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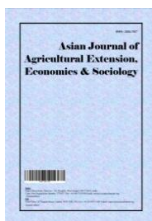
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Foundation of Addis Ababa and the Emergence of Safars

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to reveal the impact of the eviction of the Oromo from their hereditary land of Finfinne and their possession by Menilek in the late 19th century. The study deals with the history of the transformation of Finfinne to Addis Ababa and the eviction of the Oromo from the area which followed by the emergence of different Safars. In this study, the socio-economic and political conditions of Finfinne Oromo and the surrounding are explored. After the eviction of the Oromo from Finfinne area, the settlement of different ethnic groups in the areas was also discussed. In this study the researcher attempted to employ both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data sources were collected through a brief review of related literatures by assessing published materials. The primary and unpublished data sources were collected through oral interview based on focused group and questionnaire. All these data were carefully analyzed and critically interpreted qualitatively according to the standardized rules and disciplines of social sciences. Even though some earlier attempts have been made by scholars to write the history of Finfinne, most of the areas have received only very minimal attention. Therefore, this article is an attempt to fill the gap that has been created so far by other scholars and something to contribute to the history of the foundation of Safars in Addis Ababa. The study, hence, tried to highlight the history of the foundation of different Safars until the dawn fall of the imperial regime. Certainly this study is far from being exhaustive. However, the researcher hopes it can at least serve as an

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introduction to give clue to the study of Finfinne history and the eviction of Oromo from the area which later on its name was changed by the imperial rule unjustifiably to Addis Ababa "New Flower".

Keywords: *Safars; eviction; Finfinne; Addis Ababa; Makuanit; Mesafint.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Beginning from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the adjacent Amhara community was waging constant voracious attack and raiding expedition against the surrounding Oromo nation. Some of these atrocious attacks were documented in different literatures [1]. Therefore, this study mainly deals with the history of the foundation of Addis Ababa and eviction of the Oromo nation from their hereditary land and possessions by Menilek beginning from the late nineteenth century. Historically and traditionally, the Oromo people are the largest of Cushitic speaking people and the most numerous nations in the Horn of Africa. They constituted more than half of the population of the Ethiopian Empire. Thus, the aim of this article is to place the history of the eviction of the Oromo from Finfinne area and the foundation of Addis Ababa, the emergence and development of *Safars* in into the broader perspective of socio-cultural and economic relations of Ethiopia.

The study was based on numerous primaries and some secondary sources of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' research which were conducted by either Ethiopians or European scholars of both published and unpublished ones.

In the study, the researcher used qualitative method which based on social science research disciplines using these primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included oral tradition from different areas of Finfinne and archival materials of the Addis Ababa Municipality. The oral tradition was collected in the form of questionnaire and group discussion. In addition, the secondary sources of published materials were used through careful analysis and critical interpretation.

The Oromo struggle during this earlier period, then, is nothing more than an attempt to affirm their own place in history in seeking equality and democratic government to secure freedom and peace. Thus, the struggle was against the Ethiopian imperial ruling class and its military

force, *Naftagna* but not against single ethnicity or individuals.

Although the Oromo is one of the largest nations in the region of the Horn of Africa, during the imperial regimes its history was either forgotten or intentionally ignored by the majority of the scholars. Thus, the main purpose of this article was to fill the gap created so far by these scholars and introduce them to further researchers. However, it is not the objective of the researcher to write the definite history of the foundation of Addis Ababa and its impact on the Oromo of the area. This task is explicitly left for historians who are interested to make further research on Finfinne history. Because the work was what they have unjustly treated or unjustifiably ignored the justifiable history of Oromo nation in their earlier period works.

2. BACKGROUND

The power and influence of Gondar gradually declined in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as a result of the wars of *Zamana Masafint* (Era of princes) and the Dervish (Mohadist) invasion. Therefore, it could no longer serve as a permanent capital of the Empire [2]. It was Tewodros II who first moved his seat of power from Gondar to Debra-Tabor and then briefly to Meqdella until his death. Following the struggle for power on the death of Tewodros II, Adwa and Meqele became the centers and seats of the Emperor's power (1872-89). However, the two towns could not sustain their new political status for long; and the capital of the empire began to move further south, together with the imperial power soon assumed by Menilek of Shoa [3]. As a result of this, the late 19th century was characterized by the rise of Shoa as the center of the new political power of the Ethiopia Empire. The region of Shoa was much less affected than any of the other Ethiopian regions by the ravages of the warfare's of the *Zamana Masafint*. Therefore; this made Shoa gradually to grow into prominence. However, within the region of Shoa itself the centers of power of the local rulers were kept on changing. Accordingly, for some time Ankober had begun to serve as the capital of the Shoa kingdom; but this, too, did not last long;

[4], and soon after his escape from the state prison of Tewodros II at Meqdella in 1865 and his accession to the Shoa throne, Menilek changed the centre of his political power from Ankober to Debre-Berhan, Angollela, Liche and Entoto, respectively [5].

Besides economic interest, for military and strategic reasons, Ethiopian rulers often preferred the commanding positions of mountain tops for military as the site for their *Katama* (towns). And although Menilek's reign seems to have been relatively more "peaceful" than those of his predecessors, his capitals were still located on high places. In the region of Finfinne, what is today Addis Ababa, for instance, Menilek is first said to have camped for some time especially on Wachcha mountain which is located to the west of Finfinne/ Addis Ababa [6]. However, Menilek's camp before moving to Entoto was on Furi-Gara which means Furi Mountain [7]. The discovery of an old settlement site and ruins of some constructions of the reign of Lebne Dengel (1508-1540) on the top of Entoto Mountain made Menilek decide to move his capital towards the area [8]. It has been suggested that these ruins belonged to the reign of king Dawit (1380-1412) [9], however the evidence does not seem strong and plausible. It may, however, be that this tradition refers to Lebne Dengel who sometimes bore the regnal name of Dawit as well, [10] the description which is still not historically supported, and some sources goes on narrating that in 1881 Menilek established his court there [11].

