

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MONASTERIES IN MENJAR-ŠÄNKORA WÄRÄDA SINCE 1830s

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HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MONASTERIES IN MENJAR-ŠÄNKORA WÄRÄDA SINCE 1830s

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Fekadu Mersha entitled: "**Historical Survey of Monasteries in Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Since 1830s**" and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in History complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Declaration

This thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all the sources of material used for the thesis have been dully acknowledged.

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Preface

The inefficiency of comprehensive studies conducted to demonstrate the process, success, as well as challenges with respective to the historical survey of monasteries in the Menjar Šänkora *Wäräda* had seen. Some historical studied conducted in the region are in line with political, and socio-economical tales of the district, though along with churches and monasteries annals, the studies lacked in illustrating as of historical existence and significances in the district. Some of studies conducted regarding to church history are undergraduate candidates, yet there was no comprehensive and independent historical survey of monasteries conducted in the Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda*, hence that was what inspired me to carry out this historical survey of monasteries in the district.

This historical survey traced in the historic site, Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda,* regarding to monasteries found in the region since 1830s. This study tried reconstruct piece of historical survey of the monasteries in the region by tracing to its background along with exploration of to its commencement, challenges, changes and continuities in the past eons in the region. This piece of work is based on utilizing various historical sources and methods of stud, such as archival sources, oral traditions and historical written secondary sources both published and unpublished documents, field observations. The archival sources were collected from various religious institutions in the study area and National Archive and Library Agency, Addis Ababa. Yet the conditions of archives existence in the district are completely disorganized or jumbled and abandoned for damage, hence it made the works of finding weary. Of course, archival sources obtained from different sites utilized for this study were the recently organized once. In fact, the researcher believes, the documents might have been lost or damaged in due of course of time. Hence, the task of searching the archival material sources was tiresome though the researcher was able to get few of them but recent.

The sources also obtained from informants, many of them were the local inhabitants, the monasteries and churches administrators, and the district church officers whose information had been considerable input to the study. Among the local oral historians, *Qes* Girma Wudensäh, *Ato* Čärnät Masräša *Ato* Abatä Wändafraš, *Qés* Mogäs Gäbräşadeq, *Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam Aserat, and *Abba* Yoséf Tamänä were the gifted minded individuals who provided substantial and invaluable basement information of the finding. Anyways evidences were collected from more than 30 informants.

The thesis organized into five chapters, which deals about historical survey of monasteries in the Menjar- Šänkora Wäräda since 1830s. In the first chapter of the thesis paper tried to discuss about general historical and geographical background the study area, hence, geographical setting of the region, socio-economic demography of the region, expansion of Christianity in the region, and monasticism in Šäwa. In the second unit of the thesis the historical foundation of the Sama Sänbät monastery, Guramba Qedest Maryam monastery, Balç Amauel Church, and Šänkora Yohänes Nunnery and merits of foundries. The third chapter deals about administration and socio-economic developments of monasteries in the region. In this chapter's subunits the discussion points are regarding to hierarchies and administrative structures of monasteries, the titles and roles in the monasteries, administrators and their merits. The social gatherings, church education, economic developments and the sources of incomes are parts of the discussion points in the unit. The fourth Chapter also organized with account of the monasteries cultural heritages that pointed out the intangible and intangible cultural heritages in the monasteries. From this chapter, challenges faced cultural heritages, and the ingenious knowledge to preserve heritages is explored in it. The constraints that faced heritages tourism development line with lack of promotion, lack of infrastructure facilities, lack of museum service, and like related issues are discussed. The last but not least chapter deals about the merits of monasteries in the region in terms of the dogmatic educational services, socio-economic significances of the region.

In somehow, study would contribute to show about some of the historical survey of the monasteries in the Menjar Šänkora Wäräda, to those who will inspire in the church history in the region. It might also motivate local and foreign tourists and religious pilgrims to the region with regard of promotion cultural heritages endowments in the monasteries as described in the thesis paper. The study seems to inform the few of the historical merits the monasteries have in the past eons, which will contribute the every historical value of the monasteries heritages transfer from generation to generation.

