

Eritrea Needs to Read to Live

አርጉራ አልለዎ ግድዲ ናይ አንበባ ምእንቲ ሐየወ (ልሙድ ነበረ)

In this file

I Eritrea is a mosaic of people and it will continue to be:

- a) • Eritrea has been called mosaic ...
- b) • Baria and Cunama ... Kunama were in Dembelas ... 500 or 600 years ago
- c) • Bilen in Eritrea since 1530
- d) • Expansion of Deqqi Minab ናይ ደቅቂ ማኅናብ (Asghede አስገደ) in the sixteenth century
- e) • Rashaida/ራሻይዳ in Eritrea since 1846
- f) • Political legacy of Hamitic and Semitic

II Tacruri/ታኸሩሪ 5000 Units in Eritrea as Census of 1947 (in Italian and English)

III Abraha Deboch and Mogos Asgedom History of Human Freedom

IV Zerai Deres we are incredibly proud of you heroism

I Eritrea is a mosaic of people and it will continue to be

a ▶ Eritrea has been called mosaic ...

"Eritrea has been called mosaic of peoples for its diverse ethnic composition, and for



different racial strains that have cooperated to form these ethnic groups."¹ This means that every Eritrean nationality is not only aware of its own ethnicity, locational, language, religion, cultural, traditional; common law ... values but also of other nationalities that make Eritrea a mosaic country more or less like the mosaic picture that we see. If I am not mistaken Somalia mother of one nationality is not like Eritrea because of this it is not called a mosaic country.


All this is according to traditional patterns, beliefs and practices. But we live in a fast developing world that new beliefs replace the old ones. Because of this folks are not the same as they were yesterday. So, Eritrean long jump is still to come. This will begin when information become so easily accessible due to the development ICT (information and communications technology - or technologies) and rule of law in Eritrea. Here Eritrean immigrants can play a major role by pouring science and technology into their homeland.

It seems true that Bilen is becoming in the vanguard (ፊተውራሪ) of more or less revolutionary change in Eritrea. It is really amazing the wedding tradition change that is flourishing among Tigre and Bilen and Bilen Tigriyna nationalities. What will be the end of this? It seems enough if we take as an example the assimilation of Deqqi Minab ናይ ደቅቂ ማኅናብ (Asghede አስገደ) in Sahl of Eritrea. We will see this later in a bigger picture.

So the slow process of change maintained by Mosaic Society of Eritrea helps you understanding the trends (አካይይዳታት) of nationalities after centuries from now. Without any doubt, in the long run, Eritrean nationalities will arrive at the point where Habasciat and Agazian immigrant races stopped to exist. They will be substituted by Eritrean mixed race more than likely with English as a language of global communication.

In regard to the local languages Tigriyna, Tigre, Bilen, Saho ... it seems good to learn the flat battery of Geez language. We are with this situation for more than 700 years (read

more below). The church is not able to replace or recharge. As usual if a change doesn't come from East it will remain there at the expensive of Abyssinian Christianity values. But there is no reason to believe that the lightweight nationality languages (in terms of literature) will see such kind of treatment. English will be **school and home language**. Not only traders, bankers, scholars, teachers, students ... but also peasants, shepherds ... will be able to express themselves and communicate in English like Ghanaians, Kenyans ... counterparts. So Eritreans will not hesitate to send the local languages to their final resting place: archive.

Now let us exploit the time that we are living right now by making Eritrean nationalities photo mosaic at our homes in very simple way. To do this we need nine photographs or pictures of nine nationalities: Afar, Baria, Beja, Bilen, Cunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre, Tigriyna, Tacruri ... Here is one photo of Tigre Nationality .

Now we will try to learn the history of Eritrean nationalities photo mosaic chronologically. Here image of Hamitic (Baria and Kunama) takes the first place and last but not least of Rashida. Between the two firsts and the last there is a space where the rest nationalities Afar, Beja, Bilen, Saho, Tigre, Tigrinya ... are. Of these nationalities Tigriyna and Tigre can be number 3 and 4 respectively and Bilen number 8, but the place of the rest, Afar, Beja and Saho is not known because of their unknown time of arrival in Eritrea. It seems that this will hold for a moment until a strong research comes.

Base of the Eritrean society **Roof of the Eritrean society**
 1&2 Baria and Cunama + 3 Tigriyna + 4 Tigre + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 Bilen + 9 Rashaida

Conti Rossini mentions the waves of Saho immigrants from south to north without indicating if this was happened before or after the birth of Christ. But the Saho absorption in Akkeleguzai has an effect of a very, very long root. Thanks to this they managed to teach Akkeleguzai how to be excellent herds-men, how to produce the milk-utensil (like ጥፎ) and how to turn a skin into leather in an excellent way. So let us begin with the information that is at our disposal.

b ▶ Baria and Cunama

▶ As it discussed before, the mosaic colour of the Eritrean people can be arranged according to the order of their emergence in Eritrea. As already said the Hamitic (Baria and Cunama) is the base of the Eritrean society and with this they are also becoming automatically the beginners of the Eritrean people mosaic color. In general Eritrean inhabitations have **ebony/ ጥፍ** and **olive tree** colors. These trees grow in the Eritrean low and high lands respectively. So it seems climate mother-country color donation.

Hamitic = Baria and Cunama have  ebony color.

In regard to the Baria and Cunama relationships (ጥፍ) Conti Rossini says:

"These two languages, called proto-sewn by philologists, are those of Baria and Kunama, of which the current geographical posture is well known. But the two languages, while agreeing in the OR (*nell'or*) mentioned fundamental character, differ from each other in the most absolute way, for grammar and lexicon: What all the more remarkable, because the two peoples are neighboring and have commonality, or analogies, customs, legal arrangements, and (until the recent passage of Baira to Islam) even religious beliefs, from all aspects which differ radically from neighboring **Hamites** and **Semites**. Apparently, the two peoples are two of the oldest migration to Ethiopia and their current locations, arid, hot, miserable, are the point of withdrawal, or expulsion, in front of the expansion of the strongest nations."²

Kunama were in Dembelas ... 400 or 500 years ago

Carlo Conti Rossini says "It is historically certain that the Kunama, still four or five centuries ago, were in Dembelas and Tucul. However, it seems that, more than to the east, they in ancient times extended west south of existing homes."³

We are with one of the best Conti Rossini's researches that bring the past to the present. But when he says 'four or five centuries ago' for us it is 5 or 6 centuries ago because his works was published in 1913. So we are learning something from the last relations that were between Kunama and Akusmite kingdom 500 or 600 years ago.

Before the death of the kingdom "The *lesana* Ge'ez (ልሳነ ግዕዝ) ceased to be spoken about the beginning of the fourteenth century, being suppressed by a decree of Yekuno Amlak, but like Latin in the Roman Catholic Church it still exists as the language of ritual, [...] Amharic, descendant of a sister language of Geez, was adapted as the official language, and became the *lesana negus*, "language of the king."⁴

It is true the above testimonies don't tell why Kunama left the place. But it seems obvious that Kunama were under too much pressure to leave such a fertile land good for farmers and shepherds. Maybe the kingdom that was going to die out had created uncertainty to be there.

Tigrinya Color

With time passing image Tigriyna olive color emerged. This goes back a long way. George F. Black says "It is impossible to say when the immigration of the Semites into Abyssinia commenced but it must have been several centuries B.C."⁵ This is helped by Ullendorff. "As the Abyssinian, the population of Eritrea Tigrinya, is made up of ethnically original Hamitic races - Nilotic including the Agaw, the Kunama (or Bazen) and Nara (Baria), which was built over already since centuries before Christ the Semitic race immigrated from Arabia in the south.⁶ At this initial racial mix, they were added others, through the centuries, because of invasions or settler movement from both the South and the North.⁷ As Abyssinian, Tigrinya Eritrea, consists... mainly by crossing element Hamitic and Semitic, not only racially, but also to legal-institutional and socio-cultural level.⁸

Hamitic: Baria and Cunama + **Semitic:** Habasciat and Ag'azan = Abyssinians (or Habesha)



How this took place? "... for the nucleus of the Ethiopian people are Semites who crossed from Southern Arabia and settled in the high land plateau of Abyssinia. There they acquired such influence and they welded the various tribes of that region into a powerful confederation. The mixture of the races in the Abyssinian people is illustrated by their name, which comes from **Habesh**, an Arabic word meaning 'mixed/አዎላኝ.' No name could be more appropriate; for the Abyssinians are partly Semitic, partly Hamitic, and partly Negro. The dominant race, has usually been Semitic since the death of King John in 1888 the leadership has been held by a Hamito-Semitic people."⁹

Who are Abyssinians? Is it safe to say Abyssinians are Tigre, Tigrinya, and Amharic? Professor Wolf Leslau says "The Semitic languages of Ethiopia are the following: Ge'ez, Tigre, Tigrinya, Amharic, Gurage, Harari, Argobba, and Gafat."¹⁰ This proves that the welded various tribes have lost not only their tribal of governance but also their mother tongues.

And when we think of Tigriyna and Tigre, which of these two nationalities was the first to walk on Eritrean soil? Scholars say that Amharic was the first to emerge, later Tigriyna and the last Tigre. The reason they give for this depends on common words that Amharic, Tigriyna, Tigre and Geez share. In this case Tigre has more Geez terms than Amharic and it is not as old as others.

I think we need an example to make the argument stronger; a study can divide Eritrean immigrants into two according to their mother's language power or shininess. Here naturally the group that shine more are those who left Eritrea a few years ago than those more. With this we can know and assess the strength of the cord that connects with mother tongue.

Before we go further, I just want to make sure that the reader of this article is not with outdated translation that says 'nationality = ብሔር'.

And is the term ብሔር (*pl.* ብሔራት) in Tigriyna means nationality (*pl.* nationalities) in English? No, it is not. Let us prove it.

እግዚአብሔር is Gees compound word and it means in English **Lord of the universe**.

a) እግዚ = Lord, their God; It serves to form many compound nouns; ገብረ እዝሊ, ወልደአዝሊ, እዝሊጸሊ ኡልካ, እዝሊሀቦ . . .

b) አ = ናይ

c) ብሔር = ምድሪ እውን ሰማይ.

