
Research Report**CHURCH, NATION AND STATE: THE MAKING
OF MODERN ETHIOPIA, 1926-1991 – A Research Proposal**Wudu Tafete¹**Introduction**

While most of the African continent would develop nationalist movements after WWII, nationalism in Ethiopia started earlier and was finally situated in the interstices of church and state. This project explores the process by which in the years between 1926 and 1991 church and state made nation in modern Ethiopia. These years were crucial in the emergence of an indigenous leadership, in the Ethiopianization of the national hierarchy, and in the development of an administrative structure in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The year 1926 marked the emergence of a nationalist political consciousness which was directed to achieving independence from the Alexandrian Church of Egypt.

Background

The twentieth century was a crucial period for Ethiopia as its rulers grappled with the problem of building a modern country and national identity out of a multi-religious and multi-cultural society. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was the main institution through which the national identity of Ethiopia had hitherto been expressed. In the fourteenth century the Church formulated the political ideology of Solomonic descent. Until 1974, when the last Solomonic emperor was overthrown, this ideology legitimized the country's temporal and religious institutions on the basis of the Biblical traditions of ancient Israel. The role of the Church was paradoxical as it played different roles at different times. Christian Orthodox identity was used to promote modern national identity. The Church was also an obstacle to secularization, modern changes, and, importantly, to the emergence of an inclusive national identity.

Emperor Haile-Selassie (r. 1930-74) sought to build a modern national state within a framework of 'religious uniformity' under the Orthodox Church, with

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Amharic as a national language. In a pluralistic society, however, the policy marginalized other religious, cultural and linguistic groups. Religious groups, in particular, rejected the centrality of the Orthodox Church as spelled out in the constitution of 1955. Additional opposition to the Church came from modernists who began to crystallize in the student movement of the 1960s. They viewed the Church as too narrow, backward, and conservative; and questioned the value of the church for creating a unifying national identity. Opposition to the state was also opposition to the privileged status of the Church as was seen in 1974 when a revolution overthrew the monarchy and automatically disestablished the Church.

The religious policy of Haile-Selassie was contradictory. Although he emphasized the role of Orthodox Christianity in bringing national unity, the Church itself did not play a significant role in this process. I argue that the Orthodox Church was not engaged in active evangelization under his patronage. Nor had any strong attempts been made to forcibly impose the Orthodox faith on non-Christians since the reign of Emperor of Yohannes (r. 1872-89). Yohannes' immediate successor, Emperor Menelik (1889-1913) actually followed a policy of religious tolerance; and Haile-Selassie's attempt at religious uniformity under the Orthodox Church and national curriculum did not bring about any change because of disagreements among the various offices, which were to run the project jointly, and opposition from the Muslim community. On the contrary, the Emperor undermined the Church by putting it under his own strong imperial authority rather than giving it free rein to forge its independent destiny. The Church did not have the necessary material and human resources to bring about religious uniformity in a multi-religious and multi-cultural society. By contrast, the missionary churches, whose presence had become increasingly evident particularly during Haile Selassie's reign, were actively evangelizing especially in southern Ethiopia. Besides the effective material and human resources and international organizational sponsorship they had, the missionary churches also enjoyed the support of the Ethiopian state because the state wanted their participation in the development programs of the country. Although his statements on religious issues at various times indicated religious tolerance to Muslims and missionary churches, at the same time, he tried to promote the Orthodox Church as a national church. He needed to placate Muslims to counter Islamic propaganda from neighboring Muslim countries that Ethiopian Muslims did not enjoy religious freedom. As a result, he chose to follow a policy of compromise that did not satisfy the religious groups, and his policy neither effectively strengthened the Church nor attracted new converts.

The military rulers that overthrew Haile-Selassie in 1974 adopted an atheistic, Marxist-Leninist ideology, and declared the equal status of religions thereby

ending the very close historical church-state relation. They deprived the church its main economic resources by nationalizing rural and urban land. Church leaders were persecuted; the second patriarch was deposed and later executed in prison. The military rulers infringed the religious freedom of all religious groups, and of the Orthodox Christians and their church.