Acronyms

ARSCTB ---------Amhara Regional State Cultural and Tourism Bureau

A.D ------------ Anno Domini

IES ------------- Institute of Ethiopian Studies

EOTC ---------- Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

ETO ---------- Ethiopian Tourism Organization

FDRE ---------- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GDP ---------- Gross Domestic Product

NALA ---------- National Archival and Library Agency.

Abstract

This thesis deals with the historical survey of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda since 1830s. The study which conducted by scholars in exploring the historical survey of monasteries and monastic life in the region is so scarce that inspired for this study in the region to be conducted. However, the limit of scholars in exploring issue of monasteries probably related with scarcity of historical sources confronted the study to be easy. As of sources enlightened the period when each province welcomed Christianity and expanded monastic life varies from region to region. Among these places, the entrance of Christianity in the province of Šäwa and the process of expansion of monasteries are debatable. This thesis tried to investigate the foundation and historicizes the development of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora region. In due course, it shows the process of introduction and expansion of Christianity in to the region of Šäwa in general and Menjar-Šänkora in particular. The thesis explored historical developments of monasteries in administration, social and economic activities in the course of history. The monasteries have acquired important natural and cultural heritages that aquifers the valuable meanings to the communities in particular and state in general. The three monasteries are substantially discussed repository of a number of cultural heritages with significant historical values. A range of historical methods are used in reconstructing the above historical knowledge. The first method involved extensive library researches so as to gather information from published and unpublished primary and secondary documentary sources. Manuscripts like Gädls and Dersans were taken as nucleus in filling the gap. This thesis deeply assessed archives gathered from National Archival and Library Agency, IES, monasteries and also from different governmental offices. To fill the gap of information gathered from archives and library work, interviews and personal observation were also used in sketching the skeleton of the paper. The collected data were systematically and thematically organized, described, verified, analyzed and interpreted through qualitative data analysis.

Key words: monasticism, gädl, heritages, nunnery, archive, monks, nuns, dogma

Key to Transliteration System

I. The Seven Sound of the Ethiopic Alphabet are represented as follows

Vowels	symbole	Example
1st order (gĕ ez)	ä	በ --- Bä
2nd order (Ká eb)	u	ቡ --- Bu
3rd order (sales)	i	ቢ --- Bi
4th order (rabe)	a	ባ --- Ba
5th order (hames)	é	ቤ --- Bé
6th order (sades)	e	ብ --- Be
7th order (sabé)	o	ቦ --- Bo

II. Palatalized sounds are represented as follows: A. Consonant

Sounds	Symbol	Example
ሸ	Š	ሹም --- ------Šum
ቸ	Č	ቢቸና --------- Bičäna
ኘ	Ñ	ቀኘጌታ --- ----Qäń Géta
ዠ	Ź	አዛዠ ---------- Azaź
ጀ	J	ዮጀዝማች ----- Däjjazmaš
ገ	G	ገዳም --- -------Gädam

B. Glottal zed

Sound	symbol	example
ቀ	Q	ቄስ ---------- Qése
ጠ	Ṭ	ቀርሸዋጥር --------Qäršäwaṭer
ጨ	Ç	ጮባ---------- Çoba
ጸ	Ş	ጸሎት ----------Şälot

C. Germinations should always be indicated by doubling

ከበሌ	Käbbäddä	ቆላ	Qolla
ተሰማ	Tässämma	ቀበሌ	Qäbällé

Glossary

Aba menét the title given to the abbot of monastery

Abba is the title given to a learned priest or/ and monk to say father

Abunä title of the bishop

Aläqa head of the *däber* (church*)*

Aquaquam the way of standing or moving, liturgical dance of Ethiopian Christian and

Ato a title to an adult male which is equivalent to "Mr"

Awurajja an administrative unit below the level of province

Berana: is a vellum material made from goat as well as sheep skin

Berr the currency of Ethiopia

Däber Aatitle of churches given based on the service of mass.