The history of the influx of the Oromo nation in the sixteenth century in Ethiopia from the outside is a denial of historical truth. It is also a myth simply invented by Ethiopian court historians and clergymen which finally sustained by their European supporters. This revealed that the Ethiopian rulers used to claim on Oromo territory to justify their colonization of the Oromo people [12]. Finfinne has been the land of Oromo people which later became the center and seat of Ethiopian imperial government and currently became seat of numerous domestic and international organizations. Many scholars admitted that it is the center of Oromia National Regional State and the area which traditionally and historically inhabited by the Oromo nation. However, currently the issue of the administration of Finfinne and its surrounding is becoming the center of political arena for the politicians neglecting the already existed factual historical narrations. Besides its economic

significance, the interest for military and strategic reasons by Menilek and his officials, *Masafints* and *Makuanints* often made them to be attracted by the location and conducive temperature of Finfinne. The Ethiopian rulers often preferred the commanding positions of mountain tops for military as the site for their military garrison in addition to its economic and social significances.

Most of the existing literature asserts that the process of modern urbanization in Ethiopia began to take its shape from the late 19th century onwards. This came about with the territorial expansion and conquest of Menilek (1889-1913), which seems to bring about political "stability" and the effective centralization and bureaucratic governmental system. This is said to have brought about relative acceleration to the expansion of urbanization in Ethiopia, with the construction of the Addis Ababa- Djibouti railway. This improved the system of transportation and communication which were identified as factors that contributed to this new phase of urban development. Shoa territorial expansion to the south led to the appearance of garrison centers and northern settlement, which eventually evolved into the foundation of permanent city of Addis Ababa changing its hereditary name, Finfinne. The military garrison and settlements of new comers from the north was established either on already existing settlement like Finfinne or on new sites [13].

Socially, this settlement area served mainly as permanent residences for Menilek's riflemen/the *Naftagna* as the northern and central Ethiopian settlers sometimes came to be referred by some people collectively. Some literature in Ethiopia indicated that the emergence of present towns in some parts of Ethiopia associated with politico-military factors, that is to the establishment of military garrisons, like Tabanja Yazhoch (riflemen quarter). It is clear that many towns in Ethiopia developed historically from military garrisons, but many of the garrisons were also abandoned when their military needs declined [14].

According to different literature, there were important political centers that predated Finfinne (Addis Ababa) and the campaign of Emperor Menilek. Among these political centers and seats of governments, Meqdella (1865-68), Meqele/Adwa(1871-1889), and after his accession to the Shoa throne(1865-1889) and Emperor of Ethiopia(1889-1913), Menilek changed the center of his political power to Shoa region, like Ankober, Debre Berhan, Angollela,

Liche, Entoto, and finally Finfinne, respectively [15].

Finfinne had been part of the center of Oromia and the Oromo land until the second half of nineteenth century and it has been dominated in the second half of the nineteenth century by Menilek being followed by his army force, *Naftagna*. Then, the Oromo lad of Finfinne area and its surrounding was annexed. Finfinne Oromo was not only annexed but its name also changed from Finfinne to "New Flower", Amharic name of Addis Ababa. With this transformation of name and its significance for centrality of the imperial rule, large government and foreign firms had based in Addis Ababa and establishing their branches in different towns of the country [16]. By the time of Italian invasion, there were numerous branches of firms in Addis Ababa [17]. The growth and development of Finfinne as urbanized city perhaps facilitated the growth and development of other towns in the different corners of the country being the center of trade.

3. RESULTS OF EVICTION OF THE OROMO FROM FINFINNE

Despite the historical arguments, however, the choice of this site was also based on its strategic and commanding positions in that important period when Menilek was commanding his campaigns against the surrounding Oromo areas. And it was only when he felt more secure and because of other social and natural factors that he could move the capital to the more fertile and open area of Finfinne [18]. It is also clear that Addis Ababa owes its origin to the centrality of its location for administrative reasons to maintain the vast Empire which had been expanding to the west, southwest, south and southeast [19]. The initial factor for the foundation and establishment of towns or capitals is summarized as follows:

Although the original reason for the foundation of a town may have been military, its continued existence in times of peace or increased stability was due first to political and then to economic factors [20].

Finfinne is said to have also attracted some of the predecessors of Menilek II. His grandfather, Sahle Sellassie (1813-47), had once been attracted by the site of Finfinne and aspired to set up his permanent settlement there, near the hot water spring, *Filwuha*. But he could not achieve his ambition as a result of the continuous

and strong resistance of the Finfinne Oromo who dominated the area at the time and he thus failed to build lasting settlements in the area. However, he predicted that one of his grandsons would one day build his capital and seat of government there [21].

Hence, it was his grandson, Menilek II king of Shoa (1865-1889), and Emperor of Ethiopia (1889-1913) who was successive in exterminating the vast Oromo population from the Finfinne area and established his capital and seat of government there, where he is also said to have found some old ruins of the days of his grandfather, King Sahle Sellassie [22]. Later on Menilek's wife, Taitu named the area Addis Ababa "New Flower." [23] The foundation of Addis Ababa, therefore, coincided also with the incorporation of the vast regions into the Ethiopian Empire.

After the Battle of Embabo/ Ababo Guduru, on June 6, 1882 and Menilek's victory over Taclahaimanot of Gojjam, he became economically as well as militarily superior to all the other Ethiopian princes. He also continued his expansion and conquest in various directions. It was essentially these conquests and the pacification of the whole Oromo area which enabled the site of Finfinne to emerge as a natural site of a capital. The conquest and annexation of the rich Arsi region in 1886 after the battle of Anole/Azule [24], and the conquest of Harar in 1887 after the battle of Tchelenqo also specially gave Menilek full control of the trade routes from the Gulf of Aden, thus paving the way for his economic and military supremacy [25]. From this period onwards the commercial importance of Harar for Shoa continued to grow fast and tended to favour the permanency of the new capital, Addis Ababa [26]. It is described by scholar as that: "...The victory of Tchelenqo and occupation of Harar were the major steps in the establishment of modern Ethiopia" [27].

