



Military Expedition of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I in Wollo, Northeastern Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to show the routes, causes, responses and opposition of the Muslims of Wollo against the military expeditions of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I (r.1779-1800). The Emperor was one of the princes of Zemene Mesafint (1769-1855) Emperors, nicknamed as Fişsame Mengist, 'End of the monarchy.' The chronicle was written in Ge'ez during his reign by chronicler, Aleqa Gebru, who was very close to the king. Because of the state influences, the Muslim chiefs of Wollo, Yeju, Wuchale and Worre-Himeno were said to have embraced Islam at the end of the 18th century and since then more Oromo had been converted to it as a measure. This was so due to the fact that the affliction to conquer the region enlarged at the conclusion of the 18th century, Wollo was Islamized. This was largely factual of the Mommedoch/ Imams, the most influential rulers of Wollo and hereditary governors of Worre Himeno. This phenomenon paved the way for the germinations of frustration among the already deep rooted existence of the Christian populations. Therefore, this strong Islamic penetration aggravated the Christian King of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I for military expeditions. Once the final decision had been taken, the Emperor made the military expedition. The responses of the Muslims to the military expedition were threefold.

Key Words: Ethiopic (Ge'ez) language; Royal Chronicle; Routes, military expeditions.

INTRODUCTION

The beginning of a written language since ancient times has provided opportunities for Ethiopia's historical documentations. The inscriptions of Sabeans, Greeks and Geez languages are on the forefront from among the cultural accomplishments of the Axumite civilizations. These inscriptions depict the military expeditions of the various succeeding and unconquered Axumite Emperors with their victories (Panhkrust 1967, vii-viii.). The reign of Emperor Ezana in the fourth century was an attestation for the gradual but, steady growth of this documentation. Ezana's expeditions to smash the rebellions which were broke out to the south and southwest directions of the Empire, is fore example well documented (Taddesse 1972, 18). This tendency of depiction for the successes of the King has positive resemblance with the emergence of the royal chronicles many centuries later. The coming to power of

Emperor Yikuno Amlak (r.1270-1285) as a restorer of the Solomonic dynasty, opened a new era for the production and documentations of historical deeds in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church and the state which were two faces of the same coin and had the lion's share for the documentations of events in the past. During long historical process, texts were composed in Ge'ez language. When we say Geez historiographical texts it mainly concerned with hagiographies and chronicles. Hagiographies were translated in mass from the Coptic and Syria Christian Arabic texts since the 14th century (Panhkrust 1967, xi.). The Kibre Negest (Phillipson 2012, 66). (The glory of Kings) is one of the best examples from among the translated texts. However, the embryonic spirit for the production of chronicles was drawn from traditions of the

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ancient Axumite list of kings written on hard surfaces like stones, woods or metals. This in turn had its historical linkages with the Greek writing traditions, due to the fact that the Axumite ruler was knowledgeable with Greek language, King Zoscales (Bausi 2006).

The first known with full-fledged evidences on the production of chronicles as historical genres of Ethiopian kings and the highest dignitaries were started in the fourteenth century (Solomon 2016, 5; Sergew 1972, 2; McCann 1979, 387; Hussein 1983,75.). Chronicles are one of the sources for Ethiopian history. The tradition has continued to survive from the fourteenth to the twentieth centuries with significant changes in the languages used and contents of the accounts in general (Pankhurst 1967, xiii-xiv); Chernestov 1991, 87-88). Up to the reign of Emperor Tewodros (r.1855-1868), when Amharic was used, chronicles (both historical and ecclesiastical records) were kept in Ge'ez. On the basis of the mainstreamed knowledge on the production and distribution of royal chronicles in Ethiopia, the period of Tekle Giyorgis I, or the era of princes had ushered a new chapter in Ethiopian history (Abbink 2007, 964; Chernestov 2007, 43; Kropp 1994, 94; Guidi,251.).