Däbtära title given to commonly refers to a group of higher trained clergy

Däga a term used to replace the word Highland that characterizes Wet Agro-Climatic Zone.

Däjazmač commander of the gate a politico-military title bellow *ras.*

Däwäl 'bell,' the precious church liturgical service instrument

Deacon is an appellation given to a man who serves as deacon.

Derg name of military government of Ethiopia equivalent to committee

Dersan is a term used to replace the word homily

Edir mutual aid association

Emahoy the title given to the nuns in the EOTC in general

Emamnet abbess.' the title given to nun, head of nunnery

Gäbäz is a religious term used to replace the word Administrator

Gädam monastery

Gädel acts (martyr)

Gätär parish church administer under *qésä gäbäz* with lower capital

Ge'ez Semitic language and the liturgical church language

Gult non-hereditary right of the clergy and nobility to collect the tribute from the tenants

Hägärä-sebkät the zone diocese

Haymanotä-abäw the religious fathers association

Liqä diyaqon the title given to the deacon to perform church services

Liqä guba'e head of the assembly,' clerical title of head of the church

Liqä kähnat	head of priests (archpriest)
Liqä mäzämran	head of the choir,' clerical title
Mägabi	purveyor
Mälakä sälam	'angel of peace,' cleric title of a head of a church
Mälkaña	the northerners who settled an area following the conquest
Mämher	teacher or master
Mämher	'teacher,' abbot
Mämré	title given for priest
Mäqdäset	inner part of the church, where the sacred ark of covenant *found*
Märed-azemač	the political military or kings title used by Šäwan ruling family
Märigéta	a religious title given to the clergy who educate the liturgy
Mawasit	the prayers for the dead
Me'eraf	the space between the end of one part of the book and the beginning of the next, chapter
Mektel wäräda	sub-district
Negus	king
Qäbälé	small administrative unit of the district
Qedus	saint
Qené bét	the poetry school, higher level of traditional schools
Qés	the tile given to priest
Qomos	vicar (title given to virgin male monk)
Ras	chief of a region under the emperor and the head of a regional army
Rest	hereditary land use
Şäbäl	holy water
Tabot	Ark of covenant found at ETOC
Täqlay geza	administrative unit during imperial period equivalent to province
Wäräda	administrative unit below Awurajja currently below zonal unit
Wäyna däga	a term used to replace the word temperate or moderate zone
Wäyzäro	a title given to married women, equivalent to "missus"
Zéma	melody (music)
Zemaré Mawasit	hymns sung after communion

Chapter- One

Introduction

This study addressed the survey of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda in the past period. More specially, one of the investigation aims to: determine the historical existence of the monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora region that may cement the various aspects of the monastic life of the monks there. The study is significant since as preliminary sources to conduct further research in the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahdo Church as well.

The pioneer issue which is coincided with the historical facts about the monasticism and monasteries tale in Ethiopia and other Christian world is related with the Christianity. In within line to this aspects, most of the religious books and historians scarified their studies in the religious arenas recognized historical foundation of Christianity is related to the teaching of Jesus Christ in first century AD that consolidated by His apostles. As of other Christian states, Christianity in the Ethiopian history has an old aged historical episode that introduced in the Aksumite period.[1] The different travelers, missionaries, researchers have so far been engaged in revealing the country's hidden past legacies about the Christianity in Ethiopia, in their works. In fact, the most of studies have been conducting in order to reconstruct the churches and Monasteries tales regarded as the history of Christianity.[2] Thanks Gorgoryos Kale, was one of the genus man in church history, who explained about the history of Christianity and the church relation as follow: yäbétä *kerestyan tarik malät yäkerstena emenät tarik malät näw*,[3] literarily' history of church means history of Christianity' that cemented the above arguments. In addition to this, Solomon Yohänes in his book also stated, "The Ethiopian Church history mean the history of state or Ethiopian history is meant the church

[1] Zemedkun Bekel, *Qedusan Mäkanat Bäiteyopeya: Yähamesa arat Ţentawi Gädamat ena Adebärat ''Sacred Sites in Ethiopia: Fifty Four Monasteries and Churches"* (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printing Press, 1992 E.C/ 2000), pp. 2-3.