It is said that even before settling at Finfinne, both Emperor Menilek and Empress Taitu together with their *Masafint* and *Makuanit* used to visit and take bath on every Friday at the center of Finfinne valley hot water spring of *Filwuha* [28]. There, one day, Taitu looked at the beautiful surroundings of the *Filwuha* area and was greatly impressed by the fertility and healthy climate of the Finfine valley. Hence, she asked Menilek II for permission to build a house on the site. And he is said to have authorized her to build the house at the very spot his grandfather, king

Sahle Sellassie is said to have once attempted to camp but failed to do so. This is believed to have taken place sometimes in the late 1886 after which the palace of Entoto as the sole and permanent capital of the kingdom began to change down the hill towards Finfinne area [29].

Other important factors also made the position of Entoto increasingly unattractive. Climate wise, the area is very cold for much of the year, and peoples suffered from the strong wind which swept away their humble dwellings. With the gradual increase in the size of the settlements, the problem of fire-wood, water supply, and other provisions also became serious problem. In addition, the steep rise to the top of Entoto also made communication very difficult and unpopular among Menilek's *Masafint* and *Makuanit*. In contrast to this, the much warmer and sheltered area of Finfinne valley together with its more abundant supply of firewood, fresh water as well as the hot water-spring of *Filwuha* and conducive climate attracted the attention of the Empress, Emperor and their officials or *Masafint* and *Makuanit* [30]. Although Finfinne, the later Addis Ababa itself is located on the highland as its predecessors, it is much warmer and more attractive than them [31].

Until the foundation of Addis Ababa and the construction of the *Ghibbi* (palace) there, the area was traditionally and historically called "the land of the Gulelle Oromo," [32], after the Oromo clan who inhabited much of this region. The Gulelle Oromo called it Finfinne which is often said to be connected to the name of the main river flowing through the area, while the latter settlers; the Amhara soon started calling it *Filwuha*, often the hot water-spring located in the center of the Finfinne valley [33].

According to oral tradition, the area of what is today Addis Ababa was originally inhabited by various Oromo clans whose distribution is said to have been as follows: The Gulelle to the west and centre; the Galan to the east and southeast including the present day Bole area; Abbichu of Abebie Tufa to the north and northeast; and Dulla Harre to the south including the area of what later became *Meshualekiya*, the Tabanja Yazh *Safar* or riflemen's quarter, the later center of military, the Fourth Infantry Division(*Aratagna Kiflator*) camp. Dulla Harre is said to have been a contemporary to the extermination of the Oromo from the Finfinne area and the foundation of Addis Ababa a hundred years ago. It was a remarkable that one of my oral informants was

his grandson, Alamu Yai (the grandson of Dulla Hare/Alamu Yai Dula Harre). He was still occupied part of the small plot of land south of the St.Chargos church during this study which his grandfather, Dula had tried but failed to save from Menilek's occupation.

The traditions report that all of the names given above were those of the Oromo leaders and clans among whom the Gulelle clan was the dominant, strongest and most conspicuous one [34]. Alamu Yai, the grandson of Dulla Harre was not contented to give detailed information about the Oromo clans' eviction from the area for unknown reasons. Literature also gives some traditions of these Oromo clans conflict perhaps which must have been politically calculated by Menilek and his *Masafints*, *Makuanints* and his followers in the area between the Gulelle and other Oromo clans in which the Gulelle were able to achieve the upper hand [35]. It is also described as the conflict existed between Tufa Muna (one of the Oromo clan leaders of Abbichu clan, the north and north-east of Finfinne, the father of Abebie Tufa Muna), and the other Gulelle Oromo clans. As a result of Menilek's political calculation, Tufa Muna is said to have refused to join the other Oromo clans' confederation, so that the war broke-out and Tufa Muna died in the war [36]. One of my informants' Alamu Yai also expresses these Oromo conflicts which were politically calculated by Menilek and his followers/settlers in Finfinne, the present day of Addis Ababa. However, he feared and was reserved to give the final and exact situation created in Finfinne area. The Gulelle Oromo are believed to have at first come from the Salale under their leader called Gulelle and spread widely throughout the region which they eventually came to dominate the area [37]. The Salale Oromo are part of the group of Oromo clans called Tulama whose land extended east wards from that of the Macha across the Shoa highlands [38].

The Outcome of Menilek's conquest of Finfinne and the surrounding Oromo areas was far reaching. It did not only lead to their incorporation but also brought about the radical transformation of socio-economic structure of the Oromo society as a result of their interaction with the newly settled Amhara and their feudal institutions. For the Oromo population in the Finfinne area it also meant that the gradual expulsion of many of their clans in the direction of Arsi and other regions was especially after the campaigns and conquest of Arsi and Harar [39].

Between 1881 and 1886 Menilek conducted several successful campaigns against the rich and fertile Oromo land of Arsi. The Arsi Oromo put up firm resistance against an enemy equipped with modern European firearms. In one of the battles on 6 September, 1886 about 12,000 Oromo warriors are mentioned to have been killed [40]. According to literature, this number does not include the women, children and old men whom the Abyssinian soldiers burned alive or massacred in looting [41]. Menilek's conquest of Arsi is said to have led to the settlement there of many other Oromo clans from Shoa as well as other ethnic groups. Besides the Salale, Abichu, Galan and the Gulelle, the Amhara and the Gurage peoples were also made to settle there in the surrounding Finfinne and Arsi areas [42]. These peoples were enforced to move to Arsi and the surrounding area because of shortage of land in Shoa, and more precisely as a result of the Great Famine in the center and northern part of Ethiopia (1889-1892) [43]. These strong pressures as well as the fertile nature of the newly occupied areas of Arsi and further south necessitated the expulsion of Oromo people who had long been weakened by the rise and expansion of the kingdom of Shoa since the early 19th Century. Literature describes this situation as follows:

The Oromo in the Addis Ababa [Finfinne] area had been brutally crushed some ten years earlier; many had been transferred to Arssi and were in no real position to revolt for a second time [44].