So, in Tigriyna *sing.* ናዝዮናሊታ *pl.* ናዝዮናሊታ = nationality, nationalities in English; not nationality = ብሔር. (See Tigriyna Dictionary TIGRIYNA-ITALIAN-ENGLISH MODERN DICTIONARY). E.g. ቀደም ኩናማ ናዝዮናሊታ ነቢራ አብ ደምበላስ ግን እተን ካልአት ናዝዮናሊታ አይነበራን.

c ▶ Bilen in Eritrea since 1530

ሚሊን/Milen is a tool for ear cleaning. When the ear builds up too much ear wax Eritreans use this tool to remove it. With this kind of intervention they keep open the ear canal and avoid deafness. As milen to ears, Bilen nationality also plays good in making brighter (ውዕዕ) the Mosaic Society of Eritrea. With such importance, this nationality is situated at the juncture of Quella and Dega called Weinedgea. This position connects it with many Eritrean nationalities. Thanks to this it speaks more than three languages of neighboring nationalities. So Bilen nationality is not only mosaic society resources but also language hub. And it has a wonderful history that attracts many scholars. Thanks to this we can be easily connected to its past.

Bilen emigrated from Lasta and settled at Senhit in **1530**. The long way, that was led by hairy Esau (ጨግጻር አያሱ) was very successful. Its number was **4300** at the beginning of the Italian colony in Eritrea. It is well known of her Fetha Mogareh or ፍትሐ መጋርሕ. Scholars (like Werner Munzinger, Conti Rossini, William Caffarel ...) have found the movement of the nationality well rooted in its narration. Maybe of special memory strength or way of presentation or other Bilens' past events seems more accessible. Here is what William Caffarel wrote.

"Bogoss (Boas-gor), today in number of 4300 distinct tribes in the Ad-Zamat, Sucunneiti, Ad-Hadembes, Bet Gabru, took station in Senhait (ሰንሐት) apparently in 1530, emigrants from Lasta, led a tradition that reminds that of the hairy Esau (ጨግጻር አያሱ) (See Martini: *Italian Africa*, p. 222) from Gebre Terkè, which even today is claimed to exist in the tomb Asciara. Still they speak their native language Agau, or bilen, which have appropriated even their neighbors, Bet Takuè, despite being Ethiopia origin."¹¹

Conti Rossini adds "The oldest for what, according to the traditions, leads from Lasta to Eritrea Bilen. If faith deserve Bogoss tales collected by Beinisch and by me, that the Bileni would have fled before a dreadful invasion, led by a queen from the south, with what we should' bring us back, of likelihood, the second half of the century X. The Bilen seem to have reached through the streets of Eastern Tiger."¹²

d ▶ Expansion of Deqqi Minàb ናይ ደቅቂ ሚናብ (Asghede አስገደ) in the sixteenth century

Now we are going to address people's movement from south to north of Eritrea more than 500 years old. The authors of this history are **Deqqi Minàb ናይ ደቅቲ ማናብ**. Asghede አስካደ was the head of this movement. What matters most to this article is not the movement of the people from south to north or vs. but immigrants' successful assimilation into community. With this we are proving that Eritrea is a mosaic of people and it will continue to be more and more. But we must not forget that there are two ways, bad and good, for constructing the mosaic society. That of **Deqqi Minàb** is considered as bad way because it was not accompanied with democratic principles.

" In the mid - to what seems - **the sixteenth century**, some families of Decchi Minab - indeed willed branch Zanadegle of Acchele - are conducted by one of them, Asghede, from the village of Adi Nefas north. Leave on 'Anseba some of them, wave the small tribe of Begiue (Bet Zera Buruc), and establish the roar that, from that Asghede head and roar Bacla, that in two of the most dominating mountainous positions the Sahel."¹³
Here the Decchi Minab managed to establish an authoritarian regime maybe the worst on the earth.

<< The Italian authorities were on the whole outraged by the system, which was documented in 1921 by Conti Rossini who likened it to " a human octopus of a few thousands parasites exploiting great number of vassals", [...] Martini claims, however, that he successes in abolishing four types of service hitherto paid by the Tigre, a further nine major obligations being retained. The services abolished were the following:

- 1) **Wot tsahai** or "cow of the sun." During the dry season when the cattle produced little milk any Tigre owing cattle had been obliged to give the Asgada (አስካደ) to whom he was attached one cow for slaughter.
- 2) **Wot makan**, or "sterile cow." Sterile cow belonging to the Tigre were traditionally divided equally between him and the Asgada.
- 3) **Negalet elegh**, or "goat of syphilis." When an Asgada caught syphilis he had been entitled to collect a goat for slaughter from the Tigre.
- 4) **Meskangel**. An Asgada was traditionally entitled to demand one Maria Theresa dollar whenever he met any Tigre attached to him.

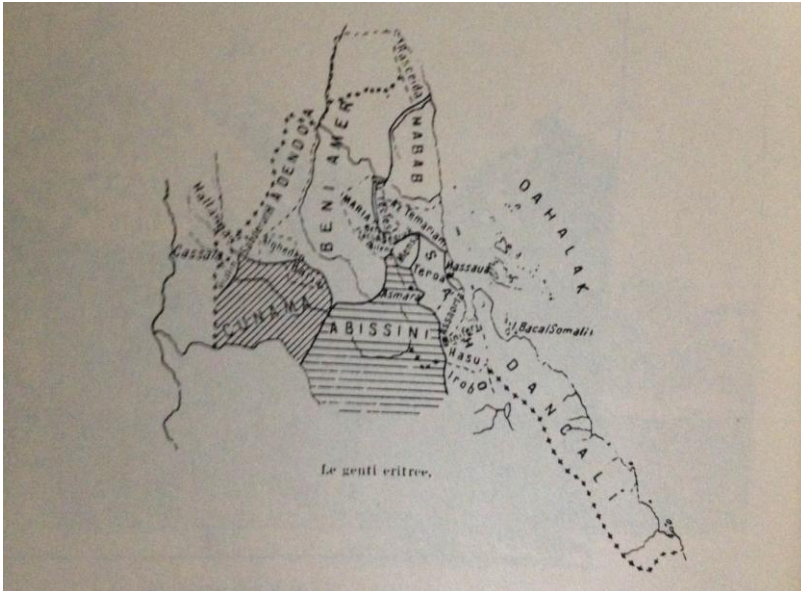
Though the above obligations were abolished the following were maintained:

1. **Medanet**. The Tigre was obliged to give the Asgada a certain quantity of butter irrespective of the size of his flock. This payment was valued at four Maria Theresa dollars for a herd of cattle and two dollars for a flock of goats.
2. **Wot halib**, or "milk cow." The Tigre had to lend the Asgada a milch (?) cow in summer and another in winter.
3. **Talit halib**, or "milch goat." This obligation resembled that of *Wot halib*, but applied to goats.
4. **Shimmet ghilsa**, or "gift of cover." The Tigre was obliged to give the Asgada during the rains a woolen blanket, or a goat or dollar in lieu thereof.
5. **James zahan**, or "transport camel." The Tigre had to supply a camel to the Asgada on the occasion of the latter's twice yearly migration.
6. **Zumbalat**, or "marriage present." On the marriage of the Asgada the Tigre was expected to give him a present, though Martini says this was not obligatory.
7. **Roggaz**, or "funeral." On the death of the Asgada the Tigre had to give the deceased's heir a cow or goat, the type of animal depending on what the vassal possessed.
8. **Talit haj**, or "goat of the haj." The Tigre had to give the Asgada a goat at the time of the pilgrimage to Mecca.
9. **Diuan**, or "hospitality." The Asgada when visiting the stockade was entitled to obtain milk from the Tigre twice a day. Through this right was preserved the Italians declared that the Asgada's stay there should be kept to a minimum.

Despite certain amelioration the system of aristocrats and vassals was thus maintained."¹⁴

e ▶ Rashaida in erittrea since 1846

Rashaida, Arab immigrants who came around 170 years ago; they are the last to join the Eritrean mosaic society. ↓Rashaida on the map (possible to enlarge by clicking)



" The emigration of whole tribes from the opposite shore of the Red Sea only recently (states remote a few decades) is that of Rasceida. Which they occupied the maritime area to the northern boundary of Colony ⁽¹⁾, but mostly modern, though perhaps began a few centuries must be considered in the coming Dahlach and sea ports of fishermen and Arab merchants and the penetration of these past along the way of the Sudan. The influence of them and traffic, which was, as it is also still largely in their hands, you must probably

attribute the formation or, rather, the increase in stable population nuclei of the Eritrean coast and the road to Kassala."¹⁵

⁽¹⁾ (It should be remembered here similar colony of Somalia settled, a few generations ago, in Baca and Abbaguba islands in the Bay Hauàchili)

"The Rashaida, Rashaayda or *Bani Rashid* (Arabic: الرشايدة, بني رشيد) are a tribe populating Eritrea and northeast Sudan.^[2] In **1846**, many Rashaida migrated from the Hejaz in present day Saudi Arabia into what is now Eritrea and northeast Sudan after tribal warfare had broken out in their homeland. The Rashaida of Sudan and Eritrea live in close proximity with the Beja people. Large numbers of Bani Rasheed are also found on the Arabian Peninsula."¹⁶

^[2] Young, William C., "The Rashaayda Bedouin - Arab Pastoralists of Eastern Sudan", 1996.

"The Rasciaida perform migrations to the Rorre Hagar, often trespassing (ብዙሕ ጊዜ ይሳገሩ እቶም ደብት) and not out of ignorance, so much so that train the cattle smuggling pasture, to the result that a cry and a formal nod to appoint and beast be put suddenly fleeing into their territory."¹⁷ Littmann mentions that an Arab tribe, the Rashaida, has crossed to the western side of the Red sea within recent years, "and is beginning to be nationalized in Africa; they still speak Arabic, but have commenced to use the Tigre as well."¹⁸

The mass emigration of Arabs was also in western and Eastern of Eritrea. But these two immigrants to Eritrea returned to their native country after the end of the history of Egypt colony in Eritrea. So, it is naïve (የሞህ, ግሩህ) not to say that the Egyptians were behind the emigration of Arabs to Eritrea in order to keep the area in their influence forever. Notwithstanding this Rasceidans are part and parcel of the whole Eritrean nationalities that form Eritrean home.