Neither the government of Haile-Selassie nor the military regime successfully galvanized the support of the Ethiopian people and their policies failed to forge a lasting national identity. Since 1991 religious associations have emerged that aim to reform and revitalize the church. There is an upsurge of Orthodox religious observance, and religious festivals have become expressions of national unity and identity in opposition to the politics of ethnicity adopted by Ethiopia's rulers after 1991. Whereas student radicals and members of the army in the 1960s turned away from the Church, the Orthodox Christian youth in the 1980s and 1990s increasingly turned towards it largely abandoning politics for religious pursuits. This was partly due to communist persecution and partly to disillusion with the revolution of 1974. Yet, religion is a main component of individual and group identities in present-day Ethiopia, and the Orthodox Church, which had defined the historic Ethiopian state in the past, continues to play a significant public role. The study of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church thus demonstrates both the importance and limits of religion in imagining twentieth century Ethiopian national identity. It illustrates to what extent religion can be used to promote national identity, and how it became an impediment to the emergence of an inclusive identity. It will also examine the way in which the socialist-military government undermined the position of the church to build a secular state with Marxist ideology, and later co-opted the church's support against the Somali invasion, and ethnic and regional liberation movements.

Historical context of the research Problem

Since the establishment of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the fourth century, it was numerically the largest single diocese of the Coptic Church of Egypt. The head of the Ethiopian Church was an Egyptian appointed by the Alexandrian patriarch. The main task of the bishop was to anoint kings, to consecrate *tabots* (the replica of Ark of the Covenant) and to ordain priests and deacons, but he had no control over the resources of individual churches or monasteries. The Egyptian church did not allow Ethiopian nationals to be primates of their own church, or to create internal dioceses. (Adugna, 1969; Taddesse, 1972; Crummey, 1972).

In the 1920s a strong nationalist feeling underlay the demand for an independent Ethiopian Church, and the development of an indigenous hierarchy and organization. It is also significant to remember that there was an earlier attempt to

break relations with the Coptic Church and appoint an Ethiopian bishop in the fifteenth century (Tadesse, 1972). The intellectuals of the period challenged the legal basis of the Alexandrian supremacy in Article XLII of the *Fetha Nagast* (Law of Kings), which stated that Ethiopians could not appoint their own patriarch and were subject to the Alexandrian See. They argued that the article lacked authenticity and charged that Egyptian control amounted to 'racial' discrimination and 'Coptic tyranny' over Ethiopia. (Adugna 1969; Beletu 1972; Shenk 1972).

In response to this growing opposition the imperial court took measures to limit the power of the bishop and decreed the Church Administration Act in 1926. It gave the *Echage*¹ the power to administer the church leaving to the bishop only the functions of ordination of the clergy and consecrations of *tabots*. The Act established the first Ethiopian Holy Synod to decide on canonical matters. The church office was attached to the court of *Ras* Tafari (later Emperor Haile Selassie), who together with the clergy of the church office negotiated with the Patriarch of Alexandria for the consecration of Ethiopian bishops. The Act stimulated the nationalists to further protests, and the period, 1926-29, witnessed the rise of a nationalist demand by the clergy for independence, and the conservatism of *Ras* Tafari, who wanted to maintain relations with the Alexandrian Church. Although the Ethiopian demand was to have an Ethiopian archbishop, however, the Alexandrian Patriarch refused to do this, and only agreed to consecrate Ethiopian bishops. Together with a new Coptic archbishop, Qerlos, four Ethiopians were consecrated in 1929 in Egypt, and another Ethiopian in Addis Ababa in 1930. It was a historic landmark for the Ethiopian Church with Ethiopian nationals being appointed bishops for the first time. It was also an important step in the organization of the first national hierarchy of the Ethiopian Church, and the development of an episcopal diocesan structure. (Adugna 1969; Shenk 1972; Haile-Mariam 1998a; Marse-Hazen 1935 E. C.).