There are traditions which indicate that the Gulelle and other Oromo clans who were thus expelled were given land in Arsi and the surrounding areas in compensation to what they lost in the Finfinne area. It seems that the Gulelle did not understand the implications of these land grants when they agreed to settle in the newly subjugated Arsi areas [45]. They especially did not understand that they were granted land only in return for the payment of tribute which they now had to pay to the Emperor [46]. It is believed that the Gulelle of the Finfinne area were predominantly settled in Munnessa worada in Arsi region [47]. According to these sources it was precisely in this area where the *gabbar* system was first practiced of all the southern regions of Ethiopia [48].

It is said that the Arsi campaign was the bloodiest of Menilek's campaigns. The then Arsi *Abba* Duula, war leader, Roba, after a bitter

battle using traditional war weapons against the modern European firearms and expertise finally submitted. However, he expressed his faith in the future independence of Oromia and Oromo land in the following words. "The hour has not come, but it will come, perhaps our children will see the departure of the oppressors," [49]. This description certainly stands against the former anticipation of King Sahle Sellassie of Shoa and the success of his anticipation by one of his grandsons, Menilek who completed the subjugation of the Oromo nation and Oromo land in the second half of the nineteenth century.

According to different sources, the settlement of the Gulelle among the Arsi also had other implications. Although they were of the same Oromo linguistic Origin, unfortunately conflicts over land arose between the native Arsi Oromo and the Gulelle settlers from Shoa. For the Arsi, the advent of the Gulelle and the other Salale Oromo and other Oromo groups could not be distinguished from Menilek's military conquests [50]. Although there was very little difference between the Shoa and Arsi Oromo, especially religion wise, since the former had a longer interaction and intermarriages with the Shoa Amhara and so that the Arsi considered them as an integral part of Menilek's army forces [51].

While the original inhabitants of the Finfinne (Addis Ababa) area were thus pushed out, immediately the followers of Menilek and their retainers moved in and divided the land in Finfinne among them and built up their own residences. Menilek's generals and other officials occupied important quarters which were later to bear their names such as *Ras Abata Safar* where the police signal in Higher 16 was later located and *RasTessama Safar* where we have the Black Lion Hospital today. Other quarters were given either the names of the original inhabitants such as Gulelle, or called after the ethnic origin of the new settlers such as "Ghimira" *Safar* which apparently belongs to *Lij* Iyyasu's reign. In some cases the names given would indicate the social and military role of the people living in the quarters, like the riflemen' or Tabanja Yazh *Safar* which is the later Fourth Infantry Division/*Aratagna Kiflator* [52].

The growth and developments of Addis Ababa and Menilek's capital were further enhanced by his eventual accession to imperial power; only two years after Empress Taitu had christened Finfinne as "Addis Ababa", "New Flower". With this new situation Addis Ababa became not only

the capital of the kingdom of Shoa but also of the Ethiopian Empire [53]. Menileks' coronation at Entoto in Nov. 1889, not only marked the gradual withdrawal of the court downward towards Finfinne but also the concentration in the new capital of highly diverse ethnic and linguistic groups from all over the Empire [54].

It was thus not only these old Shoa general warlords who came to set up their new quarters in the city. But some of his dynastical rivals and their descendents were also came with their huge followers and given their own specific quarters [55]. Many others flocked to Addis Ababa either in the form of captives or in need of employment and they settled around the *Ghibbi*, (palace) some of them becoming palace servants [56]. These people set up their own residences on the Oromo land giving their own names and to their neighborhoods [57].

The date of the foundation of Addis Ababa as the sole and permanent capital has become a controversial issue among various historians and writers [58]. However, it seems to have adopted the year 1887 [59] and some of them the year 1886 [60], while others preferred the year 1891 [61]. Some of the arguments are said to be based on Menelik's diplomatic letters in the years between 1888 and 1890. These letters were written by Menilek to the Italian Monarch king Umberto and they bore the addresses of the two capitals, Entoto and Addis Ababa. According to this source there were no letters sent from Entoto after 1890, although there is a reference to one more letter from Entoto dated Feb.6, 1891 [62]. Some scholars summarize the problem as follows: "It may reasonably be argued that the capital was traditionally where the Emperor resided, and this was by no means in one place" [63]. It seems to me that the argument here is quite tenable; and that Addis Ababa could be considered as the permanent seat of the Emperor's powers only after 1891. According to some writers, who had apparently collected oral tradition about this matter in their days, the Emperor had not yet started building his earliest stone houses in the city until 1891. And it is further stated that it was only after that year that the city land was distributed among the Emperor's followers [64].

Having authorized Taitu to build a house near the hot water spring probably in the late 1886, the Emperor himself started constructing his own palace on the prominent hill overlooking the Finfinne valley just to the north of it. Following