The Zemene mesafint is one of the eventful periods in Ethiopia, where various political and religious trajectories shaped the local and the regional tendencies. Some strong local rulers dominated the politics that also eroded the status of court chronicles (Sergew 1972, 3). This clearly demonstrated how the Gondarine Christian kings virtually lost their traditional power and authority vis-a-vis the regional lords (Chernetsov 1994,97&98). A good example of this was the short chronicle of *Ras* Mika'el Sihul of Tigray that disrupted the long maintained old tradition of the composition of royal chronicles (Chernetsov 1991, 94; Kropp 1986,362). Chernestov argued that, the *Ras* has introduced a princely historiography in Ethiopian history. In effect, his argument compares the old aged (four-hundred years) preserved tradition of the production of royal chronicles by *Tsehafe Tizazat* in retrospect. After the collapse of the period of the Era of Princes in 1855, royal chronicles come in to view from its disappearance when Tewodros II came to power (EAe, III, 2007, 43b).

Both the Wollo and Yeju Oromo chiefs were said to have embraced Islam at the dawn of the 18th century and since then more Oromo were converted into Orthodox Christianity because of the state influences (D'Abbadie 1868, 119; Trimmingham 1952, 193; Hussein 1985 122-87; Marcus 1994, 50; Hassen 1992, 77). One from among the Yeju dynasty chiefs, *Ras* Ali the Great, controlled state power in Begmeder in about 1784 by smashing the supporters of Emperor Tekle Giyorgis I and made the Emperor captive (Blundell 1922, 365, D. Crummey 1975, Chechiho and the Politics of..., pp.1-9.). *Ras* Ali then consolidated his

authority throughout Begmeder by assigning his brothers and loyalists to the highest ranks (Ibid.). The success of *Ras* Ali in the war with no doubt was with the wholehearted support of the Muslim chiefs of Wollo, Yeju, Wuchale and Worre-Himeno on one hand, and the general disorder of the Christian rulers of the Zemene Mäsafänt on the other. Thus, notable Muslim rulers had therefore, united the Muslim forces of the aforementioned localities against Bägmedär and declared themselves as Imams one after another (D'Abbadie, Douze ans, p.150, E. Ficquet, art. 'Mammadoch dynasty', EAe, V.III (2007)

The objectives of this paper is to identify place names of Wollo mentioned in the chronicle which helped the Emperor as a course to his military expedition from 1783-1784. The study is essential to recapture the legacy of Emperor Tekle Giyorgis, (1769-1855) Emperors, nicknamed as Fişşame Mengist, 'End of the monarchy.' It tries to assess the main motives of the King to his military expedition to the region of Wollo and Wuchale. Currently, Wuchale is located in Wollo, but the chronicler of the Emperor mentioned Wollo and Wuchale as separate administrative territories.

RESEARCH METHOD

Neo-Lachmannian Method

There is permanent method of textual criticism set out by a scholar as indisputably agreed (Tedros 2004, 9). Methods while we conduct textual criticism vary on the basis of the editors intended to obtain. Some researchers are pleased to renew a manuscript a little or just recreating it as reliable as possible (Bausi 2015, 323). Others made a sincere attempt to create a critical text edition as close as possible to the original manuscript. A critical edition is supposed any organized, systematic and objective study which intends to regain the initial variety of a text or a minimum of the shape nearest to the first. It simply means that the elimination of sources of corruption in manuscripts and a process of learning a way to retreat to a document to its original form. It is also the craftsmanship of reproducing ancient misplaced or lost manuscripts of the author (Greetham 1992; C. Bernard, 1991; Witkam 1988; Solomon Gebreyes 2016, 18; Bausi, 2006). This was happened due to the fact that not one in every of them has been maintained in its pure form. It cannot claim completeness or perfections and through the course of the centuries sometimes even from its initial stage, there has been lots of text alteration from one manuscript family to a different. It is the method mostly used nowadays, though with noticeable adjustment. It is also known as a method of identifying families or a method of common error i.e. the system of common faults (C. Bernard, 1991; Greg 1927; Haugen 2003; Salemans, 2000). The heart of the strategy of Lachmann is that we must know the connections of text versions first and then we begin to redress or emend copied parts in them. In other words, all the copies which contain

identical mistakes (common error) in the same places were copied from a single ancestor or manuscript holding those mistakes. A series of shared variation is a go back to the same ancestor (a downward hierarchical structure on which genealogy was based) in which this error appeared for the first time. Thus, in order to critically analyze the Ge'ez chronicles of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I this study heavily relies on the insights of the Neo-Lachmannian theory of archetypes. The area that this research is trying to explore is almost untouched or only a few related studies have been undertaken. However, the critical edition and translation based on different versions of the text was not done according to the Neo-Lachmannian methodology.