However, the Italian occupation between 1936 and 1941 interrupted the negotiations and the possibility of final settlement with the Egyptian Church. The Emperor and the *Echage* went into exile leaving the Egyptian bishop, *Abuna* Qerlos, behind in Addis Ababa. When the Italians wanted to break the church's connection with Egypt, to avoid the latter's influence on Ethiopia, and to win the loyalty of Ethiopia's church leaders by bringing about their fondest goals, the bishop went back to Egypt in opposition to the decision. The Italians declared the independence of the Ethiopian Church in 1937 by ensuring the election and appointment of two successive Ethiopian bishops, *Abuna* Abraham (1937-39), and

¹ *Echage* was originally a title held by the elder- prior of Dabra-Libanos monastery, the most prestigious of Ethiopian monastic leaders since at least the sixteenth century.

later *Abuna* Yohannes (1939-41) as metropolitans. The Italians also issued a new decree in 1940 on the internal administration and management of the Ethiopian Church. The declaration of independence under the Italians seems to have boosted the religious nationalism of the Ethiopian clergy vis-à-vis the Egyptian Church; and in 1937 and 1939, more Ethiopian bishops were appointed and more dioceses created in these two years under the Italians than under the imperial regime before 1935. The Italians hoped that the independence of the Church under Italian rule would undermine the strong nationalist resistance of the Church, and cut its link with the emperor and the *echage* in exile. The Egyptian Church, the Emperor and the *Echage* in exile, as well as the patriotic leaders in the country opposed the Italian intervention in the Ethiopian Church affairs. The Egyptians opposed the measure essentially because they lost their ancient lucrative religious leadership over Ethiopia. The Emperor, the *Echage*, and the patriotic leaders underscored that the Italian occupation was illegal, and recognition of the Italian-appointed bishops would provide some kind of political legitimacy to Italy while the national resistance was strong in the country. The Italians used the threat of a pro-Islamic policy to get church leaders to cooperate. However, they failed drastically and the majority of the clergy continued their nationalist struggle against Italian rule unabated until 1941. (Mikre-Selassie 1976; Shenk 1972; Adugna 1969; Aklilu 1977)

Negotiation to normalize relations between the Ethiopian and Egyptian Churches began soon after liberation in 1941, as the latter was eager to restore its dominance. The so-called independence of the Church under the Italians had the effect that the Ethiopian clergy were determined to get Egyptian acceptance of the *status quo*. In the 1940s they demanded the appointment of an Ethiopian archbishop and the legalization of the Ethiopian Synod on the basis of the Act of 1926. They repeated their criticism that the Egyptian Church made 'racial' distinction among Christians that barred Ethiopians from such office. The Emperor followed a conciliatory approach to resolve the issue with the Egyptians, and appointed several government officials to the council to moderate the militancy of the clergy. In 1948, following the death of the Coptic bishop, Qerlos, the Egyptian Patriarch agreed to recognize the autonomy of the Ethiopian Church, and to consecrate as the first archbishop, *Echage* Gabra-Giyorgis, who took the name of *Abuna* Basliyos. Further agreements led to the autocephalous status of the Church and the ordination of *Abuna* Basliyos (1959-70) as the first patriarch in 1959 (Marse-Hazen 1956 E. C.; Mikre-Selassie 1976; Perham 1969; Shenk 1972).

Although the emperor had his own men elected as patriarchs, he did not give them free rein to administer the Church. Though a separate organization for the Church affairs was set, the Church did not really enjoy its autonomy. The rules

enacted to regulate the Church affairs were heavily imbedded with political underpinnings. Successive General Managers appointed by the state for the church, took orders largely from the emperor and challenged the power of the newly elected Episcopal hierarchy. Parallel offices were established, which overshadowed the Office of the Patriarch. The Emperor established the Department of Religious Affairs in the Emperor's private cabinet in December 1959 rivaling the Patriarchate (Goricke and Heyer 1976; Haile-Mariam 1987, 1988 a & b)

Following the overthrow of the imperial regime in 1974, the socialist military regime abolished the

Church's privileged status and declared the equal status of all religions. The nationalization of rural and urban land in 1975 deprived the Church of its economic resources, most of which had been controlled locally by individually endowed churches and monasteries. The *Darg* and its cadres wanted to reorganize the Church, and in 1976 deposed *Abuna* Tewoflos, who was later executed secretly in prison. Then they engineered the election of a submissive, apolitical patriarch *Abuna* Takla-Haymanot (1976-88), who could neither defend the interests of the Church nor voice the plight of his religious followers. On Takla-Haymanot's death in 1988, *Abuna* Marqoriyos (1988-91) was elected as a choice of the military government (Damtie 1994; Teffera 1997). With the overthrow of the military regime by regionally based insurgents in 1991, Marqoriyos claims to have been harassed and left the country on self-imposed exile, whereupon *Abuna* Pawlos was elected. The 1990s witnessed the resurgence of religious observance as a manifestation of national unity in opposition to the government's policy of ethnicity. The independence of Eritrea in 1993 was followed by the creation of an autonomous Eritrean Church that divided the historically single church into two. The former patriarch, now in exile, has established an 'émigré synod' of which the effect on the national Church has yet to be explored (*Ethiopian Review* 1998).