that he soon began a long process of assigning plots of land to his leading generals a process which is said to have been started in 1887 [65]. Among the personalities who thus received land were the leading figures like *Afanigus* Nassibu who was later Menilek's minister of Justice. He was one of the twelve ministers appointed in 1907, thus being the first minister of Justice in Ethiopia. During the expulsion of the Oromo from Finfinnee area and the foundation of Addis Ababa he was allotted plots of land by the Emperor to the southeast of what is today the English School (higher 13, Qebele 10). Since then the area is called *Afanigus* Nassibu *Safar* [66]. Getahun was the great grandson of *Afanigus* Nassibu/Nassibu *Abba* Dama, the name of his horse, who is said to have been a well-known person in *Shango* (traditional jurisdiction), especially in the case of his argumentation. *Ras* Darge, the highly influential uncle of Emperor Menilek, originally camped on the bank of the Qabbena River where he later founded the Ourael church [67]. *Ras* Darge *Safar* which was later called Empress Zewditu *Safar* is located in the South of Ourael church. The residence of the *Ras* was later replaced by that of the Empress on the right side of the road to Bole where now Ourael Junior Secondary School is constructed. Emperor Haile Sellassie I is said to have wanted to dedicate this area to the memory of Empress Zewditu. While still he was governor of Salale *Ras* Darge served as Menilek's general in the 1886 conquest of Arsi of which he acted as administrator for some time [68]. It is apparent that his family continued to reside in the lower Qabbena River the extensive area to the northeast of the city which was to be called *Ras Kassa Safar* (later Higher 12, Qebele 22). Here his family continued to reside and founded the three churches of St. Mary church (in a building of Kassa Hailu's old residence); Iyyesus church was founded in 1927 E.C. [69], just before the Italian invasion, and St. Michael, in another of *Ras Kassa's* residential houses.

It is interesting to note here that the church of St. Michael is popularly called *Chiqunu* Michael or "the poor, oppressed" Michael in comparison to the much older and more prosperous other church of St. Michael, in the Shola area on the main Dessie road. *Ras Kassa's* Michael, which started as a private chapple of the *Ras* and became a full-fledged church only after his death, is not at all neither well known, nor well endowed. During the annual *Timket* celebrations at Janmeida, the traditional rivalries of the various parishes of the city are often exhibited in

their crudest forms. On these occasions, *Ras kassa's* Michael has very little popular following and rather insignificant offerings from the public. Thus, it has come to be called *chiqunu*, "the poor, oppressed" Michael [70]. In the later Darg regime revolutionary parlance, the term, *chiqunu* has important political implications. With the use of this term, the city populace seems to be sarcastic about the evident reversal of roles between *Ras Kassa's* church founded by one of the most powerful feudal lords' in recent history and the famous old church in Shola area of Addis Ababa with a much wider following of the broad masses.

Immediately to the east of *Ras Kassa's Safar* the land was allotted to the equally prominent families of *Ras Seyoum Mangesha*, the grandson of Emperor Yohannes IV (1871-89) [71]. The other leading Tigrean official, *Dajazmatch* Gabre-Sellassie Baryagabir [72] and *Afanigus* Tilahun who was the founder of the nearby church of Abbo [73]. This area is generally known as *Ras Seyoum Safar* and *Afanigus Tilahun Safar* and has the nearby French Legation (now French Embassy) to its immediate west.

Just across the Qabbena river, further to the west, come one after the other, the land allotted to the famous Wollo chief *Ras Michael*, and that of *Ras Mokonnen* of Harar. Michael's old quarter, earlier called *Ras Michael Safar* was later inherited by his son, *Lij Iyyasu* [74], then by *Waizero Sihen* of Wollo and finally by his great-grandson, the former Crown Prince *Asfaw Wossen Haile Sellassie*. The area is later on occupied by the Yekkatit 66 Political School with the Egyptian Embassy on one side and the Karl Marx Park on the other. This area is currently houses the Addis Ababa University, Faculty of Business Management and Economics. *Ras Mokonnen's* holding, called then *Ras Makonnen Safar* [75] were even more extensive with their western limits bordering on the Arada (piazza) area located just across the bridge known after him as *Ras Mokonnen Bridge*. Here were settled the followers and relatives of *Ras Mokonnen* from Harar with the main campus of his residence being later inherited by his son, *Ras Tafari* (later Haile-Sellassie I). This site now houses the main Sidist Kilo campus of Addis Ababa University; the old Empress Manan (now Yekkatit Comprehensive High School); and the former Haile Sellassie I (now Yekkatit 12) Hospital.

There are many other examples of the early *Safars* that emerged in Addis Ababa following

the eviction of the Oromo people from Finfinne area, of which it suffices to mention only the most prominent ones. *Ras Abata* [76], one of the leading generals of Menilek for instance, had his *Safar* just to the east of the lower Qabbena south of the British Legation (now British Embassy) and the Dessie main road. The area is now occupied by the East Comprehensive High School and the headquarters of the Signal police.

On the road from Addis Ababa westwards to Ambo, where we now have the police club, Menilek granted an extensive piece of land to *Naggadras Bahabte* who was a leading merchant and chief of the merchants at the time [77]. *Lagassa Yigazu* was the grandson of *Nagadrass Bahabte*. The whole area is said to have been the merchants' quarter with many *naggade* residing there. It is probably why the earliest Muslim cemetery of Addis Ababa was located nearby with most of the *naggade* at the time being Muslims. The area around Bahabte's main residence (now housing the exhibition Hall of the Ministry of State and Public Security) was called Bahabte *Safar*. Later, his son, *Dajazmatch Yigazu* succeeded him and the *Safar* later came to be known as after him. Yigazu, in his turn, gave way to his son, Colonel Tamrat, who was one of the leading figures in Haile-Sillassie's government.

In the present Markato area, the famous war general of Menilek, *Fitawrari Habta-Giorgis Dinagde*, popularly called *Fitawrari Qusi* [78], had his quarters known after him as Habte-Giorgis *Safar*. This *Safar* started from just across the bridge, also known as Habte-Giorgis Bridge. His own residence occupied the whole site on which now stands the St Raguel church and the chief Anwar Mosque with much of the land eastwards which extends to the nearby river and south wards in the direction of the Tekle-Haymanot church, all belonging to the old war general, Habte Giorgis *Safar*.

Immediately to the south of *Ras Habte-Giorgis Safar*, starting from where we now have the Tekle-Haymanot church and extending as far down as the present location of the Ministry of culture, the land was allotted to *Ras Tessama Abba Qemaw*, another famous general of Menelik's and later Regent king in the early days of *Lij Iyyasus's* short reign [79]. His residence was located at the prominent hill just behind the present day offices of the Ministry of Interior and Justice. The broad streets between Sanga Tara *Safar* where the Wabi Shebelle Hotel is located and the Tekle-Haymanot church square runs

through the very heart of this called *Ras Tessema Abba Qemmwaw Safar* and it is also called *Tessema Abba Qemmwaw Avenue*.

