ወይንት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር
 ከሆነ ለአይነት/የሥር በደመዳይ 2500 ልዩ ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ አርዳታ ለማግኘት
 የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ/ደ ወይንት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ለመሆኑ የሚታወቅ
 አይደለም::// _____

ይህ በአገሪቱ አገልግሎት የአርዳታ ባቢያትን የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ከሆነ ለአይነት/የሥር
 በደመዳይ 2500 ልዩ ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ አርዳታ ለማግኘት የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ
 ወይንት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ለመሆኑ የሚታወቅ አይደለም::// _____

1ኛ/ በ1979 ዓ/ም የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ከሆነ ለአይነት/የሥር በደመዳይ 2500 ልዩ
 ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ አርዳታ ለማግኘት የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ ወይንት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ
 ወር ለመሆኑ የሚታወቅ አይደለም::// _____

2ኛ/ በመተላለፍ ሰርዓት ለሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ለ2500 ልዩ ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ
 አርዳታ ለማግኘት የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ ወይንት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ለመሆኑ
 የሚታወቅ አይደለም::// _____

3ኛ/ የአርዳታ ሰርዓት የአርዳታ ሰርዓት የሥር አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ከሆነ ለአይነት/የሥር በደመዳይ
 2500 ልዩ ዓ/ም 4500 ልዩ አርዳታ ለማግኘት የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ ወይንት የሥር
 አስከፊ ልዩ ወር ለመሆኑ የሚታወቅ አይደለም::// _____

•• ረዕዩን ለሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ ወይንት ••
 •• በአኢት/ሥርዓ/ተ/በተ/ዘር/የሰዓተ/ዘርበ/ክ/ክ/ደ/ደ ወይንት ••

ባለቤቱ
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1088/1207/1984
 10/10/84

10/10/84

1984/10/10 4312/3222/84 10/9/84 ?
 1984/10/10 4312/3222/84 10/9/84 ?
 1984/10/10 4312/3222/84 10/9/84 ?

19.10.84

M.T. ANDERSON
 MANAGER

10/10/84

1984	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84
1	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84	10/10/84

Appendix XI

fikre

From: "Peter Burt" <peter.burt@yimesgin.org>
To: "Fikre Mamo" <simgovrel1@yimesgin.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 03, 2009 3:29 AM
Subject: Old SIM Bale Goba Station

Fikre,

There was a joint planning meeting with EKHC last week. One of the subjects that came up was about the old SIM Bale Goba station. EKHC are keen to reclaim this property and we agreed to support them. I do not know if anyone from EKHC has been in touch with you yet but wanted to make sure you were aware. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks for your help.

Pete

1. Bale Goba Station:

Dr Tesfaye shared the history of SIM/EKHC work in Bale. There were three stations started in this region (Goba, Ginir and Adaba), each with a school and clinic. All three stations were nationalized by the Derg government. After the communist government fell, the new government offered to return nationalized properties to the former owners and this was pursued in a number of localities, but other locations including the three Bale stations were not returned because the church was unable to take on the costs of maintaining the infrastructure and costs of running schools and clinics. Recently, the Bale KHC leaders have come with a request for SIM/KHC to seek the return of the Bale Goba site which is currently abandoned. The Bale area is 85% M and is a strategic location for the EKHC to expand

- a. EKHC/SIM will initiate the process of reclaiming the Bale Goba property. A staff member will be assigned by the church to spearhead the process on the EKHC side. Ato Fikre Mamo, government relations manager, will assist with this initiative from the SIM side.
- b. SIM Government.
- c. A letter will be written by EKHC/SIM to the appropriate government office requesting the return of the land. The letter should be written by 6 November 2009
- d. SIM will seek to notify former SIM members who served in the Bale area encouraging them to pray regarding this initiative

.....
Peter Burt
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Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

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email peter.burt@yimesgin.org
.....



RECEIVED 16 APR 1975

April 14, 1975
Meyasya 6, 1967.

S.I.M.
Bale, Goba

To the Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia Bale, Goba.

Dear Sirs,

This letter is to keep you informed of the happenings and decisions made by the S.I.M. concerning Ato Dawet Batamo our clinic evangelist who was dismissed from his work on Megabit 22, 1967. It is exactly two weeks ago today that the matter was first brought before you. Dawet Batamo was given good advice by the government administrators but he continues to trouble us with calls to various officials of the town.

Since seeing you last I have made two more attempts to help him by offering him full severance pay according to the law, three months wages to go and look for work as well as offering to take him back to his home country with his family in my car at my own expense. He has consistently refused to co-operate because he demands more money of us than the law requires. We will not pay more than the law requires of us if the case stays out of court. If the case goes to court then we will fight him with everything we have and pay only after appeals whatever the court demands of us and no more. He cannot seem to understand that he would be far better off taking the out of court settlement we have offered him which would be somewhere close to five hundred dollars.