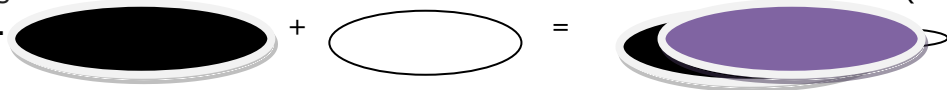
Today, but only if it is true, the population number of Rascedia reads more than 50,000 but this more than hundred years ago was round 500. Caffarel, in 1913, wrote "Those who speak Arabic, which are limited in number, **just a thousand**, the Massauini and the Rascedia, the latter almost all emigrants in recent times in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan."¹⁹

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- 1) Giovanni (P. Luca) Barzano, *Valore e Diritto della Prole negli statuti Consuetudinari dell'Altipiano Eritreo*, Editrice: Francescana, Asmara, p. 8.
- 2) Carlo Conti Rossini, *Schizzo etnico e storico delle popolazioni eritree*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, p. 64
- 3) C. Conti Rossini, *...* p. 69
- 4) George F. Black, *Ethiopica and Amharica, A List of Works in the New York Public Library*, New York, The New York Public Library, 1928, p. 5-6.
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- 6) L'Ullendorff pone la prima immigrazione Sud-Arabia di stirpi Habasciat ed Ag'azan al primo millennio Cristo, cf. E. ULLENDORFF, op. cit., p. 46. //The Ullendorff laid the first South-Saudi immigration of races Habasciat and Ag'azan the first millennium BC, cf. E. Ullendorff, op cit., P. 46. See Giovanni (P. Luca) Barzano, *Valore e Diritto della Prole negli statuti Consuetudinari dell'Altipiano Eritreo*, Editrice: Francescana, Asmara, references 12, p. 9.
- 7) Altre stirpi che invasero il paese sono quelle dei Bega dal nord nel secolo VIII d.C. circa, degli Agäw nel secolo X circa d. C., dei Cewa, coloni (militari) installatisi in Eritrea nel XV secolo.// Other lineages that invaded the country are those of Bega from the north in the eighth century A.D. about, of Agaw in the century X around d. C., of Cewa, settlers (military) who settled in Eritrea in the fifteenth century. See Giovanni (P. Luca) Barzano, *Valore e Diritto della Prole negli statuti Consuetudinari dell'Altipiano Eritreo*, Editrice: Francescana, Asmara, references 13, p. 9.
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- 10) Wolf Leslau, *The Languages of Ethiopia and their Geographical Distribution*, in *Ethiopian Observer*, April 1958, Vol. II, No. 3; p. 116.
- 11) William Caffarel, *La legislazione dell'Eritrea*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, p. 467-68.
- 12) C. Conti Rossini, *Schizzo etnico e storico delle popolazioni eritree*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, p. 75-6
- 13) C. Conti Rossini, *...* p. 81-82.
- 14) N. Pearce, *Life*, II, 13; Wylde, *Modern*, p. 266; in Richard Pankhurst, *Economic History of Ethiopia*, 1800 - 1935, (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 175-6.
- 15) Olinto Marinelli, *Un sguardo geografico all'Eritrea*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, p. 17 (for the map) and 51.
- 16) Rashaida people: From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (the date is without source).
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- 18) George F. Black, *Ethiopica and Amharica, A List of Works in the New York Public Library*, New York, The New York Public Library, 1928, p. 1.
- 19) William Caffarel, *La legislazione dell'Eritrea*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, p. 463.

f ▶ Political legacy of Hamitic and Semitic

To learn the political legacy of Hamitic and Semitic, it seems necessary to know the forms of their governments that were before and after their creation of Abyssia (or Habesha) race.



Hamitic: Baria and Cunama + **Semitic:** Habasciat and Ag'azan = Abyssinians ...

The mixture of Hamitic and Semitic has not completely swallowed Kunama and Baria. They are still living. Their cultures, tradition, form of governments ... intact are still illuminating Eritrean lowlands. Of this reality work of Alberto Pollera's "*I Baria e I Cunama*" (1913) speaks more. But for now let us give a space for the work of Work of William Caffarel that says, "Baria, Kunama ... these tribes know no division of class, have no nobility or hereditary chiefs, but they live in a condition of perfect equality; the supreme (ጸደቅ) power is icon corresponds from meeting (*mahber ማክበር*) elders of the village gathered under the tree (1).

"The Semitic immigrants, 'south Arabian races **Habasciat** and **Ag'azian** to the first millennium BC', were more civilized but they were devoid of democratic principles. For their culture to live in a condition of perfect equality was unknown. It is obvious that on Semitics arrival in the land of Kunama and Baria there was discomfort (ጥርጕኝ) for all the parties owing to their opposite regimes. But despite of this they were united to build Abyssinian world with the real power in authoritarian political system.

To the Semitic race, says Littimann, Abyssinian is grateful of what civilization it possesses. " They founded an empire, they built temples, palaces, and entire cities, as well as dams and reservoirs; they originated and carried on the only literature that Abyssinia ever had. When they came, they were, of course pagans, but after some centuries, they became Christian." (2)

Abyssinians were converted from Pagan to Christian but their traditional authoritarian regime remained intact. In fact the religion and the authoritarian regime worked hand in glove for centuries and still they cited as an inspiration (እስትንፋስ). Here is convincing evidence.

'The **Fetha Nagast** ([Ge'ez](#): ፍትሐ ነገሥት *fəṭḥa nägäšt*, "Law of the Kings") is a [legal code](#) compiled around 1240 by the [Coptic Egyptian](#) Christian writer, '[Abul Fada'il Ibn al-'Assal](#), in [Arabic](#) that was later translated into [Ge'ez](#) in Ethiopia and expanded upon with numerous local laws. 'Ibn al-Assal took his laws partly from apostolic writings, and partly from former law codes of the [Byzantine](#) rulers.

- Textual history[[edit](#)]

The first part of Fetha Nagast deals with mostly ecclesiastic affairs, outlining the structure of the Church hierarchy, sacraments, and such matters. It was compiled from the Bible, writings of early Church fathers including St. [Basil](#) and St. [Hippolytus](#), and various canons adopted at the [Council of Nicaea](#), the [Council of Antioch](#), and others.

The second part, concerning issues pertaining to the laity, such as family law, debt, civil administration etc., also drew on these sources, but is attributed in large part to four books referred to as "The Canons of the Kings". Various scholars have identified these books as:

The *Procheiros Nomos*, a Byzantine law code enacted by Emperor [Basilius the Macedonian](#) between 870 and 878;

[...]

There are a few historical records claiming that this law code was translated into [Ge'ez](#) and entered [Ethiopia](#) around 1450 in the reign of [Zara Yaqob](#). Even so, its first recorded use in the function of a [constitution](#) (supreme law of the land) is with [Sarsa Dengel](#) beginning in 1563.

This Ge'ez edition, ascribed to Petros Abda Sayd, is a loose translation of Ibn al-'Assal's original, and even diverges significantly in a few places where Petros evidently had some difficulty with the Arabic. Scholars have stated that the first section (the Ecclesiastical law) was already in use in Ethiopia before this time as part of the *Senodos*, and that the title *Fetha Negest*, Laws of the Kings, referred to the second (lay) part, that was new to Ethiopia.

The Fetha Negest remained officially the supreme law in Ethiopia until 1931, when a [modern-style Constitution](#) was first granted by Emperor [Haile Selassie I](#). A

completely modernised penal code had already been introduced in 1930. Earlier, in 1921, shortly after becoming Regent, but before being crowned as Emperor, Haile Selassie I had directed that certain "cruel and unusual" punishments mandated in the *Fetha*, such as amputation of hands for conviction of theft, be made to cease entirely. Even though Ethiopia's 1930 Penal Code replaced the criminal provisions of the Fetha Nagast, the latter document provided the starting point for the code, along with several European penal codes.^[11]

- Influence[[edit](#)]

The Fetha Nagast has had a great influence on Ethiopia. It has been an educational resource for centuries and is still consulted in matters of law in the present era.^[21] In 1960, when the government enacted the civil code of Ethiopia, it cited the Fetha Nagast as an inspiration to the codification commission.^[31] (3).

All together, now we are going to assess (ገምገመ) how much is influenced (ኢንፍሊዌንስ) Eritrean life by its creators: Hamitic and Semitic in terms of **legal-institutional** and **socio-cultural level**.

" a) the influence Semitic and Hamitic (እቲ ኢንፍሊዌንስ/iflusso ግብሪ, ክእለት)

The costumes Tigrinya Eritrea incorporate traditional elements derived from different civilizations, cooperating to form both the culture of the races also same people.

As Abyssinian, Tigrinya Eritrea, consists, as has been said, mainly by crossing element Hamitic and Semitic, not only racially, but also to legal-institutional and socio-cultural level.

[...]

A fundamental and prevalent element in the establishment of legal institutions-is the influence of the Semitic law that overlaps to a large extent on that Hamite, already in remote ages (XVII sec. b. C?).

The first Semitic influence was felt with the migration of South-Arabic groups on the Ethiopian coast. You know not the old South-Arabian law that the former north-Arabian. Consequently, the news that you may have on the ancient right of Habasciat (south-Arabian population immigrated to Ethiopia), it must be inferred from known and interpret the rights of neighboring populations then and still exist in written or orally handed down.

The scholar of the Eritrean customs (or habits or usages) Conti Rossini, sees the prevalence (ክልቅንነት, ብልጺ) of the element Hamite in family and land rights laws, while in contractual (አብ ውሳኔ) relationships and judgments, in the ease of divorce, in the institution of the guarantor, acknowledges the Arab fairly dramatic element pressure Islamic.

Ostini, noting the profound democratic sense that permeates (ዝ ይእትው) customary social institutions, discovers "an essential principle of democracy that is just the Hamitic race (4).

From the above evidence we can draw some conclusions safely. Kunama and Baria are the first establishers of the oldest institution, namely **baito ባይቶ**. And the base of a republican federal form of Akkeleguzai is inherited from the Baria-Cunama democratic customary social institutions. In other words we know that the Habasciat and Agazian immigrant races were authoritarian, hierarchical and in all sense incompatible with native's traditional democratic values. In the battle the authoritarian leadership won and took root in the invaded Abyssinian land to be the base of Abyssinians' authoritarian and hierarchical regimes. But Akkeleguzai remained intact. It followed Baria-Kunama native democratic values and it paid a high price to conserve and develop it. For this, relatively speaking, Akkeleguzai was a place where to live. So Hamitic (Baria and Cunama) are not only the base or ancient elements of the Eritrean society but are also wells or evolutions

of our democratic values from which the coming Eritrean republic drinks water for its growth.

To come to a conclusion, the influence of Semitic culture is not faded because there are large areas of our lives governed by it. The authoritarian leadership of Abyssinia in general and the dictatorship that is at full gallop (ናብ እቲ ምሉእ ጋልበት) in Eritrea in particular can be mentioned as examples. And it will be very difficult to be away from the shadow of Semitic culture before influence school culture prevails. So Semitic culture, naturally not the good but the bad political legacy ..., will see its grave only when the influence of school culture in politics, architecture, language, arts, philosophy ... becomes active. This suggests that Eritreans will go a long, long road to liberate themselves from the prison of old culture. A voyage to break bad habits is not always easy. But it seems necessary to dig deep, no matter how hard, in order to understand the pillars of Semitic culture from their roots. For example, we are with the following two key terms **ሰብ** (*from verb ተረከተየ*) and **ገላት** (*from verb ገለለተ*) that are influencing lives of Eritrean society for centuries and centuries. **In a very specific way**, Seraye and Akkeleguzia are with **ሰብ** and **ገላት** respectively since their establishments. The term **ገላት** is the right to use land granted by government, organization ... For me our mindset is the product this old land policy. So it needs change from fixed mindset to growth mindset.