On the other side of the river, east of what has been known as Churchill Avenue and just behind the French Lycee, there was still an old building which was the residence of *Ras Nadew* and the area around which was called after him *Ras Nadew Safar*. *Ras Nadew* was Menilek's Minister of the palace [80] and his residence is characteristically separated from the Emperor's *Ghibbi* (Palace) only by the quarters specially reserved to the servants and slave laborers' of the palace. Less than 500 meters below the *Ras's* mansion, on the western bank of the river separating the *Safar* from the *Ghibbi* was the old Qera (abattoir) which served mainly the vast needs of the palace in these matters; and from the balcony of his three storied mansion, the minister of palace had a marvelous view of the *Sira-Bet Safar* (the servant or slave quarters) spread over the western slope of the hill on the pinnacle of which Menilek had built his palace. It is interesting to note that the most direct gate of the palace enclosure leading to the residence of the minister of palace was officially called the "Gate of Discrete Exit" (*Yesirqosh Bar*).

To the south of *Ras Tessemma Abba Qemmwaw Safar*, another well-known official of Menilek, *Ligaba Wedajo Wube* [81], had his quarter near the *Wabi Shebelle Hotel*, exactly in front of the current Junior College of Commerce, where his old residence was still stood during this study and houses the office of *Kafitegna* 3. On the other side of the road, *Ligaba* (later *Dejazmatch*) *Bayana Abba Sabsib*, [82] had been allotted vast land and the nearby street passing through it was called *Bayana Abba Sabsib Street*.

To the east of *Bayana Abba Sabsib's* quarters, the present site of *Revolution/Masqal Square* was a vast marshy plain. The elevated land overlooking it from the south was given to *Dajazmatch Wolde-Gabriel*, [83] another favorite of Menelik, whose son *Ras Birru* later succeeded him and had the area called after him *Ras Birru Safar* [84]. *Ras Birru's* multi-storeyed residence is still a beautiful land mark overlooking the *Masqal/Revolution square* on one side and overshadowed by the new high rise building of the *Ethiopian Trade Union Association* on the other. The area adjacent to and south of *Ras Birru's* residence was assigned to the *Elfign Zabagna* (Palace Guards) [85], one of whose

early commanders was *Fitawrari G/Mariam* succeeded later in this post by *Fitawrari Dachassa* [86].

The *Tabanja Yazh Safar* or *Forth Infantry Division/Aratagna Kiflator* is located immediately to the west of *Elfign Zabagna Safar* and owes its origins to similar military services which its residents provided to the Emperor. The Commander of the *Tabanja Yazh* (Menilek's riflemen or gun holders) was *Fitawrari Sabarew*, [87] whose residence located to the west of *Bishoftu/Debre Zeit road*, was still inhabited by some of his descendants and relatives. Another major leading figure in this *Safar* was *Liqamakwas* (later *Afanigus*) *Katama* [88]. *Asfaw Fiqre Sellassie* was the grandson of *Afanigus* *Katama* also had his residence there, in what were later the *Fourth Infantry Division /Aratagna Kifla-Tor/headquarter*, and later, he was to dominate the history of the *Safar*.

According to one of the interesting stories told by one of my oral informants, *Afanigus* *Katama* was born in *Shoa* region of *Manz* and *Gishe*. His elder brother *Azzaz Awgichew* was the governor of *Minjar* and one of the most loyal servants of Emperor Menilek advised *Katama* at his early childhood to be loyal and achieve a position in the Emperor's court. *Katama* began to act accordingly and started expressing his loyalty usually early in the morning by going to the Emperor's *Chibbi*. It is interesting that nobody could arrive at the *Ghibbi* always in the morning before *Katama* did. One day *Katama* arrived at the *Ghibbi* as usual, however, the season was *Kremt* (summer) and he felt cold and then immediately went to sit by fire. The Emperor wanted to send someone somewhere and unfortunately there was nobody at all. A person who was told to search for a messenger replied to Emperor Menilek that he could not find anybody. The Emperor again asked "What about *Katama*?" Because he knows that *Katama* always presents himself at the *Ghibbi* to express his loyalty [89]. Generally this loyalty was the process in which different *Makuanints* and *Masafints* like *Afanigus* *Katama* and others expelled the *Oromo* from their land in *Finfinne* area. It was also one of the ways in which they could get the political power in the old feudal ruling system of Menilek through their loyalty, and partitioned the land of the *Oromo* in the *Finfinne* area and the surrounding among themselves to establish their own residential quarters or *Safars*.