This research has used critical edition based on the Neo-Lachmannian method which helps to reconstruct the text close to the original text written by author of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I as a component of the Ethiopic chronicle tradition. The chronicles which are housed from various European libraries have been gathered with the help of scholars and through the involvement of close reading and identifying the selected texts. These Mss which are collected and used are *BnF Ethiopien* d' Abbadie 118, Orient 821, MS or 38 Ruppel, MS Paris, BNF Eth.143 and MS or 39 Ruppel. In the course of this study both primary and secondary sources have been consulted. The primary manuscript used is d'Abbadie 118 has described the manuscript. The height of the letters is 2.5 mm and every column of it holds 28 lines. It was written in the 18th century. The main reason for the selection and use of this manuscript is for its completeness, it is legible, and it has full pages and is well preserved than others. The secondary sources comprises various scholarly works of contemporary periods are also visited and used. With the involvement of this approach of critical editions that this paper has been done to examine the chronicle of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Causes for the Expedition

The main cause for Emperor Tekle Giyorgis's campaign was the revival, expansions and establishment of strong Muslim communities in the heart of his empire (Wollo). In addition to this, the relations between the Muslims and the Christians in the area was deteriorated from time to time. A case in point was the Wollo and Wuchale Oromo Muslims had set up harsher policies against their neighbor Christians by destroying Churches, imprisoned the followers, smashing down the *tabotat*. Thus, the Christians of Wollo and Wuchale were forced to embrace Islam, were made captives, enslaved or restricted their freedom by their neighbor Muslims. In order to substantiate the above historical fact, it is mandatory to look at the Geez text as stated; “**ወአመ፡ ጌተንሥአ፡ ንጉሥ፡ እምቊርቊር፡ ወኮኑ፡ ላሱቶች፡ ደጀነ፡ ወኃደረ፡ በጓደላሱ፡ ዘምድረ፡ ወሎ፡፡ ወአመ፡ ጌቦአ፡ መነሾ፡ ዘእምዓበይተ፡ ወሎ፡ በእደ፡ ደጅ፡ አዝማች፡ አድገህ፡**

ወሰገደ፡ ለንጉሥ፡ ቅድመ፡ ወምስሌሁ፡ መጽኡ፡ ሰብአ፡ እምሐራ፡ ዘተዳወው፡ ወዜነው፡ ለንጉሥ፡ እንዘ፡ ይብሉ፡ ውስተ፡ አፍላገ፡ ኃላ፡ ህየ፡ ነበርነ፡ ወበከይነ፡ ሶበ፡ ተዘከርናሃ፡ ለተደባበ፡ ማርያም፡ መቅደስነ፡ እለሂ፡ ዪውውነ፡ ከመ፡ ላህም፡ ይሠይጡነ፡ ወከመ፡ ፡በግዕ፡ ፡ይጠብሉነ፡ ፡፡ እምይእከሱ፡ ይትባረክ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ አምላክ፡ ጳኤል፡ ዘአንሥአ፡ ለነ፡ እምቤተ፡ ኢያሱ፡ ገብሩ፡ ቀርነ፡ መድኃኒትነ፡፡ (The Negus left Qurqur on the sixth, with troops from Lasta in the left flank, and tented at Gadelas in the region of Wollo. On the seventh, Menesho, one of the Wollo leaders, arrived and surrendered himself to Dejazmach Adigeh, accompanied by the people of Amhara who had been summoned and they spoke to the Negus, stating, “Among the Oromo Rivers where we resided, and we have grieved as we recalled the dome (building) of our blessed Mary, yet they took us prisoners, traded us as animals, and slaughtered us as sheep.” So today, worship the Almighty God of Israel, who brought forth from the house of Iyasu (Joshua) his subject the trumpet of redemption for us.”) (Text, p. 201).