[2] Zemedkun, pp. 4-6; Getnet Tamene, Features of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Clergy, *Institute of Oriental and African Studies*, 7, (Slovakia: Slovak Academy of Sciences, 1998), p. 87.

[3]Gorgoryos Cale, *Yäbetä Keresteyan Tarik Bä'aläm Mäderäk (History of the Church in the World Stage), (*Addis Ababa: Tinsa'e Zeguba'e, 1978 E.C/1985), P. 8.

history."[4] This is really showed us the strong church-state relations in the past period till the downfall of the imperial regime.

The unique feature of the introduction of Christianity was actually evangelized in Ethiopia since in the early fourth century under the willingness and assistance of the royal families, without religious discontent and bloodshed in the state that realized the establishment of the first church in Aksume, unlike Romans. However, as some historical works stated, the introduction of Christianity in Ethiopia was not the result of planned industriousness evangelical works of missionaries rather than it was sudden and the will of the rulers of the time.[5] On the other hand, first teaching and introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia was associated in the first century (34 A.D) through an Ethiopian agent, eunuch- treasurer of Candace Queen of Ethiopia, who was baptized by Saint Philip the Apostle.[6] That is why scholars like Kefyalew and Chaillot called it as one of an ancient, historic, national and apostolic church in the world; nevertheless, there was no priesthood until the 4th century.[7]

The survey of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora is also the main theater of the discussion of this thesis. The early monasteries foundation coincided with the legacies stilly influencing the church history is the arrival of Nine Sanities at the end of fifth century and foundation the monastic life of in the Christian communities and monasteries in the sixth century in the Ethiopia,[8] coined the foundations of several monasteries in the country in the different period which show the strong interrelation with the timely rulers of the state in the respective region.

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[4] Solomon Yohanes, *Yä Iteyopeya Bétäkrestiyan Wärqäma Zämänat (The Golden Age of Ethiopian Church),* (Addis Ababa: 2001 E.C/ 2009), P. 4.

[5] Sergaw Hable Selassie, *The Church of Ethiopia: A Panorama of History and Spiritual Life* (Addis Ababa: United Printers, 1970), p. 3. Zemedkun, p. 4.

[6]Act 8:26-40; Genet Abera Nigatu, "History of Itisa Tekle Haimanot Monastery from Its Foundation up to Present" *International Journal of Science and Research*, Volume.II, Issue 6, June 2014, p. 1343, ccessed on August 21, 2022 at www.ijsr.net.

[7] Kefyalew M. *The Contribution of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahdo Church to Civilization of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Enterprise, 2004), p.5; Christain Chaillot, *The Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahdo Church Traditions: A Brief Introduction to its Life & Spirituality* (Bialystok: Orthdruk and Vilastic Press, 2002), p. 17.

[8] Sylvia Pankhurst, *Ethiopia: A Cultural History* (London: Leighton-Strake Book Binding C.LTD, 1995), P. 231; Sergaw Hable Selassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History* (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababab University, 1972), p.104.

The considerable interrelationship of the state and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church from the early its emergence enable to comprises several historical valuable literatures left the to the state generations, which have been vital to encode the beside of religious, aspects regarding to political, social, economic, and cultural values of the state. The establishment of the monasteries also strengthened the values of its literary development that assist the scholars to engage the valuable investigations in various aspects of the Ethiopia in the past, which found in the monasteries. Ravit Cohen also asserts that, the Ethiopic scripts, which found in the monasteries significantly, become as sources of historical documents not alone for the Ethiopians but also the Beta Israel who have the insight historical tie with the state even the pre-Christianity.[9] As Mulualem coted, Steven Kaplan also stated the church and state relation by stating in his work, "From the ancient to the second half of twenty century, the emperors of Ethiopia valued political loyalty for more than religious conformity."[10]