Table 1. Oral informants

Name	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Residential information	Remarks
Addmasu Taka (Mamhire)	56	May, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	He lived in the <i>Safar</i> since 1939 E.C	He was the priest of St. Qirqos church. He gives basic information about the church starting from its early foundation
Akalu Bayou (Ato)	88	Nov. 1985	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	He is in Addis Ababa since 1918E.C., but in Tabanja Yazh Since 1941	His father was a loyal servant of Menilek in Ankober. He has marriage relation with the Tabanja Yazhoch. He is also a known narrator in the <i>Safar</i> concerning the foundation of Addis Ababa and Menilek's Tabanja Yazh.
Alamirew Edaye Ato	72	Oct. 1986	<i>Ras Kassa Safar</i>	He was in the resident of <i>Ras Kassa Safar</i> Since 1919 E.C	He claims to have come from Salale. He served the <i>Ras</i> as a secretary. Still he serves in the three churches of the <i>Ras Safar</i> .
Alamu W/Mariam (Ato)	52	Oct. 1986	Baqlo-Bet <i>Safar</i>	He resided in Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> since 1941	He tells that he was born near St. Qirqos church /Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> /
Alamu Yai (Ato)	64	April, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	He resided in Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> for 64years	He is the grandson of Dulla Harre who was the leader of Oromo clan in that area.
Asfaw Fiqre-Sellase (Ato)	70	May, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	He left Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> for two years and, now lived in Higher 17.	He is the grandson of <i>Afanigus</i> Katama and the son of <i>Bajerond</i> Fiqre-Sellassie. He gives invaluable information about his grandfather.
Asfaw Mulunhe (Ato)	72	March, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 72 years	He is the descendant of Arada Zabagna. He gives detailed information concerning the city and Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> in particular.
Asfaw Mashasha (Ato)	64	March, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1964E.C.	He is the son of <i>Fitawrari</i> Mashasha Jamanhe (one of the original Tabanja Yazhoch)
Ayalew Wolde (Ato)	64	Oct., 1985	Elfign Zabana <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He was an employee of sugar factory but he was retired and pensioned since 1978E.C.
Ayalkibet Asrat	62	Oct., 1985	Elfign Zabana <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He was member of an Imperial body guard, and still he is a driver (in Ministry of Defense)
Ayana Golba (Ato)	76	Oct., 1985	Arada Giorgis	His was in Arada Zabana <i>Safar</i> Since 1920'sE.C.	He was born in Wollega Province especially Horo Guduru Awraja. He was also honey trader before and after Italian occupation, but now retired.

Name	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Residential information	Remarks
Charmo Wolda-Samayot (Corporal)	82	Oct. 1986	Ras Abata <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He claims his origin to have been Walayita. He was a soldier (now retired and pensioner)
Gabramariam Dhera (Ato)	75	Feb., 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1920E.C.	He is a "Gimhira" origin, and said to have been given to <i>Afanigus</i> Katama by <i>Lij Iyyasu</i> during his tour to the area. He gives good information about the <i>Afanigus</i> and his family.
Gabrayas Balata (Brigader General)	70	Oct., 1985	Baqlo Bet <i>Safar</i>	Since 1960E.C.	He is well oriented about <i>Safars</i> and their foundation.
Getahun Asfaw (Colonel)	62	Sep. , 1985	<i>Afanigus</i> Nassibu <i>Safar</i>	For 62 years	He is a great-grandson of <i>Afanigus</i> Nassibu (Getahun Asfaw Damisew Nassibu)
Girma Ayele (Sergent major)	52	March, 1986	Ministry of Defense	For the last 52 years	He was serving in Fourth Infantry Division but now in Ministry of Defense.
Hailamasqal Banti (Colonel)	60	Feb., 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1975E.C. he resided in Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	He was born in Gulelle <i>Safar</i> (now higher 8). He is pensioner since 1975 E.C. He serves in higher 21, Qebele 25 as a cashier.
Halamasqal Gualesiya (Ato)	74	Oct. , 1985	Baqlo-set <i>Safar</i>	Since 1960E.C.	He knows different foreign languages. He knows very well about the traditional military system of Ethiopia.
Kassa Tnqish (Ato)	66	Feb. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He is one of the descendants of Tabanja Yazhoch who were granted land in Kullo-Konta. He was born in Kullo, but began to reside in Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i> after the Italian evacuation.
Lagassa Yigazu (Ato)	66	Oct. 1986	Nagadrass Bahabte <i>Safar</i>	For 66 years	He is the grandson of <i>Nagadrass</i> Bahabte and the son of <i>Dajazmatch</i> Yigazu
Madimim Ayichilum (Ato)	72	March, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 72 years	He is the descendant of Arada Zabagna (City police/. He served in Ministry of Justice but now pensioner since 1975E.C.
Marid Agonafir (Ato)	62	Feb. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 62 years	He is the grandson of <i>Fitawrari</i> Sebarew (the commander of Tabanja Yazh)
Mikra Wolda-Iyasus (Ato)	63	Feb. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 63 years	He is the Son of Wolda-Iyasus Amha (<i>Mamhire</i>). <i>Mamhire</i> Wolda-Iyasus or <i>Qes</i> Wolda-Iyasus was the father-Confessor of <i>Afanigus</i> Katama and the spiritual administrator of St. Qirqos Church.

Name	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Residential information	Remarks
Mohammad Humar (Sheik)	75	Dec., 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1951E.C.	He is a Somali Origin. He was the Railway technician. He was well informed about the first shop owner in the <i>Safar</i> "Gudar" by Ethiopians and "Guthal" by the Somali people of the area.
Mulugeta Dilinasaw (Ato)	68	Feb., 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For the last 68 years	He is one of the sons of loyal servant of the <i>Afanigus</i> Katama. He says that his family residence was in the compound of the <i>Afanigus</i> up to 1937E.C. He served in the ministry of pen
Nigussie Yadeta (Ato)	67	Oct. , 1986	Markato <i>Safar</i>	His residence was in Arada <i>Zabagna Safar</i>	He claims to have come from Bale at his early childhood. He tells that he was the Italians cook during their occupation of Ethiopia. He is one of the well-known oral historians in the <i>Safar</i> .
Sahle Akala-Sold (Ato)	66	Nov. , 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 66 years	He is the grandson of <i>Fitawrari</i> Damen Astatique on his mother side, and grandson of <i>Balambaras</i> Wolda-Amanuel on his paternal side (both of them <i>Tabanja Yazh</i>)
Same Kabbada (Alaqa)	56	Nov. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 56 years	He is the grandson of Qes Wolda-Iyasus and the son of Qes Kabbada. Now he is blind since 1979.E.C.
Seyoum Ayale (Captain)	70	Oct. , 1986	Ligaba Wadajo <i>Safar</i>	Since 1917E.C.	He is the son of <i>Balambaras Ayale</i> Gabra-Masqal one of the Ethiopian patriots of the Battles of Adwa and Maitchew. He served in the Imperial body-guard.
Taye Ababa (Mamher)	53	Oct. , 1986	Ras Darge <i>Safar</i>	He was born at Entoto (now in higher 11)	He is the teacher of Ourael Junior Secondary School. He gives full information about the history of <i>Ras Darge Safar</i> and the school itself.
Wold-Giorgis Wolda-Haragawi (Ato)	64	Oct. , 1985	Baqlo Bet <i>Safar</i>	Since 1948E.C.	He was a mason and later became a carpenter. But now retired.
Wolda-Mariam Fakyibalu(Ato)	84	Oct. , 1985	Elfign Zabana <i>Safar</i>	Since 1945 E.C	He was military but now pensioner.
Wolda-Sellassie Baraka (General)	68	Oct. , 1985	Elfign Zabana <i>Safar</i>	Since 1958E.C.	He is well oriented about Menilek's land granting system as well as the <i>Tabanja Yazh</i> .