References

- 1) William Caffarel, *La legislazione dell'Eritrea*; in Ferdinando Martini; L'ERITREA ECONOMIA, Novara - Roma, 1913, page, 471.
- 2) George F. Black, *Ethiopia and Amharica*, A List of Works in the New York Public Library, New York, The New York Public Library, 1928, p. 1.
- 3) *The Fetha Nagast*: From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.
- 4) Giovanni (P. Luca) Barzano, *Valore e Diritto della Prole negli statuti Consuetudinari dell'Altipiano Eritreo*, Editrice: Francescana, Asmara, p. 33- 34.

II Introduction to the History of Tacruri in Eritrea

መቼድም ናብ እታ ታሪኽ ናይ ታኽሩሪ ኣብ ኣርቲራ

Now, we enter into discussion upon our people who are in limbo (in a situation characterised by uncertainty). Their number was **5000** according to the census of **1947**. They are seven groups of Moslem pilgrims who belong to different West and Central African races, and in most cases, farmers, shepherds and fishermen who use Eritrea as a bridge to go to Mecca and to return from Mecca. It is an old practice but now days it seems that the civilized world has made it to change its course.

These seven groups when they are in Eritrea they are under one name: Tacruri (*pl.ታኽሩሪ*), Tacrurir (*sin.ታኽሩር*). When we see them from Eritrea's point of view they they are bridges that connect Eritrea with West Africa. Without any question they are a great asset for our country.

The document shows that there are many things that play against these most vulnerable people. Politics and ignorance have a great negative role. But I hope that this abuse be substituted by democratic treatments. They are a people who deserve respects, and assistance. Eritrea must recognize and embrace them as daughters and sons of her mother Africa.

The document what is at our disposal for reading is written in Italian by Ellero Young in 1947. Because of its importance, it is with English translation. So there is a languages choice.

I TACRURI 5, 000 UNITÀ IN ERITREA NEL 1947

GIOVANI ELLERO

I. Con la denominazione Tacruri (in arabo Tacruri, Tacarir; e dall'arabo recepita integralmente o quasi in Tigre Tacruri, Tacarir, in Begia Tacruri, Tachrir e in Cunama Tuqruri, Tuqrura) si è oggi soliti indicare in Eritrea i componenti di una popolazione fluttuante che, proveniente dalle regioni occidentali dell'Africa e diretta in pellegrinaggio alla Mecca, finisce per lasciare sul nostro territorio, nel viaggio di andata e con maggiore frequenza in quello di ritorno, nuclei più o meno numerosi di famiglie stabili o semistabili.

L'origine della denominazione è incerta. Certo è però che gli interessati, i quali ne ignorano il significato, se la sentono attribuire per la prima volta al loro ingresso nella parte del Sudan A.E. che confina con l'Abissinia, e poi ripetere in Eritrea fino alle rive del Mar Rosso. In senso proprio essa denominazione non vale ora a indicare una razza, ma semplicemente una comunità di appartenenti a razze diverse, di provenienza grosso modo circoscritta, e aventi una caratteristica ben definita se pure transeunte: quella di essere parte di una collettività di pellegrini diretti alla Città Santa o da questa provenienti.

Probabilmente siamo di fronte a un tipico caso di estensione del termine che in origine servi a designare soltanto un importante gruppo etnico della stirpe Fullo, i Tacruri --- più tardi noti come Toucouleurs. L'estensione si può facilmente spiegare quando si pensi che dal secolo XIII alla fine del secolo XIX la storia dei Fullo segna una continua espansione, un progressivo assorbimento di popoli vicini. Insomma un crescente predominio nel bacino del Niger, e che la loro fama dovette presto oltrepassare le sedi dell'Africa occidentale. L'inizio delle migrazioni attraverso il continente nero si può riportare all'islamizzazione o al successivo periodo di affermazione dell'islamismo nell'Africa occidentale, ove esso si impose appunto tramite i Fullo; l'itinerario tradizionale, seguito ancor oggi dai Tacruri (Socoto - Cano - Fort-Lamy - Hatia - Om Hager - Uadai - Hadere - Ginena - El Fasher - El Obeid - Ghedarf) coincide con la direttrice dell'espansione musulmana che, come è noto, ha avuto in questa parte dell'Africa andamento generale da occidente o orientale.

Comunque, di *Tacruri* sulle frontiere abissine è notizia fin del secolo XVII in fonti etiopiche. La regione da loro preferita fu quella compresa tra il Setit e l'Atabara: Ghedaref, Gallabat, Ghedabi, Noggara, e in genere i mezzà del Uolcait furono centri abitati in buona parte da Tacuri. Gli Abissini dell'Etiopia nord-occidentale ne conoscono il nome, e sono soliti accomunarli nel loro disprezzo per tutte le popolazioni negre e negroidi del Sudan e del bassopiano occidentale.

II. Tale comunità, quale si presenta dopo avere varcato il confine dell'Eritrea, è interessante esempio della influenza livellatrice esercitata dalla religione e dalla convivenza, sia pure effimera, su gruppi e individuali appartenenti a razze o, comunque, a stirpi diverse.

Infatti se le stirpi originarie dei Tacruri residenti in Eritrea sono otto - Haussa, Bornu, Fullo, Cotoco, Baghermi, Borcu, Bilala, For - il pellegrinaggio alla Mecca, fenomeno sociale ed economico oltre che religioso e politico, esercita su di esse le più sensibili ripercussioni.

Dal punto di vista sociale, si osserva che i membri delle singole stirpi, partendo dalle sedi abituali in gruppi di qualche decina, incontrano lungo il cammino altri gruppi, con i quali spesso si accompagnano e sostano, per mesi o per anni. Quando il luogo di sosta si

trasforma in villaggio e questo assume un carattere di qualche stabilità, le stirpi subiscono delle mescolanze. Non è possibile segnalarne delle vere e proprie tendenze in proposito: consta però che Haussa, Fullo, Cotoco e Baghermi sono soliti sposarsi fra loro, e così pure tra loro Bornu, Borca, Bilala e For. Ogni stirpe parla in origine una lingua o dialetto omonimo e la conserva a lungo, durante l'emigrazione, nei rapporti interni. I nati da matrimoni misti imparano la lingua della famiglia materna o paterna secondo che sono allevati in una o nell'altra. È frequente il caso di persone che ne conoscono due o più. Nei villaggi Tacruri esistono inoltre dei veri e propri interpreti, per quanto la diffusa assimilazione dell'arabo da parte di tutti tenda a rendere sempre più questa lingua il mezzo comune di espressione per gli scarsi rapporti esterni.

Dal punto di vista economico si nota che il lungo viaggio esaurisce rapidamente le modeste risorse dei pellegrini, che sono, nella maggiore parte dei casi, **contadini, pastori o pescatori**. La necessità di fare fronte ai bisogni immediati dell'esistenza li spinge a soste la cui durata può di prendere dalla possibilità di raccogliere risparmi sufficienti per continuare il cammino, dalle buone condizioni di vita materiale in una determinata località, ma anche, e quasi indifferentemente, da nuove parentele contratte per via, o dal semplice capriccio.

A tale solidarietà di movimenti e di interessi si aggiunga la notevole somiglianza delle caratteristiche medie fisiche e morali – eccellente costituzione che rende i Tacruri particolarmente adatti ai lavori manuali, limitati bisogni, indole mite – che è un ulteriore fattore di pacifica convivenza sociale.

Non va trascurata la tendenza all'isolamento caratteristica dei Tacruri, effetto della minore considerazione dell'ambiente in cui sono portati a vivere e, a un tempo, loro istintiva difesa contro l'ambiente stesso.

Dopo di che non farà meraviglia che la denominazione di Tacruri sia comunemente usata per indicare un agglomerato incerto che spesso ed erroneamente si ritiene assurgere all'unità di una razza.

III. I nuclei residenti ai nostri giorni in Eritrea comprendono i diretti discendenti degli immigrati nelle due ultime decadi del secolo scorso, e i successivi apporti; le alterne vicende delle guerre e delle attività pacifiche e i continui spostamenti delle popolazioni non consentirono il formarsi di genealogie locali.

Le varie stirpe, esaminate analiticamente, conservano ricordi dei paesi di provenienza e un'intatta conoscenza delle lingue e dei dialetti originali.

Sotto il profilo della tradizione orale ecco le caratteristiche schematicamente riassunte:

Gli Haussa interrogati si dichiarano originari della Nigeria settentrionale e sudditi inglesi. Sono agricoltori e pastori. Fiumi ricordati: Quara, Curarà, Cogincanu. Villaggi originari ricordati, che essi affermano di abitare insieme con i Fullo: Cano, Socoto, Cazina, Zezeu, Cataga, Adegia, Massau, Bauci, Giamare, Gombe. Conservano ricordo di un passato di dominazione, cui pose fine la preponderanza dei Fullo.

I Bornu interrogati si dichiarano originari della regione omonima (Nigeria settentrionale) e sudditi inglesi. Sono agricoltori. Loro ricordano il lago Ciad, limite nord-occidentale della regione di provenienza. Villaggi originari ricordati: Cuca, Maiduguru, Diqua, Cahua, Gasermo, Goneiri, Yoruha. Hanno una vaga memoria del passato della stirpe, di cui affermano esistere anche una genealogia scritta: circa al medesimo non sanno però dare notizie precise. Nei loro racconti ricorre spesso menzione del sultano Sefu Lamino.

I Fullo (che gli Haussa chiamano Fullata o Fullani) interrogati si dichiarano originari della Nigeria settentrionale e sudditi inglesi. Sono agricoltori e pastori, spesso benestanti. Parte di essi conosce l'arabo. Fiumi ricordati: Tecu, Geginrubu, Socoto. Villaggi originari

ricordati: Godobaua, Urno, Gigane, Asara, Meli, Tauna, Damba, Terche, Gidancatta, Gaharu, Ciri, Calmalo, Bauni, Malgam. Conservano il ricordo di un passato di dominazione e ne attribuiscono il merito a Osman dan Foda, che avrebbe convertito all'islamismo il suo popolo e tradotto il Corano in lingua Fullo.