In Line with, continual elastic periods of existence, the Ethiopian Church preserved its several manuscripts and books that enhance the studies to reconstruct church history. These sources tell us, Ethiopian Orthodox Church had foreign relations, particularly with Christian countries from the early beginning. The main sources of the history of the state as most of scholars recognized are the sources obtained from Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwahedo* Church from monasteries.[11] The study of Ethiopian history has clearly indicated that the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the history of one of the oldest Christian Church- in Africa,[12]

As part of Ethiopian churches and Monasteries, probably in the Menjar-Šänkora region, Sama Sänbät, Guramba, Balchi Amanuel and Šänkora Yohänes churches had its own monastic historical entities throughout its foundation that might support the investigation to crucial for further studies in the region had taken as part of my study.

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[9] Ravit Cohen, "The Ethnography of the Gondar Compound: waiting and what it mean?" *Beta Israel: The Jews of Ethiopia and Beyond History, Identity, and Borders* (Venice: Ca. Foscari, Venezia University Press, 2011), p. 163.

[10] Mulualem Gebeyehu, "A History of Šänkora Däbrä Mänekrat Mäţemqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Church from 1628 to Present" (Debere Birhan University, MA thesis in History and Heritage Management Department of History, February 2021), pp. 1-2.

[11] Getnet Tamene, p.87; Adamu Amare and Belaynesh Mikael, "The Role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Literature and Art," online accessed on 10 August 2022 from ethiovirgnmary.org/files/c-.

[12] Baur John, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa* (Nairobi: np, 1992), p. 39; Atiya Aziz s., *A History of Eastern Christianity* (London: np,1968), pp. 146-7.

1. Geographical Background of Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda

1.1. Geographical Setting

Locating the sufficient information regarding the geographical milieus of places and events is significantly vital for historical investigations. It is, thus, imperative to provide readers of this thesis an overview of the geographical and historical background of the area that study conducted. This thesis conducted in the present day of Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda, one of the twenty-fourth districts of the North Šäwa Administrative Zone of the Amhara Regional State located in the previous part of Yärär and Käräyu Awurajja, Šäwa Täqelay Gezat also called Greater Šäwa until it was disintegrated in the last quarter of 20th century.

The distance from Debre Birhan to the Minjar-Šänkora Wäräda's capital, Arärti is 263 kilometers, 133 kilometers from Addis Ababa and 690 kilometers from Amhara Regional State's capital, Bahir Dar.[13] Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda also bounded with Hägärä Maryam-Käsäm Wäräda in the north, Bosät Wäräda in the south, Fäntalé Wäräda in the east, and Gimbiču Wäräda in the west. The most the territorial limit of the district is bounded with the Oromia Regional State.[14] The total area of the district is 229,463 hectares.[15] The district also divided into 27 rural and three towns' administrative käbälés with its absolute location extends between $8^0$42′46′′ to $9^0$7'37′′north latitude and $39^0$12′57″ to $39^0$46′ 53″ east longitude.[16]The altitude relief ranges from 1040-2380 meter above sea level that began its low altitude range from hottest Çoba *Qäbälé* to the cold mountain Gara Bokan, afforested by eucalyptuses trees.[17] The area obtains sufficient rainfall between June to August and low rainfall between March to May, and dry season extends from December to February.[18] In the same manner, the area endowed the three climatic regions: 17% of *wäyena däga (*sub-tropical*),* 13% of *däga* (cold) and 17% of *qolla* (tropical*)* with annual temperature of 15.3 to

[13] Yä Menjar Šänkora Wäräda Bahelena Turizem Şefät Bét, "Yä Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Aţäqala Gäşta" (Minjar Shenkora District Cultural and Tourism Office, "General Geographical Feature of Minjar Shenkora Distric" (Arerti: Tourism Development and Promotion Office, 2017), p.1. 6

[14] Aweke Kebede, "Livelihood Bases and Challenges of Small Farming House Hold: in Case of Menjar-Shenkora Woreda, Amhara Region, Ethiopia" (MA Thesis in Geography and Environmental Studies, Addis Ababa University, 2015), pp. 8-9.