Objectives of the Study

My study will address church-state relations under the imperial state and the military regime during the period from 1926, which marked the establishment of the first national Holy Synod, to the fall of the *Darg* in 1991. I will examine the role played by the Orthodox Church to build national identity, and the obstacle it posed to accommodate other religious groups, and its attempt to maintain its survival amid changing political conditions and modern secular trends. I will focus on the development of an indigenous national hierarchy within the framework of a new organizational and administrative structure. I argue that, in fact, the main weakness of the Church was in its organizational structure. I want to analyze the

various regulations, rules and proclamations that provided for the development of the organizational structure of the Ethiopian Patriarchate. I seek to investigate the administrative relationship between the Patriarchate and the provincial dioceses, and sub-district diocesan offices (*awarajja beta-kehnat*), individual churches and monasteries. Altogether, during this period, there have been five Ethiopian Patriarchs – Basliyos (1959-71), Tewoflos (1971-76), Takla-Haymanot (1976-88), Marqoriyos (1988-91), and Pawlos (elected in 1991). While the outlines of control are clear, very little is known towards what broader ends the state manipulated the patriarchal elections, a clear study of which should cast a significant light on the rules that constituted the electoral college, and the political principles involved in electing the bishop. I will assess the power rivalries within the church leadership, which gradually developed into the 'division' of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Synod into national and 'émigré synod'.

Both Ethiopian intellectuals and foreign scholars severely criticized the Church as backward and conservative. However, the Church participated in educational, developmental and relief programs. Under the imperial government, the Church actively participated in the expansion of education. The Church ran its own elementary and secondary schools with sizable student enrolments. Under the military regime, when private and religious schools were nationalized, the church turned its attention to rural development, relief work, helping those that were displaced by the protracted civil wars, and orphaned children. These activities were carried out with funds obtained from foreign sources, and this study aims to assess its contribution to rural development.

I have chosen to study the Ethiopian Orthodox Church between 1926-1991 for the following reasons. Firstly, the Church is deeply entrenched in the life of the Orthodox Christians who account for about 50% of the total population of the country.² Both the imperial state and the military regime sought to control the Church. The Church legitimized the political authority of Haile-Selassie, and his coming to political power in 1916 was with the support of the Church that had excommunicated his rival and predecessor. Haile Selassie was well aware that the success and failures of Ethiopian kings had depended on the relationship they maintained with the Orthodox Church. He thus contributed to the development of a national church and its autocephalous status from Egypt. At the same time he was an autocrat and made sure that he could control the institution as it developed. He

² The figure is the result of a recent census conducted in 1994. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Office of Population and Housing Census Commission, Central Statistical Authority, *The 1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia, Summary Report at Country and Regional Levels*, Addis Ababa, November 1998.

tried to reform and reorganize the church while subordinating the church leadership under his imperial authority. He attempted to build a modern state and national identity within a framework of “religious uniformity, linguistic uniformity and ethnic assimilation or intermixing” (Abebe 2000).

On the other hand, the military regime, which came to power in 1974, attacked the established church regarding it as a ‘ground for counter-revolution’; and sought to build national unity by defusing ethnic and religious conflict in other ways. It declared the separation of church and state and the equal status of all religions. The dominant role of the church was particularly undermined in 1975 by the nationalization of rural and urban land from which the church derived its considerable economic wealth. In 1976 the *Darg* imprisoned, and later executed its patriarch. However, the military rulers soon had to moderate their repressive approach to the church seeking, in 1977, its support in their struggle against Somali invasion and secessionist movements. In a period when alien socialist and atheistic ideology was propagated, and brutal measure was indiscriminately taken against adversaries of the regime; and when tradition and custom was trampled upon, the church was the only surviving symbol that connected people with the past, and it became a refuge to avoid political measure. The period of the *Darg* witnessed the suppression of the basic rights of all religious groups, and of the Orthodox Christians and their church, which I want to study.