I Cotoco interrogati si dicono originari di Afade (Uadai, Africa equatoriale francese) e sudditi francesi. Sono agricoltori, pastori e pescatori. Ricordano il fiume Lam. Village originari ricordati: Melue, Cala, Danuna, Maltam 'Ngami, Massauah, Segghel, Delhte. Niente sanno dire sulla loro stirpe.

Sui Baghermi non ebbi modo di raccogliere notizie.

I Borcu interrogati si dichiarano originari della regione omonima (Africa equatoriale francese) e sudditi francesi. Sono in prevalenza agricoltori e pastori. Alcuni tra essi conoscono l'arabo. Villaggi originari ricordati: Abesci, Calina, Ghemanga, Auali, Condom, Abgudam, Bilti, Adre, Fuda, Orada, Om Hagar, Hatia. Non hanno saputo dare notizie sulla loro stirpe.

I Bilala interrogati si dichiarano originari di Yaho (Africa equatoriale Francese) e sudditi francesi. Sono agricoltori e pastori. Ricordano il fiume Fitri. Villaggi originari ricordati : Malene, Dinni, Gollo, Niammena, Aburda, Ateardeb, Halifa, Abdaia. Non è stato possibile avere da loro notizie sull'origine della stirpe.

I For interrogati si dichiarano originari del Darfur (Sudan A.E.) e sudditi anglo-egiziani. Sono agricoltori e pastori. Ricordano il fiume Denderti. Villaggi originari ricordati: Ecceu, Cungia, Debo, Tauhila, Birtauhil. Si dichiarano di razza Cungiara, ma ignorano le tradizioni della stirpe.

Ed ecco una raccolta di parole delle stirpi nominate¹⁾:

IV. Per quanto è a mia conoscenza, i vari censimenti hanno sino ad oggi fornito solamente elementi approssimativi sulla consistenza dei Tacruri in Eritrea : il che si spiega con la stessa incertezza del termine, con il comunque esiguo numero di essi in rapporto alla popolazione del paese, con la loro polverizzazione nel vasto territorio, con le difficoltà che una rilevazione presenta anche a causa dello spiccato nomadismo per cui la porzione fluttuante è di gran lunga superiore alla fissa.

Dei Tacruri non è neppure menzione nella relazione pubblicata nel 1902 dal CONTI ROSSINI ²⁾. Il censimento generale del 1931 comprende sudanesi e Tacruri nella cifra di 3.700. Il POLLERA, che trascrive questo ultimo dato ³⁾, parlando dei censiti come globalmente appartenenti <<a varie regioni del Sudan orientale>> dà l'impressione che la cifra stessa sia basata su di un equivoco iniziale. I dati del censimento del 1939 in fine non sono stati ancora elaborati. In ogni modo l'ammontare dei Tacruri in Eritrea, dopo l'aumento temporaneo ed abnorme del periodo della campagna italo-etiopica e dell'immediato dopoguerra per il moltiplicarsi dei lavori di ogni genere, ma soprattutto stradali ed edilizi, si è stabilizzato in una cifra che si può calcolare un po' al disotto del doppio di quella preesistente, e cioè sulle **5.000 unità**. Il che è pur sempre in linea generale dovuto alle profondamente mutate condizioni del mercato della mano d'opera (aumentata domanda, notevole specie a Massaua per l'incremento del porto), e in particolare allo sviluppo delle coltivazioni di Tessenei e di Om Hager.

Quanti alla loro distribuzione, i centri di residenza sono bene identificati perfino nei confronti di ciascuna delle varie stirpi, che dimostrano di aver particolari predilezioni: così se gli Haussa si stabiliscono indifferentemente a Om Hager, Gulli, Foco, Tessenei, Ducambia, Cheru, Agordat, Cheren, Asmara, Massaua, Ademdeme, i Bornu preferiscono Arrauian, Om Hager, Gherghef, Agordat, e alcuni nuclei Gullui, Tessenei, Ducambia; i Fullo Tessenei, Agordat, Cheren, Asmara, Massaua; i Cotoco Massaua, e limitatamente a piccolo nuclei Om Hager e Foco; i Borcu Scironna, Omera, Om Hagar, Gherghef, Gherset, Gullui, Tessenei, Agordat, Cheren; i Bilala Om Hager, Gherghef, Gullui, Tessenei; i For Om Hager, Tessenei, Ducambia ⁴⁾, Agordat, Cheren e Massaua ⁵⁾. I Tacruti abitano in

villaggi che da essi ripetono il nome, in posizione appartata e ed ovest del centro abitato: pochi elementi vivono frammischiati agli agglomerati di razze diverse.

Nel Bassopiano occidentale essi sono dediti prevalentemente all'agricoltura. Coltivano i cotone, la dura, il granoturco, l'arachide, il sesamo, il carcadé e, lungo le sponde del Setit e del Gasc e del Barca e nelle vicinanze dei pozzi, gli ortaggi. Per attendere a tali lavori essi lasciano talvolta la residenza abituale e si recano a seminare in regioni anche distanti da questa, trattenendosi fuori per il periodo che va dalla semina al raccolto. Nelle oltre Setit sono pure raccoglitori di miele. Durante tali spostamenti le famiglie vengono lasciate nei centri su menzionati.

Esercitano un artigianato molto limitato. Pochi fabbri e falegnami sopperiscono alle esigenze saltuarie e scarse della comunità. Soltanto i barbieri-ceruscici praticano la loro attività anche a favore della restante popolazione.

Sull'altopiano (Cheren, Asmara, Massaua?) i Tacruri vivono sparsi e dispersi e sono dediti ai lavori manuali: manovali, facchini, e così via.

- 1) Si conserva tale e quale la trascrizione non scientifica dell'autore N.D.R.).
- 2) C. Conti Rossini, *Il censimento delle popolazioni indigene della colonia Eritrea*, in *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, 1902, fasc. 1.
- 3) A. Pollera, *Le popolazioni indigene dell'Eritrea*, L. Cappelli, Bologna, 1935, pag. 281.
- 4) Del villaggio Tacruo di Ducambia è fuggevole cenno nel resoconto di G. Corni, *Tra Gasc e Setit*, Sindacato It. Arti Grafiche, Roma, s.d. pag. 69 e seg.
- 5) L'Odorizzi ai suoi tempi, nella tabella censuaria di Massaua, includeva in una cifra di 659 unità, sudanesi e Tacruri della circoscrizione. V.D. Odorizzi, *II Commissario Regionale di Massaua al 1^o gennaio 1910*, Fioretti e Beltrami, Asmara, 1911, pag. 125.

The TACRURI 5000 UNITS IN ERITREA in 1947

BY

GIOVANI ELLERO

I. Under the name Tacruris (Arabic Tacruri, Tacarir; and Arabic incorporated in full or nearly in Tigre Tacruri, Tacarir in Beja Tacruri, Tachrir and Kunama Tucruri, Tucrura) it is now usual in Eritrea indicate the components of a floating population which, coming from the western regions of Africa and live on a pilgrimage to Mecca, it ends up leaving our territory, on the way out and more frequently to return more or less numerous groups of stable or semi-stable families.

The origin of the name is uncertain. It is certain, however, 'that the persons concerned, who are unaware of the meaning, are unwilling to attribute for the first time as they enter the part of Sudan A.E. that border with Abyssinia, and then repeat in Eritrea to the shores of the Red Sea. Strictly speaking it is not worth naming now indicating a race, but simply a community of belonging to different races, big circumscribed way origin and having a characteristic well defined even if transient: that of being part of a community of pilgrims to city Santa or this coming.

Probably we are facing a typical case of extension of the term originally servants to designate only a major ethnic group in Fullo lineage, the Tacruri --- more later known as Toucouleurs. The extinction you can easily explained when one considers that since the **thirteenth** century to the end of the **nineteenth century**, the history of Fullo marks a continued expansion, a progressive absorption of neighboring peoples. To sum up a growing dominance in the Niger basin, and their fame soon had to go beyond the West African locations. The beginning of migrations across the continent it can bring Islamization or Toggle Next period of affirmation of Islam in West Africa, where it is in

fact imposed by the Fullo; the traditional route followed today by Tacruri (Socoto - Cano - Fort-Lamy - Hatia - Om Hager - Uadai - Hadere - Ginena - El Fasher - El Obeid - Ghedarf) coincides with the Muslim expansion director, as has known, he has had in this part of the general trend from the west or the east.

However, the Tacruri the Abyssinian borders is documented since the **seventeenth century Ethiopian sources**. The region of their choice was one between the Setit and Atabara: Ghedaref, Gallabat, Ghedabi, Noggara, and generally Mezga of Uolcalt were inhabitants centers largely from Tacuri. The Abyssinians of Ethiopia northwestern not know the name, and are used to unite them in their contempt for all black women and Negroid peoples of Sudan and the western lowlands.

II. This community, which looks after crossing the Eritrean border, is an interesting example of the leveling influence exerted by religion and coexistence, albeit ephemeral, of groups and individual breeds or, however, in different lineages. In fact, if the original tribes of Tacruri residents in Eritrea are eight - Hausa, Bornu, Fullo, Cotoco, Baghermi Borcu, Bilala, For - the pilgrimage to Mecca, social and economic phenomenon as well as religious and political, exerts on them the most 'appreciable effect.

From the social point of view, it is observed that the members of the individual races, starting from the usual locations in groups of a few dozen, encounter along the way other groups, with which often accompany and stop, for months or years. When the resting place turns into the village and this takes on a character of some stability, the families suffer of mixtures. You can not report the actual trends in the way: but that consists Hausa, Fullo, Cotoco and Baghermi are wont marry each other, and so well between them Bornu, Borca, and Bilala and For. Each tribe speaks originally a language or dialect of the same name and keeps well, during the emigration, in internal relations. Those born from mixed marriages learn the language of the maternal or paternal family according that is raised in one or the other. It is often the case for people who know two or more '. In addition, there are villages Tacruri real performers, as the widespread assimilation of Arabic by all tends to make more and more 'this language common medium of expression for the limited external relations.

From an economic perspective we note that the long trip out quickly the modest resources of the pilgrims, who are, in most cases, farmers, shepherds or fishermen. The desired amount required to meet the immediate needs of existence drives them to stop whose durations can 'take the opportunity to gather enough savings to continue the journey, from good material living conditions in a particular location, but also, and almost indifferently, by new relationships contracted due, or whim.

In this solidarity movements and interest add the remarkable similarity of the physical and moral medium characteristics - excellent constitution that makes Tacruri particularly suited to manual labor, limited needs, mild-tempered - which is an additional factor of peaceful social coexistence.