[15]Yä Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Bahelena Turizem Şefät Bét, p.1.

[16] Bizuwork Terefe et al., "Assessment of marketing systems, customer preference and health management of chickens in free range and intensive poultry production systems in Minjar Shenkora District, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia," Ethiopian Veterinary Journal, 22 (2), (College of Veterinary Medicine, Mekelle University, 2018), p.16, https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/evj.v22i2.2, accessed on 30 March 2022.

[17] Yä Menjar Šänkora Wäräda Bahelena Turizem Şefät Bét, "Yä Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Aţäqala Gäşta" *(*Minjar Shenkora District Cultural and Tourism Office*, "*General Geographical Feature of Minjar Shenkora Distric" (Arerti: Tourism Development and Promotion Office, 2017), p.1

[18] Bizuwork Terefe et al., …, p. 16.

26.5 degree Celsius and from 655 to 691.1 milliliters area received annual rainfall.[19] Indeed, as annual rainfall reports indicate, the rainfall in the region is not moderate throughout the years, fluctuated in every year that may be link with global climate changes.

The geographical features of the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda is endowed various geographical setting with consisting the 2% of mountain covered with different fauna and flora, 14% of abyssal (plateaus) and 84% percent of plain surface with fertile soil that region proud in its agricultural productivities.[20] The dominant soil types are 46% of brown, 19% of black, 15.5% of red and 19.5 of gray. As local farmers told that, brown type of soil is suitable for agriculture in order to cultivate various crops in the district that enable the peasants' productive enough. The Šänkora Sub-district landscape is covered with abyssal river gorges. For instance, as I had seen during field observations, the landscape at the banks of the Balçi Amanuél Church in the east direction is Burka River. Šänkora Yohänes Church in the north direction is Šänkora River, and in the Menjar, Sama Sänbät Monastry in the south direction is Ţäbo River that consist the difficult landscape with full of abyssal structures. The gorges found in the district are the rocky once that delightsomeness the available the mines there. In the same ways, the church of the Dofa Mika'el and the Gur Amba Monastery are found under the gorges, border with Käsäm River, the most irrigation activity has been conducting in the district.

The lower plain surface of the district found in the Çäbo, Amora Bét, Malkajilo and Finanajo precincts are very hot in climatic condition, it also fiddly to sustain the environmental protection through afforestation there because of the sacristy of the water supply for both faunas and floras. Beside of natural difficulties, as some informants implicated, the instabilities of the region due of the boundary clash among with neighboring people also added the geographical setting to be manifested various calamities.[21]

On the other hand, sandy soil existence of in the region opened the opportunity for societies to produce the construction materials added the various landscape validities of the region in many aspects in the region.

[19] Hélän Feker and Yaréd Mänegestu, "Yäfälägä Heywät Tadagi Kätäma Mäsärätawi Pelan Zegejet ena Eqed Riporet" (Baher Dar: Amhara Regional State Towns Plan Institute, 2011/2018), p.8.
[20] Yä Menjar Šänekora Wäräda Bahelena Turizem Şefät Bét, *Yä Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Aţäqala Gäşta,* p. 2.
[21] Informants: *Ato* Abate Wendafrash, and *Ato* Welta Neguse.

1.2 Historical Background of the Region

Currently, the Menjar-Šänkor Wäräda is one of Amhara Regional State of North Šäwa Zonal Administration in which the *wäräda* took its name from combined *Oromifaa* words probably in the end of 16th century due of the Oromo population movement. Prior of this influence the region was part of Fatagar Muslim Sultanate and later Telq. Historically, Šäwa is one of the Ethiopian regions, its name recorded in various European languages: Choa in French, Shewa or Shoa in English, Schoa in German, and Scioà in Italian. As Alain Gascon verifies these spellings accounted from Xoa in Portuguese appears in the early 17th century maps based on the accounts of soldiers, Portuguese travelers, and missionaries who spent sometime in the region.[22] In fact, Šäwa was center of Christian Highland Kingdom prior of Adal Sultanate's dominance over the region and consequently the constant pressure of Oromo population movement that push it to the north bank of the Abbay River.[23] The people of Šäwa later found them almost surrounded by Oromo territory and formed a kind of outpost in a border margin.[24]