Name	Age	Date of interview	Place of interview	Residential information	Remarks
Wolde Shibashi (Ato)	78	Oct. , 1985	Baqlo Bet <i>Safar</i>	For 50 years	He was an Imperial body-guard. He gives invaluable information about the history of <i>Ras Birru</i> and his <i>Safar</i> .
Wondimu Masrasha (Mamhir)	40	May , 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 40 years	He is the teacher of Falaga Yordanos public school in the western quarter of Tabanja Yazh.
Wondimu Wolde (Sergeant)	72	Oct. , 1985	Baqlo Bet <i>Safar</i>	Since 1946E.C.	He was a military but now retired and pensioner. He served in the <i>Gibbi</i> minister as a guard.
Worku Bayana (Mamhir)	34	May , 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	For 34 years	He is a teacher of Falaga Yordanos school. He knows the history of the school very well.
Worku Estifanos (Ato)	62	March, 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1948E.C.	He is an employee of the Railway station, at first as a daily laborer but now a technician.
Worku Farisa (Corporal)	77	Oct. , 1985	<i>Ras Darge Safar</i>	Since 1935E.C.	He was a military but now pensioner. He is well informed about the history of <i>Ras Darge</i> and the <i>Safar</i> called by his name
Yimar Lamma (Ato)	78	Nov. , 1986	Ras Seyoum Mangasha <i>Safar</i>	Since 1914 E.C. he was living in that <i>Safar</i>	He was born in Wollo and claims to have been the loyal servant of Kabbada Mangasha who was the governor of Wollo before Marid Asfaw Wossen
Yitraf Hailemariam (Ato)	55	Oct. , 1986	Elfign Zabana <i>Safar</i>	For 35 years	He served in the <i>Ghibbi</i> minister finance department. He was born in <i>Afanigus</i> Nassibu <i>Safar</i> .
Zanaba Wube (Ato)	63	Feb. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He was one of the descendants of <i>Tabanja Yazh</i> in Kullo-Konta. He was born there and began to reside in <i>Tabanja Yazh Safar</i> after 1941. Now he is the representative of patriots of Kulo Konta <i>Awraja</i> .
Zewde Wolda-Iyasus (Ato)	58	Feb. 1986	Tabanja Yazh <i>Safar</i>	Since 1941E.C.	He is another descendant of <i>Tabanja Yazh</i> in Kulo who was born there and started to reside in the <i>Safar</i> after 1941E.C.

4. CONCLUSION

Addis Ababa was established when Menilek moved his *Gibbi* from *Entoto* to the hill around the hot water springs in Finfine. Thus, Menelik's occupation of Finfine was not an unexpected decision rather it was a long time dream of his predecessors to subjugate Finfinne area and the surrounding Shoa Oromo whose center was Finfine. The history of Finfine (Addis Ababa) indicates the manner the Oromo people were subjugated, deprived off their land and possessions, reduced to *gabbar* and dependence, and kept under inhuman suppression.

Prior to subjugation of the Oromo nation and Oromia land by the domestic Amhara feudal colonizers, the present day Addis Ababa had possessed an Oromo name of Finfine. These colonizers tried to destroy some of the Oromo names and their history; however, the Oromo community retained them till today. The name confirms the abundance of hot water springs ("Hora Finfinnee" in Afaan Oromo) at the center of the city where their cattle flourished. This area was exclusively inhabited by different Oromo clans like *Ganda* Gullele, Eekka, Galan, Abbichu which was divided into different *Ganda* (*Safars*): Each of these *Ganda* was being administered by their own local clan chiefs. According to oral tradition some of these local chiefs were like Abebie Tufa Muna, Dula Harre, Jimaa Jatani, Guto Wasarbi, Jima Tikse, Ware Golole, Tufa Araddo and Mojo Boxora [90].

Ecologically and agriculturally, Oromia is the richest region in the Horn of Africa. Livestock products, coffee, oil seeds, spices, mineral resources and wildlife are all diverse and abundant. In spite of all these, a century of domination by the Ethiopia imperial regime, one of the backward nations itself, the Oromo nation has suffered of this backwardness. Ignorance and famine have been together with brutal oppression, exploitation and above all extermination of the Oromo resulted in their eviction from their land and property, because Finfinne area has a very fertile land and favorable temperature for residence of these colonizers.

According to the oral tradition; the removal of the Oromo was started first from Finfinne during the territorial expansion, and then annexation and conquest of Menilek and his *Masafint* and *Mekuanints* beginning from the late nineteenth century. After the exclusion of the Oromo from

the Finfinne area, the Emperor, Empress and their *Mekuanint* and *Mesafint* began to divide the land of Oromo among themselves and constructed their own residences and formed their own quarters (*Safars*) which later owe their names. As it is indicated by different scholars, the fate of these *Safars* was finally determined by the prominent leading officials of Menilek. The naming of these *Safars* were also based either on the political occupations of the officials or social activities and ethnic background of the resident. Currently all these became the political issues for Finfinne which has to be given the best solution by scholars/historians through tracing back the factual historical sources.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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