It is also a critical feature of Tacruri tendency to isolation, due to the reduced inclusion of the environment in which they are brought to life and, at the same time, their instinctive defense against the environment itself.

After that it will not wonder that the name of Tacruri is commonly used to indicate an uncertain agglomeration often and mistakenly believed rise unity of a race.

III. Residents nuclei in our days in Eritrea include the direct descendants of immigrants in the last two decades of the last century, and the subsequent contributions; the vicissitudes of war and peaceful activities and the continued displacement of populations did not allow the formation of local genealogies.

The various races, analytically examined, retain memories of their home countries and an intact knowledge of languages and dialects of the original.

In terms of oral tradition are the characteristics summarized schematically:

The Hausa questioned declare originating in northern Nigeria and English subjects. They

are farmers and shepherds. Rivers remember: Quara, Curarà, and Cogincanu. Original villages mentioned, they claim to dwell together with Fullo: Cano, Socoto, Cazina, Zezzu, Cataga, Adegia, Massau, Philemon, Giamare, and Gombe. Preserve the memory of a past of domination, which ended the preponderance of Fullo.

The Bornu questioned declares the same name originating in the region (northern Nigeria) and English subjects. They are farmers. They remember the Lake Chad, the north-Western Hemisphere region of origin limit. Original villages remember: Cuca, Maiduguru, Diqua, Cahua, Gasermo, Goneiri, and Yoruha. They have a vague memory of the past of the race, which claim also is a written genealogy: about the same do not know but give precise information. In their stories often recurs mention of Sultan Scefu Lamino.

The Fullo (that Hausa call Fullata or Fullani) polled say they are originating in northern Nigeria and English subjects. They are farmers and herders, often wealthy. Of them he knows Arabic. Rivers remember: Tecu, Geginrubu, and Socoto. Original villages remember: Godobaua, Urno, Gigane, Asara, Meli, Tauna, Damba, Terche, Gidancatta, Gaharu, Ciri, Calm him, Bauni, Malgam. Keep the memory of a past domination and they ascribe the merit and Osman dan Foda, who would convert to Islam his people and translated the Koran in Fullo language.

The Cotoco questioned say they originate in Fade (Wadi, Africa equatoriale French) and French subjects. They are farmers, herders and fishermen. Remember the river Lam. Village originate remember: Melue, Cala, Danuna, Maltam 'Ngami, Massauah, Segghel, Delhte. They say they know nothing about their lineage.

On Baghermi I had no way of gathering news.

I questioned Borcu declare the same name originating in the region (French Equatorial Africa) and French subjects. They are mostly farmers and shepherds. Some of them speak Arabic. Original villages remember: Abesci, Calina, Ghemanga, Auali, Condom, Abgudam, Bilti, Adre, Fuda, Orada, Om Hagar, and Hatia. They have not been able to give information about their lineage.

The Bilala questioned say they originate in Yaho (French Equatorial Africa) and those French. They are farmers and shepherds. Fitri remember the river. Original villages remember: Malene, Dinni, Gollo, Niammena, Aburda, Ateardeb, Halifa, and Abdaia. It was not possible to obtain from them news about the origin of the race.

For I questioned declare originating in Darfur (Sudan A.E.) and Anglo-Egyptian subjects. They are farmers and shepherds. Remember the Denderti River. Original villages remember: Ecceu, Cungia, Debo, Tauhila, and Birtauhil. They claim to Cungiara race, but ignore the traditions of the race.

And here is a collection of words bloodlines nominate¹):

<u>Tigriyna</u>	<u>Hausa</u>	<u>Bornu</u>	<u>Fullo</u>	<u>Cotoco</u>	<u>Borcu</u>	<u>Bilala</u>	<u>For</u>
ሰማይ	sama	semi	dule	sama	sema	samane	giuahi
ምድሪ	cassa	sedi	ledi	ften	ared	ardne	suro
ጸሐይ	rahma	chingal	naughe	zuhu	agnich	camcara	dule
ማይ	ruha	ingi	diem	ahume	angi	mahne	coro
ሐውዊ	utu	cannu	ihite	hu	uassich	fodo	udu
ነ/ንፋስ	isca	caroa	éndu	zi	aulit	lehle	caulo

To the best of my knowledge, the various censuses have so far provided only elements approximate the consistency of Tacruri in Eritrea, which is explained by the same uncertainty of the term, with the still small number of them in relation to the population of the country, with their pulverization in the vast territory, with the difficulties that also presents a detection because of the nomadic issued for which the floating portion is far superior to the fixed.

Of Tacruri it is not even mentioned in the report published in 1902 by CONTI ROSSINI ²). The general census of 1931 includes Sudanese and Tacruri in the **3700** figure. The POLLERA, who transcribes this latest figure ³), speaking of the census as a whole << belonging to various regions of eastern Sudan >> gives the impression that the same figure is based on an initial misunderstanding. The data of the 1939 census in order have not yet been processed. In any case the amount of Tacruri in Eritrea,

after the temporary increase and the abnormal period of the Italo-Ethiopian campaign and immediately after the war about the proliferation of works of all kinds, but especially road and building, has stabilized at a figure that you can 'calculate a bit' below the double of the pre-existing, namely on **5,000** units. Which is still generally due to the profoundly changed market conditions of labor (increased demand, significant species *Massua* for the increase of the port), and in particular the development of the cultivations of Tessenai and Om Hager.

How their distribution, residency centers are good even identified against each of the various races, who can prove they special fondness: so if you Hausa either establish Om Hager, Gullui, Foco, Tessenai, Ducambia, Cheru, Agordat, Keren, Asmara, Massawa, Adememe, the Bornu prefer Arrauian, Om Hager, Gherghef, Agordat, and some Gullui nuclei, Tessenai, Ducambia; the Fullo Tessenai, Agordat, Keren, Asmara, Massawa; the Cotoco Massawa, and limiting to a small Om Hager and Foco nuclei; the Borcu Scironna, Omera, Om Hager, Gherghef, Gheret, Gullui, Tessenai, Agordat, Cheren; the Bilala Om Hager, Gherghef, Gullui, Tessenai; For the Om Hager, Tessenai, Ducambia ⁴), Agordat, Keren and Massawa ⁵). The Tacruti live in villages that they repeat the name, in secluded location and west of the town: a few elements to live intermingled agglomerati of different races.

In Western Lowland they are dedicated mainly to agriculture. They grow cotton, hard, corn, peanut, sesame, Carcade and, along the banks of Setit and Gasc and Barca and nearby wells, vegetables. To attend to this work, they sometimes leave their habitual residence and go to seed in the regions also far from this, staying out for the period from planting to harvest. In addition Setit are also honey collectors. During these movements families are left in the centers mentioned above.

Exert a very limited craftsman. Few blacksmiths and carpenters to make up for unforeseen needs and scarce community. Only the barber-surgeons practice their activities also in favor of the remaining population.

On the high plateau (Keren, Asmara, Massawa?) If Takruri live scattered and dispersed, and are dedicated to manual labor: laborers, porters, and so on.

Giovanni Ellero, *I TACRURI IN ERITREA* in Rassegna Di Studi Etiopio, Direttore Carlo Conti Rossini, volume VI, Gennaio-Dicembre 1947, Fascicolo II, Roma, 1947, p.189-199.

- 1) It is preserved as such transcription unscientific author's editor's note.
- 2) C. Conti Rossini, The census of indigenous peoples of the colony of Eritrea, in Italian Geographic Magazine, 1902, fasc. 1.
- 3) A. Pollera, The indigenous peoples of Eritrea, L. Cappelli, Bologna, 1935, p. 281.
- 4) Of the village of Tacruo Ducambia is fleeting mention in the report of G. Horn, Between Gasc and Setit, Trade Union En. Graphic Arts, Rome, S.D. p. 69 et seq
- 5) The Odorizzi is his day, in the census table of Massawa, he included in a figure of 659 units, Sudanese and Tacruri the constituency. V.D. Odorizzi, II Regional Commissioner of Massawa to 10 January 1910, Fioretti and Beltrami, Asmara, 1911, p. 125.

III Introduction to History of Abrha Dobocho, Mogos Asgedom and Zerai Deres

What happened in Addis Ababa on February 19, 1937 and in Rome on May 21, 1937? On these particular occasion was the birth of history of quality that man always wants to learn it in order to win **with the utmost courage**. The authors were Abrha Dobocho and Mogos Asgedom in Addis Ababa and Zerai Deres in Rome. Their history is a history of resistance in Abyssinia. Yes, these three guys were Eritreanborn and their stiffest

resistance operation places were in Modern Ethiopia (or Menelik II Ethiopia) and Italy. But these heroes fulfilled their duties as ancient Ethiopian citizens or ከም ጥንቲ ኢትዮጵያውያን ደቅቂ ኣብባብ not as Eritreans or modern Ethiopians. For them Treaty of Wichale had no weight and worthless stuff to buy it.

For example, *ሃይማኖት አበው* or **FAITH OF THE FATHERS** is a manuscript produced by ancient Ethiopia many centuries ago. Treaty of Wichale divided this book and has distributed onethird of the pages to king Umberto and twofourth to king Menelik 11 on May 2, 1889. Then both are republished as books. The title of the Italian book became *Eritrea* and that of Menelik II *Ethiopia*. On this issue the above mentioned heroes were part of those who gave their lives **to rebind together** the pages of the book. These kinds of people are called **defenders of status quo**.

We have already learned how Habesba emerged and their kingdom ruled by a king or queen. The civilization of this kingdom started from Adulis, Quohaito, Yaha and finally Aksum. And I believe the following churches share the same history: Aromo (in Scimezana, demolished 1940-41), Debre Dammo (of 6th-century ... located west of Addigrat), Yemrah, Lalibela (of 1187).

Habesha were with their kingdom from B.C. until the birth of **Treaty of Wichale**. This treaty divided ancient Ethiopia into two, namely Eritrea with its capital city Asmara and modern or Menelik II Ethiopia with Addis Abeba. For this Menelik II received "a sum of money and the provision of 30,000 muskets and 28 cannons."¹ Since 1889 the Treaty of Wichale is still in force. It is a political legacy left for us **to be always not in peace but at war**. We have direct experiences of this because we are both north and south of River Mereb wars survivors. This could have been avoided but only if we were with the **defenders of status quo**.

Let us talk openly. Menelik II while he was making this pact with Italians he had no knowledge about northern Ethiopia, Red Sea, port, ship not to mention that northern Ethiopia (today Eritrea) is **the birthplace of Ethiopia** (or Abyssinia or Habesha). This shows that the northerners are the leaders of an action or movement in society, politics, art, war, etc. for defending **the birthplace of Ethiopia**. This is what Abrha Dobocho, Mogos Asgedom, Zerai Deres, Dr Lorenzo Tazaz ... have proved again. I strongly believe that this living way left open for us must be respected and followed. If we don't, especially Eritreans, we will be nowhere near our real history that begins before B.C.