As historical accounts enlightened, the local aristocrat called Nagasi Kirstos at the core area, Mänz, established Šäwa as kingdom in the end of the 17th century.[25] This was administered by his successors: Sibste, Amha Yesus, Asfa Wossen, Wossen Seged, Sahle Selassie, and Haile Melekot. These successors expanded the frontiers of its region into the territories of the neighboring Oromo and Gurage lands. The distance of the Šäwa from the central Christian Kingdom, Gonder opened the opportunities to the rulers exercise full authority in their kingdom. As early, as the first half of the nineteenth century, the kings of Šäwa took advantage of their peripheral location to establish direct regular contacts with European powers that assisted them in order to consolidate military power and economic strength through extending their administrative influence beyond they occupied before.[26]

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[22] Alain Gascon, "Shäwa, Ethiopia's Prussia: Its Expansion, Disappearance and Partition," *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies,* ed. by Svein Ege, et al. (Trondheim, 2009), p. 85; Richard Pankhurst ed., *Travelers in Ethiopia* (London: Oxford university Press, 1965)**,** pp. 36, 40 and 44.
[23]*Ibid.*
[24]Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p.38.
[25] Grade 12th History Students Text Book, P. 11.
[26] G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, pp. 65 and 67.

During the reign of Haile Melekot (r. 1847-1855), Šäwa lost its autonomous right when Emperor Tewodros- II waged expedition to the region to realize state unity.[27] Emperor Tewodros-II became victorious and made Šäwa as his administrative entity. In the time of his campaign the son of Haile Melkot heir, Menilek was war prisoner at Mäqedäla until he was escaped in the second half of the 19th century.[28] The escapement of Menilek from royal prison in 1865 made he to pay allegiance to the "Old Šäwa" highlands peopled with Amhara and he had overcome the threat of the Wällo Oromo in the North while extended the territories towards the Awash River in the south in subjugating the Tulama and Méča Oromo. The enlargement of the territories since 1880s realized the formation of 'New' Šäwa.[29] When Menilek-II shifted his capital from Ankobär, benefited from the progress of his new capital, Addis Ababa, which retain as capital of Ethiopia and chosen as the terminus of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway line that enhanced economic ties with foreign.[30] The historical accounts afforded, Šäwa was nucleus of the nineteenth century of nation building implementation under the leadership of Menilek. In the nation building, Šäwa was a gear of the frontier confrontations with the regional lords through forceful as well as peaceful subjugation methods to realize the "Greater Ethiopia."[31]

Marcus annotated, Greater Šäwa was source of powers to the central government, which Menilek used to develop the tools of his expansion through local recruitment, conversion of local leaders to Christianity, intermarriages, land concessions, and establishment of towns that helped him to defeat the Italians in1896.[32] The victory at the Battle of Adwa to the second Italian occupation since1935, the frontiers of Šäwa remained stable, as far it is possible to understand from inaccurate maps.[33]

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[27] Marcus,p. 70*;* Gétačäw Haylé, *Yä'abba Bahery Dersätoč: Oromočen Kämimäläkät* Léloč *Sänädoč Gar,* 'The *Works of Abba Bahriy with Other Documents Concerning the Oromo* (New York: Avon, MN 56310, 1995 E.C/ 2002), P. 18.

[28]*Ibid.*

[29] Alain Gascon, "Les" bastides "d'Éthiopie. Les villes fortes de Menilek dans le sud del'Éthiopie et l'urbanisation contemporaine," *Tropiques. Lieux et liens* (Paris: ORSTOM-CNRS-EHESS, 1989), pp. 436-437.