First, Emperor Tekle Giyorgis I's campaign from 1783-84 and his subsequent coercive measures (Text, p. 200). **ወአመ፡ ጌወጅ፡ ነምመ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ለደጅ፡ አዝማች፡ አድገህ፡ መንገለ፡ ራስ፡ ኃይሉ፡ ወፊት፡ አውራሪ፡ ኢኮንያን፡ ወፊነም፡ ለአቤቶ፡ ገብረ፡ መድኃኒ፡ መንገለ፡ ወጎኒ፡ ምስለ፡ በጅሮንድ፡ ሕዝቅያስ፡ ወቀኝ፡ አዝማች፡ የማርያም፡ ባርያ፡ ወፊነም፡ ለኩሎ፡ ላዕካን፡ ዘመጽኡ፡ እምጎንደ፡ ዓዲ፡ ፈነው፡ ገበ፡ እመ፡ ንግሥት፡ ወአቡነ፡ የሳብ፡ ወእጩጌ፡ ተስፋ፡ ወዓቃቤ፡ ሰዓት፡ አቤሱሎም፡ ወራስ፡ አያዳር፡ ወኩሎ፡ ካህናት፡ ወሊቃነ፡ ካህናት፡ ጠማረ፡ መልአክት፡ ናሁ፡ ሶበ፡ ሰማዕነ፡ ተመዝብሮተ፡ አብያተ፡ ክርስቲያናት፡ ወተዳውዎተ፡ ምዕመናን፡ ወእምኩሉሱ፡ ዘየዓቢ፡ ተሰብሮተ፡ ታቦትነ፡ በማኅዜ፡ ወበመፍጽሕ፡ በእደ፡ አረማውያን፡ ቀናዕነ፡ ቅንዓተ፡ መንፈሳዊ፡፡ (On the twenty-fifth, the Nigus dispatched Dejazmach Adigeh to Ras Haylu and Fitawrari Ikonyan, and then dispatched Abeto Gebre Medehin to Wohni alongside Bejrond Hezeqeyas and Qegnazmach YeMaryam Barya, as well as all others dispatched from Gondär. He delivered a messenger around the Nigus and Abune Yosab and echege Tesfa, and ‘Aqabe Se’at Abeselom and Ras Ayadir, as well as every one of the priests and the head clergy he delivered a royal response “See, after we noticed of the devastation of the Churches and the enslavement of the believers as well as the entire outstanding disintegration or come apart of our Tabots in Mahtse and Mafasech by the actions of pagan people (refers to Muslims), I was shot with religious rage) towards the Muslims was partly motivated by this immediate factor. Second, the Emperor conducted his military expedition for the reaffirmations of his overlord shipment in the Muslim dominated areas of Wollo and Wuchale. In addition to the above mentioned factors, the Christians of Wollo and**

Wuchale had appealed the Emperor to take measures and convert the Muslims to Christianity who had allegedly mistreated them.

Courses of the Military Expedition

Once the final decision had been taken, the Emperor made every effort to select routes, conduct and ensure the eventual success of the expedition. Therefore, the march of the Emperor to Wollo and Wuchale was started from Gondar on December 7, 1775 E.C/ 1783 CE (text p.198 to 203) and arrived at Tseda where the Emperor halted for one day. The campaign was commanded by the Emperor himself. In the march the Emperor was accompanied by his notable Generals as well as higher dignitaries. The case in point was Aleqa Gebru, Balaten geta Goleja, the spokesperson Wase, the commander i.e. Wolde Dawit etc were some of them. On December 8, 1783 CE, the Emperor marched and stationed at Gorba. The next day Tekle Giorgis, with his followers moved his camp from Şada to Enfranz and stayed for one day. It was here that his notable men like judges (*Liq* Gebru, *Liq* Iyo'akes), Aleqa Gebru, the metropolitan, priests with the Kuer'ate Resu, the *tabotat* of the Holy Trinity and Abune Tekle Haymanot, the picture of our Lord were come and joined the Emperor in the campaign, so that the force was gathered around the Emperor to the next journey.