We must not be confused by reading a wrong book. That is there are two history books about Menelik II, written by those who derived benefit from his reign and by those who suffered much humiliation. It is obvious that men like Abrha Dobocho, Mogos Asgedom, Zerai Deres, Dr Lorenzo Tazaz ... who were sold with their land to Italians had nothing to do with benefits. But this doesn't stop from forming united liberation front with second enemy to destroy the first. I strongly believe that Abrha Dobocho and the others were associating themselves with authoritarian politics of Addis Abeba with the mentioned reason in mind. And they were right because there was no other way out.

To sum up, history of Abrha Dobocho, Mogos Asgedom, Zerai Deres ... must not be misunderstood. To be bought by political legacy of king Umberto and king Menelik II was against their principles. Their acts of bravery are unique in the region where they belong. So no wonder why their history is not properly known as it should be. But now we are in the modern Era of internet where folks learn more than before. This gives a guarantee that **defenders of status quo** will be winners and naturally, the politics that maintains the political legacy of two kings, Umberto and Menelik II, will be a loser.

Abraha Deboch and Mogos Asgedom History of Human Freedom

Now let us talk of Addis Abeba event of **February 19, 1937**. History of heroism of Abrha Dobocho and Mogos Asgedom begins from here. But before this let us shade some light on the names of Eritrean villages and provinces that gave rise to these two black lions.

According to my primary research Abrha Dobocho is from the village of Shakha-Iyamo ጻሻ-አያሞ, round six km south of Mendefera - Addiqualla road,² Seraye province. But of Mogos Asgedom in short no reliable source is found.

These two young educated men went from northern Abyssinia, Eritrea, that was under Italian colony to southern Abyssinia; Addis Abeba capital city of modern Ethiopia before north and south of ancient Ethiopian becomes Italian colony. "As the wife of Mogos and wife of Ras Abeba Aregai were sisters"³ we can say that Abrha and Mogos were for a long of time before the occupation arrives there. Thanks to this they were acquainted with Ras Abebe Aragay and others. But no matter who or what or where they found a chance to defend their country and people against vicious enemy on earth.

"A failed [assassination](#) attempt against Graziani occurred on February 19, 1937. During a public ceremony at the Viceregal Palace (the former Imperial residence) in [Addis Ababa](#), [Ethiopia](#), Abraha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, two men of Eritrean origin, attempted to kill Viceroy Graziani with a number of grenades. The Italian security guard fired indiscriminately into the crowd of civilian onlookers. Over the following weeks the colonial authorities executed about 30,000 persons in retaliation—including about half of the younger, educated Ethiopian population. [\[13\]](#) " ⁴

After glorious day for resistance in history what happened? Abrha Dobocho and Mogos Asgedom were headed in the direction north Addis Ababa. There is reason to believe that the Ethiopian resistance with Ras Abebe Aragay at helm had an influence on the road taken by Abrha and Mogos. At that time, it is said that the Ras "always seemed to be at the point of submitting to the occupiers in return for money".⁵ And it is said that he had a wife that was receiving about 5000 br a month from Italians.⁶

Abrha was with his wife. Maybe of Ras's air of uncertainty Abraha and Mogos soon moved on, seeking safety and protection in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Their aim was to join members of diplomatic staff where Dr Lorenzo Tazaz was. "After Lorenzo was appointed Permanent Delegate ... although during the [Italian occupation](#), he secretly entered Ethiopia on several occasions for the Emperor."⁷ We can say that this was possible by western modern Ethiopia with the help of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. There is no clue if there was any direct or indirect contact but there could have been a plan to take them out of a country to boost diplomatic activities. But on their way north west they were killed in mysterious circumstances. Some believe that " Ras Abebe was behind this disaster because Abrha and Mogos were aware of his secret relationship with Italians." Of the relationship king Haile Selassie also had a concern that was increasing weight. In light of this let us give a space for an article of Richard Pankhurst. That is all.

"If the Italian Fascist invasion and occupation of Ethiopia (1936-1941) was a major turning point in Ethiopian history, the attempt on the life of the Italian Viceroy, Rodolfo Graziani (19 February 1937) was a turning point in the history of that occupation. The attempt was followed by the Addis Ababa massacre of 19-21 February 1937, which is indelibly associated with Graziani's name. The massacre in its turn vastly increased the ranks of the Ethiopian Patriots, many of whom felt that it had shown that any thought of collaboration with the invader was futile.

Well Known

The main features of the story are well known. In February 1937 - the second year of the occupation - the Viceroy, Graziani, decided to hold a celebration at the Addis Ababa Palace - now Addis Ababa University, to commemorate the birth of an Italian royal baby: the Prince of Naples. The commemoration was scheduled for 19 February, and the principal Ethiopian courtiers in the city were all invited to attend.

Both of Eritrean Origin

Ethiopian opponents of the occupation included two young friends, Abraha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, both of Eritrean origin. Seeing that the education of "natives" was strictly limited in the Italian Colony of Eritrea, they had made their way to Addis Ababa. There they had enrolled in the country's most modern school, the Tafari Makonnen School, which was called after Ras Tafari Makonnen, the future Emperor Haile Sellassie, who had founded it in 1925. Early in 1937 the two friends decided to strike against the Viceroy, whose oppression had by then incurred the hatred of many of their Ethiopian compatriots.

They decided to act.

The Two Plotters

The first of the plotters was **Abraha Deboch**, who had by then succeeded in finding employment with the **Fascist Political Bureau** in Addis Ababa, where his Eritrean origin, knowledge of Italian, and familiarity with the city made him appear useful. He was, however, bitterly opposed to the Graziani regime, and particularly its racial discrimination.

The second plotter was **Moges Asgedom**, who was unemployed, but looked after by a friend by name of Sebhat, who served as a language instructor in the **German Consulate** (formerly the German Embassy).

The two friends, Abraha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, decided to seize the occasion of the forthcoming celebration at the Palace to attempt to assassinate the hated Viceroy.

Could not be Trusted

Tradition has it that Abraha, not wishing to harm innocent Ethiopians, warned a number of them to stay away from the Palace on the fateful day. However, most of them reportedly ignored his warning, for they saw him as an employee of the Fascists, and felt that as such could not to be trusted.

Abraha and Moges, we are told, had by then acquired a number of Breda-type Italian hand-grenades, and had on several occasions traveled into the nearby lowlands, in the direction of Mount Zeqwala, to experiment with throwing them.

Before Leaving His Home

On the appointed day Abraha, before leaving home, placed an Italian flag on the floor of his house, and stuck an Ethiopian spear into it - a symbol of defiance for everyone later to see.

The two men, taking a number of hand-grenades with them, then made their way to the Palace compound. They entered the Palace building, where, as assumed collaborators, they attracted no attention - and took up their position to strike.

Graziani and the Top-Ranking Leadership

Graziani and the top-ranking Fascist leadership had by then taken up their positions on the Palace steps (now those of the University). They were thus, it appears, standing

immediately below the overhanging balcony, which was to be the Viceroy's saving, as it prevented the little bombs from exploding immediately beside him.

The bombs were hurled; it is said, shortly before mid-day. Graziani and some thirty of his colleagues were wounded - and the Viceroy, who was badly shaken, later claimed that no less than 250 pieces of steel had entered his body.

For further revelations you are invited, dear reader, to a SOFIES lecture to be given by Mr. Ian Campbell on 24 March at 6pm. It will be given within only a few meters of where the incident took place.

The incident led, as is widely known, to the great massacre - with which, however, we are not here concerned.

Our focus today is rather on what happened to the two young would-be assassins - and in particular to introduce our readers to the one whom we may call The Third Man.

The Third Man

The Third Man, according to family tradition, was another interesting - and patriotic - figure: Simeyon Adefres. Born in Harar around 1913, he had there attended a Roman Catholic mission school (where he had become a Catholic) before making his way to Addis Ababa. There he had enrolled at the Alliance Francaise School.

As a member of Ethiopia's pre-war foreign educated generation, subjected to Fascist occupation, Simeyon Adefres, then aged twenty-four, shared the aspirations of Abraha Deboch and Moges Asgedom, whom he soon befriended.

Simeyon had a passion for motorcars. On leaving the Alliance he had become one of Addis Ababa's then very few taxi-drivers. He was assisted in this profession by two of his brothers, Agonefer Adefres and Debebe Adefres, who had made their way to the Somali port of Djibouti, then under French rule. The former managed to acquire, and send Simeyon two German Opel cars. With them he transported his clients to such principal destinations as St George's Cathedral, the Railway Station, the Palace, and the foreign Legations.

Having agreed with Abraha Deboch and Moges Asgedom on the need to attack Graziani, Simeyon is said to have also made contact with one of the more important Patriot leaders, Dejazmach Fikre Mariam, and befriended the latter's machine-gunner. Simeyon then reportedly drove his two friends, together with the said machine-gunner, to the lowlands around Mount Zeqwala, where the gunner instructed them in the use of hand-grenades.

Hand-grenades

Simeyon, again according to family tradition, then obtained a number of Breda hand-grenades from the Dejazmach's house. They are said to have been around seven in number, though some other accounts suggest a slightly larger figure. Simeyon reportedly gave these little bombs to the two conspirators, and arranged with them to wait for them immediately in front of the Palace compound.

Abraha and Moges, as we all know, duly hurled their grenades, it is said from the Palace balcony. They then seized the opportunity of the general excitement following the explosions - to rush out of the compound.

They found Simeyon Adefres waiting for them as arranged. He then drove them northwards to Selale. Abraha had chosen this destination as his wife had found asylum at the ancient monastery of Debra Libanos.

Simeyon Adefres, his mission accomplished, remained a week in Selale after which he drove back to Addis Ababa, where he returned to his home, and remained there as if nothing had happened. His temporary disappearance was, however, reported to the Fascist police; as a result of he was arrested. His Opel and bank account were seized, and he tortured to death, thus entering the Pantheon of Ethiopia's martyrs.