In the meantime we continue to have trouble with this man on the compound. He refuses to fix his garden fence and when the cattle of our other staff accidentally get into his garden then he fights with them. He also continues to waste my time with this nonsense. The mission administration in Addis Ababa has therefore made the decision that if Ato Dawet Batamo has not moved off the property with his family by the date formerly designated, namely Meyasya 15, 1967 and or if he continues to fight with us in the courts that the foreign population on the mission station will be re-deployed to other places and the station will be operated under Ethiopian management with the mission coming in periodically to check things and pay staff wages. The mission has asked that I respectfully submit this information to you by registered mail.

Sincerely, Robert Ratzliff,

Goba, Ghimmir S.I.M. stations manager.





የኢትዮጵያ ጥያቄ ለጥናት ማኅበር
የሥነ ምግባርና ሥነ ጥናት ማኅበር
ወይንም የሥነ ምግባርና ሥነ ጥናት ማኅበር
ሐይለማርያም ሥራዊት
ግዛት

ቁጥር 4/04/02/2003
ቀን 19/02/2003

ለኢትዮጵያ ቃል ሕይወት ቤተክርስቲያን ዋናው ጽ/ቤት
አዲስ አበባ፤

"እግዚአብሔር ታላቅ ነገርን አደረገልን ደስም አለን" መዝ/126/3

የአክብርት ሰላምታችንን በጌታችን እና በመድኃኒታችን በእየሱስ ክርስቶስ ስም እናተርጠላችኋለን።

ጉዳይ፡- ምስጋና ማትረፈን ይመልከታል

የልጆቹን ጨካኝና እምባ ቸል ብሎ የማያልፍ እግዚአብሔር በዘመናችን እና በምድራችን ላይ ተፃምራቱን ሠርቶ ስላስደነቱን ክብርና ምስጋናን ሁሉ ለእርሱ እንሰጣለን። እናንተም ከእኛ ጋር ይህንን ጌታ እንድታመሠግኑልን በጌታ ፍትር አንጠይቃለን።

በደርግ መንግስት እምባነናጥ አስተዳደር ወትት በጉባ ከተማ የSIM ሚሽን ጣቢያ የነበረው ግቢ እና በውስጡም ያሉት ቤቶች ከነገብረታቸው በ1970 ዓ.ም በቃል ትዕዛዝ ተወስደው ለ33 ዓመታት በእ/ር ተፃምራት ተጠብቀው ከቆዩ በኋላ እ/ር ቦታውን እንድናስመልስ በልባችን አስተምጦ እንትስታሉውን በጀመርን በአንድ ዓመት ጊዜ ውስጥ እነሆ ጥቅምት 17/2003 ዓ.ም ቦታው /25,000 ካሬ ወይም 2.5 ሄክታር ስፋት ያለው ቦታ/ እና በውስጡም ካሉት ቤቶቹ /5 ቤቶች/ ጋር ለኢትዮጵያ ቃል ሕይወት ቤት እና ለባሌ ከ/ማ/ሀ አገልግሎት እንዲውል የመንግስት ባለስልጣናት በተገኙበት ርክክቡ ተፈጽሞ ቦታው ተመልሶልናል። ስለሆነም ይህንን ቦታ በማስመልስ ሃደት ዋናው ጽ/ቤታችን ትልቅ ሚና በመጫወት እና በሚያስፈልገው ነገር ሁሉ ከፍተኛ ርብርብ በማድረግ ከጉናችን በመቆማችሁ ለዚህ ታላቅ ድል ስለቦታን እ/ርን እያመሰገንን እናንተም ስለታላቅ ትጋታችሁ እያመሠገንን ድሉ የኢትዮጵያ ቃል ሕይወት ቤት ሁሉ ነውና ከእኛ ጋር ደስ ይበላችሁ እንላለን። በተጨማሪም በዚህ ቦታ ለእ/ር ክብር እና ለኢትዮጵያ ቃል ሕይወት ቤት በረከት ለሰው ልጆችም ጥቅም የሆኑ ሥራዎች እንዲከናወኑ አሁንም ዋናው ጽ/ቤታችን ከጉናችን እንዲቆም እየጠየቅን ስለደረጋችሁልን ድጋፍ ሁሉ ከልባችን በማመስገን እግ/ር ዘመናችሁንና አልግሎታችሁን ይባርክ እንላለን።

ክብር ሁሉ ለእግዚአብሔር ይሁን



(Handwritten Signature)
አንጻው ማሞ

የባሌ ከ/ማ/ሀ ሰብ/ገቢ

GLOSSARY

<i>abämenét</i>	male administrator of monastery
<i>abba</i>	father', title of a priest, also a monk
<i>abunä</i>	bishop
<i>aläqa</i>	head of a church
<i>aquwaquwam</i>	the way of standing or moving accompanied by sistra, prayer sticks and drums during monthly or annual festivals.
<i>astädadär akkababi</i>	administrative region
<i>ato</i>	title the same as Mr.
<i>awaamaa</i>	people who have no religion and ate meats of animals slaughtered by people other than Muslims.
<i>awraja</i>	province
<i>awraja gezat</i>	provincial governorate
<i>azmač</i>	commander
<i>baala buufannaa</i>	leaf lying
<i>bäddaa</i>	highland
<i>badda daree</i>	intermediate climate
<i>balabatoč</i>	local chiefs, hereditary owner of rest land
<i>balambaras</i>	lower politico-military title
<i>balbala</i>	door, lineage
<i>bälg</i>	spring
<i>bareedduu (midhadduu)</i>	beautiful
<i>ber</i>	Ethiopian currency
<i>bétäkenät</i>	administrative office of the Orthodox <i>Täwahedo</i> Church
<i>däber</i>	autonomous, endowed church
<i>däbtära</i>	learned cleric
<i>däjjazmač</i>	commander of the gate, politico-military title
<i>därg</i>	committee, designation of the military government
<i>darasaa</i>	student in Quranic school
<i>degwa</i>	the study of the chant book