From Enfranz the Emperor started his journey and entered to Qaroda and from there to Amed Ber. From Amed Ber Emperor Tekle Giorgis issued the proclamation to his people settled from Gonder to Wollo must receive the Emperor and his soldiers warmly on his way to Wollo and Wuchale with the threat of persecution if not. This well-worded and modest proclamation of the Emperor was received by the priests as well as the commons. The next day short march was conducted from Amed Ber to a place called Tsegur. On 23, 1783 his Majesty preceded to a place named Wahir, where he made a feast to his men and entertained those in a large celebratory meal at a banqueting pavilion. Then the Emperor's soldiers marched and countermarched to right and left to Kimer Dingay and to a place named Meshelemiya and then to Nefas Mewucha. From Nefas Mewucha the Emperor moved his camp and marched towards the steep slope areas of Debre Zabit, where most of the animals and his followers were hungered with shortage of food, the long and difficult journey, the mountain air of Wadla was chilling, and acts like a refrigerator as well.

On December 30, 1783, His Majesty broke up his camp at Chat Wuha to Anchim. The next day the army marched down the Zita (Shepherd, Appendix X.) ravine and up again on to the summit of Delanta plateau. Between Delanta and Wadla the Emperor had faced and fought a certain warlike robber than a recognized power. From Anchim, the Emperor and the army travelled next morning to Yenja on the Wadla plateau. On January 6, 1783, the Emperor with his men went on to Bet Hor and stationed there for two days. On 12th of January,

the Emperor issued an order at Bet Hor that announced the people of Wollo and Wuchale should recognize two Dejazmachs i.e. Beto ('Mohammed Ali' *EAE*,V.3 (2007), 647b; Ahmed,1985) and Wolde Mika'el as their governors and follow the orders them.

After two weeks' of hot discussions and debate with the highest dignitaries at Bet Hor, they travelled, from terrace to terrace, down slanting gradines, and down the side of ledges, which in some places were almost perpendicular, until they arrived at the bottom of the ravine. On the same day (January 28, 1783) they reached at Shoga (Text p. 200. ...**ወአመ ጳወጅ፡ ተነሥኦ፡ ንጉሥ፡ እምሻን፡ ወረደ፡ ቍልቍሊተ፡ በሽሎ፡ በእግር፡ ወተኃጉላ፡ ሰብእ፡ ወእንሰሳ...** (In 28, 1783 they left the area of Shoga which is even down and men and animals had died by the difficult journey in the ravine). In Dawunt district with their baggages. Further movement for few days was impossible due to the long, difficult march; the troops were showing signs of exhaustion. The delay was also made to some extent by a shortage of supplies sufficiently serious to make the Emperor at least consider the necessity for either a further cut in the already available provisions or collecting from the nearby society along the route. On 27, 1783, the force of the Emperor moved to the northern edge of the Beshilo (see Donald Crummy, "Some Notes on Checheho; 1975, pp.1-9.) River, from where Wollo was clearly visible. For the next two days the force camped on the banks of the Beshilo Ravine for the commemoration of the day of Medhane Alem ('Savior of the World') on January 27, 1783). The next day the stay at the Beshilo River was come to an end and orders had been given to leave the River towards the land of the Amhara (Zergaw Asfera 1973, p. 1; Paul Lester Stenhouse, trans., 2003, pp.218-219).