Rumor has it that the historic old Opel still exists and is actually in Addis Ababa. The vehicle is obviously of no small historical importance, and should be consigned to an Historical Museum". ⁸

There are questions remained unanswered regarding name of their mothers ... (see the rest in the article of Zerai Deres)

እታ ሕይወት ኢያ ካብ እቲ ሕርሲ ናብ እቲ ጋሕሲ
ግን እቲ ጀግንነት እዩ ኣንጻር ናይ እዚ
ይከይድ ቅድሚ ናብ ነበረ ምሁር ብ ካልኣት ትውልዲ
እንተ ኣይነበረን ከምዚ ኣይምክኣልናን ባለ ገለመለ ናይ እታ ታሪኽ ናይ ዘርኣይ ወይ ጋሪባልዲ

Life goes from cradle to grave
but the heroism is against this
it goes on to be studied by other generation
if it was not so we cannot say **anything about** story Zerai or Garibaldi.

La vita va dalla culla alla tomba
Pero il eroismo è contro di questo
Va avanti a essere studiato dal altri generazione
Se non era così noi non potremo dire niente della storia di Zerai or Garibaldi.

ድሕሪ እታ መሸጣ ናይ እቲ ጥንቲ ሰሜናዊ ኢትዮጵያ
እታ ፖሊቲካ ናይ ሸዋ ነበረት ኣብ እታ ናታ ፋንታሲያ/fantasia (ጓይላ)
ግን ኢጣልያ ነበረት ሰኣን ናይ ድቅቃስ
ከሳዕ ንስሳ ትውርውር እታ ናታ ስምጫ ጋስ

After the sale of ancient norther Ethiopia
The Showa politics was in her fantasy
But Italy was in her restless sleep
until it launches its poison gas

Dopo la vendita dell antico itopia nord
La politica di Showa era nella sua fantasia
Ma l'italia era in suo sonno inquieto
Finchè lancia il suo gas veleno

እስገዶም እውን ኣብርሃ
ሰባት ዝ ነበሩ ምሉእ ናይ ቍጥጥግ
ሐደጋወደቕ ግራዝያኒ ምስ ኢድ ቦምባ
እንክ ንስሱ ነበረ ይህብ እታ ዘረባ ናይ ሐደ ፈረቕረቕ

Asgedom and Abraha
Men who were filled with rage
They assailed Graziani with hand grenade
When he was giving the speech of a vile

Asgedom e Abraha
Gli uomini che erano pieni di rabbia
Hanno assalito Graziani con la bomba a mano.
Quando lui stava dando il discorso di un vile.

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1. Encyclopaedia Britannica: Treaty of Wichale
2. Tesfai Temenowo ex-fighter told me that one day, perhaps in 1976, he went to Shakha-Iamo for the assignment of a fighter. Then a villager invited him to come to his house for a dinner. On that occasion he learned that he was in the house and village of Abrha's brother.
3. Geometry Zienaghebriel K. Sbehatu is the source of my information. He worked and lived in Addis Abeba and its suburbs for many years and he has a good knowledge about the fall of the city in the Italian Hands and movement of resistance.
4. Del Boca, Angelo. 1996. *I gas di Mussolini: il fascismo e la guerra d'Etiopia*. Roma, IT: Editori riuniti. [ISBN 9788835940913](#).) in Research begins here, New World Encyclopedia, *Second Italo-Ethiopian War*)
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6. Geometry Zienaghebriel K. Sbehatu.
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8. Richard Pankhurst, "[Events during the Fascist Occupation: in February 1937: Who Was the Third Man?](#)", *Addis Ababa Tribune*, published 27 February 2004 (Internet Archive mirror copy).

IV Zerai Deres we are incredibly proud of you heroism

In the world there are 115 historically documented folk or national heroes. Among these there are only 6 Africans. One of these is Zerai Deres (see his picture). Here is an example that includes all African folk heroes followed by the reason why.

- 1 [Alexander the Great](#) - King of the Ancient Greek Kingdom of Macedon who created one of the largest empires of the ancient world
- 2 [Dokubo-Asari](#) - Nigeria, a political figure who currently fights against western oil companies in the [Niger Delta](#)
- 3 [Mohamed Bouazizi](#) - Tunisian fruit vendor who immolated himself in protest of government mistreatment and sparked a successful revolution in that country and the [Arab Spring](#)
- 4 [Joseph Cinqué](#) - [West African](#) man of the [Mende](#) tribe, leader of the [Amistad](#) slave rebellion
- 5 [Zerai Deres](#) - Eritrea, Eritrean-born man lionized for his act of vengeance against the Italian Fascists in Rome during an imperial celebration
- 6 [Giuseppe Garibaldi](#) - Italy, general, he personally commanded and fought in many military campaigns that led eventually to the formation of a unified Italy.
- 7 [Che Guevara](#) - Argentine Marxist revolutionary, politician, author, physician, military theorist, and guerrilla leader.
- 8 [Paul Kruger](#) - South African [Boer](#) leader and President of the [South African Republic](#) (Transvaal)
- 9 [Abraham Lincoln](#) - President of the United States during the Civil War
- 10 [Nelson Mandela](#) - South Africa, anti-[apartheid](#) activist who became President on apartheid's end
- 11 [George Washington](#) - First President of the [United States](#). ¹



Zerai Deres

"Zerai Deres ([Ge'ez](#) ዘርአይ ደረስ) died in 1937 in [Rome, Italy](#), in public opposition to the rise of fascist power in Italy and her African colonies. His death is considered part of the movement



against [Italian occupation](#). Deres was born in [Hazega, Eritrea](#) and is considered a [folk hero](#) in both Ethiopia and Eritrea.

[...]

On May 21, 1937, in Rome, Italy was celebrating its fourth anniversary of the proclamation of the Italian Empire. The celebratory parade was attended by [Adolf Hitler](#), [Benito Mussolini](#) and King [Victor Emmanuel III](#). Thousands of soldiers from Italy's African colonies marched during the parade. Among them was a young Eritrean man named Zerai Deres. He was carrying the sword to salute the King, the [Führer](#), and [Il Duce](#), at the grandstand. As the parade marched past the [Vittorio Emanuele](#), he saw Lion of Judah Monument. That Monument was taken from [Ethiopia](#) by the Italians as a war booty. Zerai's shock was too great for him, and he drew his sword and with it he slew five fascist guards,² and wounded many more before, before he was killed³ on the spot in a hail of gunshots.

Monument to the Lion of Judah ሞኑመንትቶ ናብ እቲ አንበሳ ናይ አይሁድ

"For centuries a symbol of the Ethiopian monarchy, the lion of Judah is omnipresent throughout the country. From the top of a road overpass, it can be admired in all its might. Erected in 1930 for the coronation of Haile Selassie, was brought to Rome as spoils (ግድዳዎት፣ ሰለባታት) of war by the Italians in 1935 and located next to the imposing monument to Vittorio Emanuele.

[...]

The lion is the symbol of the tribe of Judah described in the Old Testament, from which descended Jesus Christ. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, an ancient Christian church, considered the King of Kings Haile Selassie as the Lion of Judah Revelation."⁴



"The monument remained in Rome for several decades, and was finally returned to Addis Ababa after long negotiations in the 1960's. When it was re-erected in it's square the day it arrived, the Emperor was present in military uniform to salute, and to pay tribute to Zerai Deres. Following the revolution in 1974, the Dergue regime decided to remove the statue once more as it was a monarchist symbol. However, the elderly war veterans association members appealed to the Dergue to consider the memory of Zerai Deres and his sacrifice that was inspired by this very symbol. This act saved the statue and it stood it all it's Imperial glory right through the Dergue era, and continues to stand today."⁵

The returned remains of Zerai Deres have a final resting place in Hazaga. This was realized according to some sources by the king Haile Selassie and the other by his brother Tesfazion Deres during British Administration in Eritrea. I believe that such very sensitive issue that demands tough diplomacy cannot be realized by brother or father. But there is no doubt that the monument that is there in honor of Zerai Deres is built by the king. For this I believe that the king deserves to be praised.

So, there are cemetery and monument in memory of Zerai in Hazega to visit and see at least once in life. And when we are once there we should not forget to pay tribute (ገጽበረኸት) to weizero Elena, mother of Ras Woldenkiel, by visiting her grave because she was one of the most brilliant minds in her time.

Notwithstanding discomforts Zerai Deres is always alive in the memories of the Eritrean people. His heroism passes from person to person by oral communication. Band (a small group of musicians who play popular music together), bank, hotel, school ... are named after him (እዩም ጽጌዓት አብ ዝኸሪ ናይ ናቲ). Such thoughts in respect for or in the memory of Zerai Deres are always on the increase. This shows that our duty to remember our national or folk heroes is at good health. And I am confident that time is coming where the best honor we can give. In that moment in addition to the above, libraries, research

centers, institutions, etc. will be named after or in respect for our heroes. With these institutions we break old habits and create new once.

There are questions remained unanswered regarding name of his mother, where and when he was born exactly, how many brothers and sisters had/has, was he literate, married (name of wife, children ...), his occupation, for how long was he in Rome before his death, how many Eritreans were with him ... how was his heroism rewarded ... etc.

ዘርአይ ደረሰ ሐደ ሰብ ናይ ዓቢይ ዋጋ
እዙ ዓለም አይአልለዎን ከትቶ ርኡይ ሐንቲ እክከለ መዓልላ
ኢኻ ብኡንነት ሐደ ቢታኪ ዓለማዊ ዝኸሪ ናይ ትብዓት
ግን እዩ ሓጢአት ዝ እቲ ዓለም አይሰምዐን እዙ ዝ አልለዎም ብሁል መስሰሊኒ እውን ሂትለር ድሓር

Zerai Deres a man of great worth
The world has never seen as such an action
You are really a courage world record breaker
But it is pity that the world did not hear what Mussolini and Hitler said after.

Zerai Deres un uomo di grande valore
il mondo non ha mai visto come una tale azione.
Sei davvero un interruttore record mondiale di coraggio.
Ma è peccato che il mondo non ha sentito quello che hanno detto Mussolini e Hitler dopo.

እታ ናትካ ሴፍ መሂራ አውሮፓውያን አብ ናቶም ቃንቋ
ናይ እተን ነገራት ዝ ንስሳቶም ነበሩ ይገብሩ አብ አፍሪቃ
ፌጽጸመ እክከለ ግብቡኣት አብ እዞም ግዝያት እውን እክከለ ሰፍራታት
ብዘይ ጥርጥር ሐደ አንበሳ አይ-ይገብርን እክኣ ከምዚ ምእንቲ ፍሉያት ምኽንያታት

Your sword has taught Europeans in their language
Of the things that they were doing in Africa
To perform such duties at such time and such places
No doubt a lion does not do anything like this for different reasons.

La tua spada ha insegnato gli europei nella loro lingua.
Tra le cose che stavano facendo in Africa
Per esercitare tali funzioni al momento e tali luoghi.
Non c'è dubbio che un leone non fa nulla di simile per diversi motivi.

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