<i>ečägé</i>	most prestigious of Ethiopian monastic leaders since at least the 16 th century
<i>emmämenét</i>	female administrator of monastery
<i>endärasé</i>	governor
<i>enjära</i>	a kind of food usually eaten by Ethiopians
<i>eyyäsusawiyān</i>	Jesuits
<i>fidäl</i>	letters (alphabets)
<i>fitawrari</i>	commander of the vanguard, politico-military title
<i>gäbbar</i>	tenant, tribute paying peasants
<i>gadaa</i>	a generation based indigenous socio-political system
<i>gädām</i>	monastery
<i>gammoojjii</i>	low land
<i>gaša</i>	unit of local measurement; one <i>gaša</i> is approximately 40 hectare
<i>gebrä deqqunna</i>	prayers to become a deacon
<i>ge'ez nebab</i>	reading religious
<i>gerazmač</i>	commander of the left, military rule
<i>goläbehensa</i>	residence of sheep
<i>gosa</i>	clan
<i>guwad</i>	comrade
<i>hagärä sebkät</i>	provincial diocese
<i>hajji</i>	title used by Muslims, who had traveled to Mecca on a religious pilgrimage
<i>hora</i>	salty soil
<i>hulluqaa</i>	gate
<i>jawaraa</i>	“holly soil” used by pilgrims at Sheik Hussein shrine
<i>kätäma</i>	town
<i>kafir</i>	non-Muslims mostly Christians
<i>karra</i>	two births of Christ
<i>keflä hagär</i>	region
<i>kénnetto</i>	a drink usually prepared from roasted barley

<i>liqä-kahnat</i>	head of priest
<i>mädräsaa</i>	Quranic school
<i>mäggabi</i>	‘feeder’, a monk in charge of provisions in a monastery, also of clerical title
<i>mähär</i>	autumn
<i>mäkanähiwot</i>	place of life (soul)
<i>mälkä Iyyäsus</i>	prayers for Christ
<i>mämmeher</i>	‘teacher’, abbot
<i>mämmeré</i>	priest
<i>mänbärä pepesena</i>	residence of a bishop
<i>mäqqaño</i>	small hut, tukule
<i>märiyéta</i>	a religious title given to the clergy who educated the liturgy
<i>mäsqäl</i>	a religious celebration commemorating the finding of the true cross on which Christ was crucified, celebrated on September 27.
<i>mäwasit</i>	prayers for the dead
<i>madäriya märét</i>	a land given for officials instead of salary
<i>mekettel wäräda</i>	sub district
<i>muuda</i>	pilgrimage, pilgrim,
<i>negest Hendäké</i>	Queen Candace
<i>nubura ’ed</i>	clerical title of the churches of Aksum <i>Şeyon</i> and Addis <i>Aläm Maryam</i>
<i>qäläd</i>	a rope that was used to measure land in the imperial period of Ethiopia
<i>qän̄azmač</i>	commander of the right, politico-military title
<i>qäsis</i>	priest
<i>qadi</i>	Muslim judges in Islamic courts
<i>qalluu</i>	a high priest who communicates the Oromo people with <i>waaqa</i>
<i>qebat</i>	unction
<i>qeddasé</i>	liturgy
<i>qené</i>	poetry

<i>qés</i>	priest
<i>qomos</i>	vicar
<i>ras</i>	‘head’, highest politico-military title
<i>sä’atat</i>	prayers for hours
<i>säbäka mänfäsawi guba’é</i>	spiritual congregation
<i>sämon</i>	the land that had been possessed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church
<i>Šäläqa</i>	local representative of a higher authority entrusted with the collection of tribute
<i>Šéyk</i>	Muslim religious title
<i>sire</i>	bed
<i>Şägga</i>	three births of Christ
<i>tabot</i>	replica of the Arch of the covenant
<i>täqlay gezat</i>	province
<i>täwahedo</i>	two births of Christ
<i>ulee sheeka Baalee</i>	Sheik Hussein’s stick
<i>waaqa</i>	sky God of Oromo
<i>waaqeffataa</i>	a belief in <i>waaqa</i>
<i>wäräda</i>	sub- district
<i>wäräda gezat</i>	district governorate
<i>weddasé Mareyam</i>	prayers for the virgin
<i>zämäča</i>	campaign
<i>zämzäm</i>	“holly water” pilgrims used at Sheik Hussein shrine
<i>zemmaré</i>	hymns sung after communion
<i>zéma</i>	church music

DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other University. All sources in the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name_____

Signature_____

Date of Submission_____