On the first of April the march was begin further to the locality named as Tsede Ambala, where the Emperor's force come to clash with the locale people. It was in this area that a certain Dejazmach named Dejazmach Beto had brought excellent mead and a loaf of bread to the Emperor probably as a sign of homage. On the 2nd April in view of the dangerous situation from the local people the Emperor decided to leave Tsede Ambala to the area of Kolo. In this place the well-known man of Wollo who came and surrender himself to the Emperor was Wolde Abay Chufa even before the Emperor issued a proclamation stating that all the people of Amhara, Wollo and Wuchale subordinated and ruled by Dejazmach Adigeh. The advance started on 5th April 1783 and garrisoned at Qurqur and at the same time prominent men of the king like Derso, Ali and *Ras* Haylu, left the King and killed those who had an anti Amhara sentiment in and around Qurqur.

Acceptance and Opposition

The responses of the Muslims were threefold. Some accepted Christianity nominally, while others openly refused

to accept Christianity and opted to adhere their predecessors' religion i.e. Islam, and even some chose conversion to Christianity. When the news for the advancement of the Emperor heard, a great anxiety was overwhelming among the Muslims of Wuchale and Wollo. As a result, the Muslims of Wuchale and Wollo and their senior officials sat to discuss what to do next. After a long and "open discussion" in a counsel known as "Counsel of the Men of Wollo", it was decided that they should accept Emperor Tekle Giorgis I as their King with an act of kowtow. From those notable men of Wollo who came with his people and surrender himself to the Emperor was Menesho. ይቤሎ ፡ ለመነሻ ፡ ትፈቅድኑ ፡ ትኩን ፡ ክርስቲያናዊ ፡ ወኦራሥኦ ፡ መነሻ ፡ ወይቤ ፡ ዘንተሰ ፡ ኢይፈቅድ ፡ ኦንጉሥ ፡ አላ ፡ እነብር ፡ ከመ ፡ አቡዮ ፡ እለሰ ፡ መጽሐፍ ፡ ምሳሌሁ ፡ ይቤሎ ፡ ንሕነሰ ፡ ንፈቅድ ፡ ከዊነ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ እስመ ፡ ጥንተ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ንሕነ ፡ ወሰሚያ ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ይቤ ፡ ዘፈቀደ ፡ ይኩን ፡ ክርስቲያናዊ ፡ ወዘይኢፈቅደ ፡ ይነብር ፡ ከመ ፡ አቡሁ። (The Emperor asked the chief, "Do you wish to become a Christian?" Menesho responded thus: "I do not wish to become a Christian, Oh king, but I will stay like my father", but there were those that came to him and said, "We indeed desire to be Christians, for we began as Christians." After hearing the Emperor replied "Who so desires, let him be a Christian. Who so desire not, let him remain as his father was.") (Blundell 1922, Ibid. 281(trans.) =55&56 (text); Solomon Gebreyes 2019,809;MS Paris, BNF – d'Abbadie 118, fols 387r-417v (1842), p.200 (text),p.201).

Here the Emperor applied the flexibility and liberalism in the field of religious issues and gave the area of Dereq Amba to Menesho and his people to settle in. Besides this, the Emperor made a proclamation that anyone who kills an Oromo illegally would be punished too. Correspondingly, many known men of Wollo were converted to Christianity with their men.

On 8th of April the Emperor left Gedalas, a locality situated near Qurqur. At this place the Emperor gave baggage and other necessary equipment to Dejazmach Adiyam as a reward to his service. In the same day, the force of the Emperor stationed at Worqe Masicha, a place not far from Gedalas. The Emperor was with Dejazmach Wolde Gebre'el on the 11th of April and marched towards Shewa. The chiefs of Wollo and Wuchale joined the King with various gifts during his march to Shewa. On 18th of April the Emperor ordered the people of Wollo to make an oath not to disturb the Christians of their neighbors and so as to live in peace and harmony. Side by side with this, another proclamation of the Emperor on 19th April was issued to notify his hand-picked appointees by which Dejazmach Derso was appointed over Amhara and kentiba (Mayor) Kabte made governor of Meqdela (Rita Pankhurst, vol. XXXVI, part 1, 1973, p.223). On 21th April with the order of the King, Dejazmach Derso followed a mass conversion of notable

men of various localities with their people (text p.201). Due to his happiness the King arranged a feast to the newly converted people, Dejazmachs, higher dignitaries etc. as a sign of his delightfulness. During this festivity time Aleqa Gebru made a religious hymn to praise the Emperor.