Theoretical framework

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the earliest national church in Africa and has a long historical tradition. It played a major role in creating Ethiopian historical and national identity on the basis of Biblical traditions, consciously claiming that Ethiopia had inherited the glory of Israel and had itself become a new Israel. In this regard, some comparison is possible between the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia and certain aspects of early modern Europe, as exemplified by England. Haile-Selassie used religious symbolism to legitimize the divine rule of kings by claiming himself ‘Elect of God’. His coronation ceremonies as king of Gondar in 1928 and as emperor of Ethiopia in 1930; the annual celebration of his birth day, and accession day; civic and religious processions, and royal progression enhanced the power and significance of the king. He closely controlled the affairs of the church, approved the election and appointment of bishops, who swore allegiance to him. He regarded himself as defender of the Orthodox Church. He built three royal chapels at his different palaces, patronizing and endowing them with gifts of land. In short, understanding Ethiopia’s royal and religious tradition is enriched by comparison with English royalty and religion.

Ethiopia's monarchical and religious traditions can also be seen in light of what Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger call 'invented tradition' (1983). Hobsbawm indicates that political traditions are invented by institutions with political agendas in mind, and are consciously formulated to inculcate certain values and largely establish continuity with the past. He and Ranger assert that the invention of European tradition dates back to the late nineteenth century. Although Ranger at first denies Africans the ability to create traditions that explain their identity, he later revised his work and acknowledged the prevalence of traditions that demonstrate an African ethnic identity. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is a good example that formulated traditions in the fourteenth century to define the historic Ethiopian state and its national identity. The creation of Ethiopian national state is also illuminated by Anderson's (1991) discussion of official nationalism; the monarchy, the Orthodox Church, Geez and Amharic languages shaping its identity and contributing to the expansion of the state. In a recent study, Andrian Hastings (1997 and 1999) argues against modernist views of nationalism, such as Anderson's emphasis on print capitalism as a driving force of nationalism in the nineteenth century, in favor of a medieval origin of nations and nationalism. His argument is based upon Biblical religion and the development of vernacular literature, and he considers the case of Ethiopia, which had Geez vernacular literature and state ideology based on Biblical traditions as indicated earlier, as one of his African examples. In light of this, a study of the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and its changing fate in the twentieth century will contribute to an understanding of Ethiopian national identity.

The suffering that the Orthodox Church experienced under the socialist-oriented military regime is no different from the experiences of other Orthodox churches in communist countries. (Ghermani 1988; Pospelovsky 1988; Curtiss 1953). The military rulers of Ethiopia tried consciously to implement the anti-religious policies of the Soviet Union, Rumania, and other communist countries where religious persecution was most severe. In relation to Africa, a comparison is also possible with the response of the Catholic Church to Marxism in four African countries: Madagascar, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (McKenna 1997). Eide (1996) and Donham (1999) made some strides in studying the Protestant Church in revolutionary Ethiopia. In this context, this study is important in that it aims to investigate the impact of the revolution on the Orthodox Church and as a result my study will also contribute to the broader study of religion and Marxism in Africa.

Review of Literature and General Statement of the Problem

The literature on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is very scanty, and there are no institutional studies. The available works are mostly limited in scope and descriptive in their treatment of the subject. There are a number of unpublished B. A. theses that attempt to assess the history of particular churches and church leaders. Among them Adugna (1969) discusses the independence of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church from the church of Egypt. Two unpublished Ph. D. dissertations were produced in the 1970s (Shenk 1972; Mikre-Sellasie 1976). Calvin E. Shenk focuses on the Italian period and on the relations of the Orthodox Church with sisterly churches. His treatment of the national church lacks depth and analysis and leaves many issues unanswered. His work covers the period of the first two Patriarchs, and did not investigate the working relations between the patriarchate and the provincial dioceses and sub-district offices. Mikre-Sellasie Gabre Amanuel, formerly general manager of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, focuses on foreign mission churches in the period of the Italian occupation. Except Adugna (1969), who had access at the Trinity Cathedral to a copy of the Decree of 1926, and to Ms No. 74 of the National Library, containing letters, minutes and major decisions concerning the church between 1874 and 1944, no one has yet consulted these and similar other primary documents. MS No. 74 is an indispensable document that contains government regulations for the church, the activities of the church synod, the negotiation with the Egyptian church, and all correspondences concerning the church. A fresh investigation and a more careful interpretation of these sources is absolutely necessary to shed a new light and perspective for a better understanding of developments in the church, and the attempts of the state to control it.