On the morning of the 29th of April the King left Worqe Masicha to the nearby areas and engaged himself to the rebuilding of Churches and religious reestablishments which were demolished by the Muslims before. The next day the Emperor with his court retainers marched from AUSA to Wuchale and stationed at Sengola, a locality not far from Wuchale. Tekle Giorgis reached Chercha on 1st March from Sengola and stationed there for a few days. The delay was forced on the Emperor due to the unfriendly act of the Oromo robbers who conducted looting, killing and plundering of the already exhausted followers of the Emperor. Next morning there was a useful meeting, discussion, brief etc. with the higher officials about the robbers and deserted soldiers of Tigray. In the same day followed the skirmish many people were died and wounded on the side of the local robbers. On the 4th March Tekle Giorgis left Charcha with his bare foot to Debre Ze Wučhale, the area near to Chercha.

From Chercha onwards the troops of the Emperor was divided and organized in to four divisions. Two of them to move on the left flank, soldiers of Yeshalkoch (troops commanded by various Majors) and on its right flank, troops commanded by Dejazmach, Wolde Gebre'el, to the area of Deber. The third one composed mainly of retainers, to follow close behind the Emperor. The fourth one with different mequanents (soldiers under higher dignitaries of the Emperor) was on the center. The line of command during the march was arranged also to guard the Emperor against the possible attack from the local Wəçale robbers. Thus, it happened that the expected fighting-provoked in part by the people of Mämmäd Ali's (Ahmed, 1985; 'Mammadoch dynasty', *EAE*, V.3 (2007), 716a. Muhammad Ali (1771-85) tactical mistakes with the burning of houses to ashes. The consequence had proved advantageous to the Emperor.

The number of death toll or wounded on the side of the people of Mammed Ali was incalculable. From the emperor side there was no losses in prisoners or wounded during the fighting. Tekle Giorgis watched the fighting from a strategic place and saw his men were fighting bravely against the people of Mammed Ali. News then came through Dejazmach, Wolde Gabriel in that Tekle Giorgis had already won the fighting. The son of Mammed Ali, Adem (Blundell 1922, 289 (trans.) = 61 (text), see 'Mohammed Ali' *EAE*, V.3 (2007), 647b (E. Ficquet) was caught and beheaded, and his head was taken to Tekle Giyorgis I as a war trophy. This was all on the 5th March, the day for the commemoration of Saint Abune Gebre Menfes Qidus. The stay at Deber camp was strategically came to an end and on March 10th the Emperor

left Legot (Leslua W.1991, 308), a nearby area from Deber and stationed at Qest Ambula.

The Next few days were spent resting and reorganizing for the long return march across the Beshilo to the northwest direction. On the 12th April the march back, started steadily from Qest Ambula towards the Beshilo River. However, the decision had been reached by the people of Wuchale to burn Deber Legot while the Emperor reached at the Beshilo ravine as revenge. Then the houses, shelters, brans, hay and destroyed everything in the village as they could to the ground as retaliation. As a result a great pillar of black smoke rose over the village to signal its destruction for miles around. There was a short halt at Beshilo where the retainers were reorganized and some changes made in the order of March.

Thursday, on the 13th of April the march started and reached safely at Yewotet or Shoga, on the other side of the Beshilo ravine in Dawunt district. On the next day, the Emperor went on his march and stationed at a place named Yohannes, another strategic place in the same district. Here there was trouble from the local men on the march back. Men of the area gathered along the route on high cliff and made repeated attempts by throwing heavy stones to cut off stragglers, sick men and animals along the route. On the 16th of April the Emperor made promotions and demotions to the different noblemen as of their contributions in the military campaigns in the above aforementioned place.

On the 17th of April the retainers, soldiers and the higher officials packed their properties, gathered around the Emperor until the whistle blew for the beginning of the march. As the Emperor started to walk the order march was heralded, and commenced their journey for Gondar. Between the plains of Dawunt, Delanta and Wadla lay the Zita ravine. The immoderately steep descent and ascent and the great heat, were very serious danger for the troops heavily loaded. On the next day passing all these hazardous nature, they reached at a place called Geregera in between Wadla and Lasta with much fatigue. At Geregera the Emperor appointed Fitawrari Ayidagn as governor of Dehana, a district in Lasta. On the same day the Emperor left Geregera to a locality named Mewuqerya. From Mewuqerya with a temporary halt they passed to Afergemagn on the 20th of April, then; the next day to Kimer Dingay. On the next two days, the King, officers and the camp followers in general halting at Kimer Dingay and a relaxation of their whole bodily system began. On the 24th of April the Emperor left Kimer Dingay to a place named Aringo (*EAE*, V.1 (2003), 335ab), where he established a temporary administrative center in southern Gondar. On the next day (on the 25th of April), after the Emperor and his force successfully accomplished their missions at Wuchale and Wollo in 1784, the Emperor sent back most of the soldiers of Gojam and Mecha to their home land. On the 27th of April the Emperor

sent back all the soldiers to their respective provinces with rewards of appointments.

CONCLUSION

The article tried to show the routes used, causes, responses and reactions of the Wollo Muslims in general and the Muslims of Wollo and Wuchale in particular to the military expeditions of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I (r.1779-1800). The Emperor was one of the Zemene Mesafint or the Era of Princes (1769-1855) Emperors, nicknamed as Fissime Mengist, 'End of the monarchy.' Although occurrence of a written language started since the Axumite period, the first known with full-fledged evidences on the production of chronicles as historical genres of Ethiopian kings and the highest dignitaries were started in the fourteenth century. On the basis of the mainstreamed knowledge on the production and distribution of royal chronicles in Ethiopia, the period of Tekle Giorgis I or the era of princes had ushered a new chapter in Ethiopian history. This was so because some strong local rulers dominated the politics that also eroded the status of court chronicles.

The relation between the Muslims and the Christians in the area was deteriorated from time to time. A case in point was the Wollo and Wuchale Oromo Muslims had set up harsher policies against their neighbor Christians by destroying Churches, imprisoned the followers, smashing down the *tabotat*. This phenomenon paved the way for the germinations of frustration among the already deep rooted existence of the Christian populations. Therefore, this strong Islamic penetration aggravated the Christian King of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I for military expeditions, as one of the immediate factor to the campaign. Once the final decision had been taken, the Emperor made every effort to select routes, conduct and ensure the eventual success of the expedition.

Therefore, the march of the Emperor to Wollo and Wuchale was started from Gondar on December 7, 1775 E.C/ 1783 CE and arrived at Tseda where the Emperor halted for one day. The responses of the Muslims were threefold. Some accepted Christianity nominally, while others openly refused to accept Christianity and opted to adhere their predecessors' religion i.e. Islam, and even some chose conversion to Christianity. Finally, after accomplished his goal, with the exception of the province of Shewa, the force of the Emperor was ordered to re-cross the Beshilo River on its return to Gondar.

The findings of this study show the different courses or ways that the Emperor chose and used to the military expedition towards Wollo and Wuchale areas. These courses were stretched from Gondar to the areas of Wollo by crossing two large ravines or Rivers i.e. the Zita and Beshilo. The research reveals the various responses and oppositions from the Muslim communities of Wollo and Wuchale towards the

military expeditions of Emperor Tekle Giorgis I. Thus, accordingly the responses were different, which mean some of the Muslim communities welcomed the Emperor and baptized. To the contrary, some other Muslim communities were totally rejected to be baptized and opted to adhere their forefathers religion i.e. Islam. The responses of the Emperor to these responses and oppositions of the local Muslim communities showed a twofold sense. Firstly, the Emperor showed flexibility and liberalism towards the Muslim communities and allowed them to practice their religion as it was before. Secondly, due to a dispute with a few followers of Islam, the king adopted a mass conversion of all local Muslims to Christianity by military force.

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