A number of works deal with Haile Selassie's church reforms, the negotiation for independence from the Alexandrian Church, and other general issues. (Hayatt 1928; O'Leary, 1936; O'Hanlon 1946; Trimmingham 1950; Geddes 1969; Talbot 1952; Perham 1969; Clapham 1969; Gilkes 1972; Markakis 1974). However, these accounts do not have much depth since they did not have access to original sources.

Some journal articles deal with criticism directed at the church (Melesse 1970; Okite 1970); the persecution of the church by the Italians (Shenk 1972); the church's social institutions in the pre-revolutionary period (Goricke and Heyer 1976; Ephram 1975); and the church and politics in the twentieth century (Haile Mariam 1987; 1988 a & b). A few general works touch on the fate of the church under the military regime (Ottaway 1978; Teffera 1997; Harbeson 1988). Some writers have praised the emperor for reforming the church (Perham 1969; Schultz

1968; Wynn 1951; Talbot 1952; Lipsky 1962). They did not realize that most of the emperor's regulations were actually intended to tighten the control of the state over the church, and that he did not really contribute to the emergence of an independent or autonomous church able to determine its own destiny. State paternalism limited the freedom of the church. Critics of the state became critics of the church and this had an impact on the image of the church.

Teffera (1997), who was in charge of religious affairs in the office of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers during the period of Darg rule, gives us a disappointingly sketchy discussion of the religious policy of the Darg and its attack on the church. Haile Mariam's article on the revolution (1988b) does not cover the whole period of the Darg and is short on local sources. Giulia Bonacci (2000) recently published a short piece purporting to be an M. A. dissertation on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the State in 1974-1991. Her focus on what she calls the 'secret plan' of the *Darg* to eradicate religion in Ethiopia does little other than restate materials already well known. The views of some of her informants are suspect as they themselves were closely involved in the military regime's plan to suppress religion, and thus may have more to conceal than they reveal. While the missionary churches during the revolutionary period have received some attention (Eide, 1996; Donham, 1999), no major work has addressed the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the proposed study seeks to redress this imbalance.

Research Methodology and Data Collection

Research for the study will be conducted in Ethiopia through two principal strategies: consultation of primary written documents and the collection of interviews. The dissertation will make full use of the archives of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, provincial and sub-district dioceses, where legal documents, institutional files, records of committee meetings, Holy Synod files, memos, and correspondence, church newspapers, and magazines could be found. The archives of the Ministry of Education, and the National Library of the Ministry of Culture and Information are also sources of information that will reveal government policies. The rich collection of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies at Addis Ababa University is another important center for my research. In addition to its rare collection of primary sources, the Institute has the richest collection of secondary materials and documents any where in the world. The Department of History, Addis Ababa University, where I am affiliated and taught between 1989-1998, has several unpublished B. A., M. A., and Ph. D. theses, which will be of much use for my studies.

I will supplement this with extensive interviews targeting officials of the church in the patriarchate, provincial diocese archbishops, bishops, leading clerics, abbots, church leaders (*alaqas*), parish committee members in Addis Ababa and in my research sites, individuals who participated in the election of Patriarchs, former and present teachers and students of the Theology College, former members of the Orthodox Students' association, government officials and others. The aim of the interview is to collect reminiscences reflecting the experiences and insights of the interviewee, to supplement existing documents or to substitute for such documents as may have been lost as a result of the protracted civil wars. I will thoroughly counter-check the oral information with written sources and also with other informants. I will carefully select informants strictly on the basis of their knowledge, expertise and insight.

Research Site and Schedule

My main research site will be Addis Ababa. I have also selected six other additional centers. I will spend sixteen months in Ethiopia. Twelve months will be for collecting data from the archives of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, various ministries, selected churches in Addis Ababa, and the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, and conducting interviews in Addis Ababa. The remaining four months will be used to collect data and do interviews in the dioceses of Tegray, North and South Gojjam, North Gondar, North Shewa, and North Wallo.

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