[30]*Ibid.* Marcus (1994), p. 107.

[31] The conflict between the Oromo and the Šäwan rulers frequently recorded in various historical sources in different period and the European travelers recorded actual situations of they saw during their travel. Major W. Cornwallis Harris, *The Highlands of Ethiopia* (New York: J. Winchester, New World Press, 1841), pp. 149, 157 &165.

[32] Marcus (1994), pp. 92-97

[33] David R. Buxton, "The Shoan Plateau and Its People, an Essay in Local Geography" *Geographical Journal*, Vol. CXIX (Np. 1949), p. 161.

Under the Italian occupation, Šäwa obliterated in 1936 and resurrected in 1938.[34] This shows how hesitant and inconsistent the new masters in the state structural formation were. There is no doubt that the reestablishment of an administrative region of Šäwa through disintegration was an effort to appease the Ethiopians. Italian administrative organization tactically based on a language basis: *Amhara, Eritrea, Somalia, and Oromo-Sidama* in the six administrative provinces.[35] In the 1938, Viceroy Amedeo d'Aosta re-established a *Governatodello Scioà* that was larger than the previous *Governato d'Addis Abeba*.[36] Amedeo d'Aosta probably meant to appease the Ethiopians after the bloody repression ordered of Graziani Massacre and to encourage allegiance.[37] There must have been other considerations such as the construction of the road network radiating from Menilek's capital, which later became the positive basement in transportation development of the state.

However, in fact, as several sources implicated, the Italians could not escape the recognition of Šäwa because they had chosen Addis Ababa as the capital of Africa *Orientale Italiana* and the hub of their road network that linked with the other parts of Šäwa regions. Šäwa was populated by Oromo and Amhara that the Italians tried to divide to stir up opposition between them in order to weaken the patriotic resistance in the region but was ironically strong.[38] As different sources insisted that, the resistance entrenched in Old Šäwa led by Amhara and Oromo patriotic chiefs who never signaled the sign of shadow.

Once reinstated to the throne in May 1941, Emperor Haylä Sellasé hastened the pace of the reforms he started before 1936.[39] In 1942 restructured "new" Šäwa, Täklay Gizat extended to the Awash River and to Guragé country and in the early 1960s; Känbata and the Rift as far as Šašämané were annexed.[40] According to the 1970 and 1984 censuses reports show, Šäwa had the highest and densest population region in the country that attracted the peoples and the

[34] *Ibid.*
[35] Gascon (2009), p. 87. Marcus, p. 150.
[36] Marcus, pp. 150-151.
[37] Amedeo d'Aosta considered the not cruel governor of Italian East Africa Colony than formers that also opened the opportunities of the patriotic restless struggle against the common enemy, Marcus, p.150.
[38] Marcus, PP. 148-149.
[39] Aregawi Berhe, "Revisiting resistance in Italian-occupied Ethiopia: The Patriots' Movement (1936-1941) and the redefinition of post-war Ethiopia," p.110, *https://openacess.icidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/8887/12915/Asc-075287668.243-01-pdf?*, accessed on January 9, 2020.
[40] Margery Perham, *The Government of Ethiopia* (Londres: Faber & Faber, 1948), p. 213; H. P. Huffnagel, *Agriculture in Ethiopia* (Rome: F. A. O., 1961), p. 321.

products of Ethiopia.[41] The existence of railway and the roads networks were on the other hand a serious help in the unification of Old and New Šäwa districts. From then on, the cities of the Christian Kingdom, Däbrä Berhan, Ankobär, Däbrä Sina, the towns founded by Menilek and his lieutenants, Holäta, Addis Aläm and the stopping places, Ambo, Wäliso on the highways leading to the coffee growing regions, Wälläga and Jimma,[42] the area of Menjar-Šänkora and surrounding were attracted by the influence of the capital.

During the imperial regime, Šäwa Ţäqlay Gezat divided into eleven *awuräjjas* (sub-provinces*)*, sixty-eight *wärädas* and one hundred sixty-eight *mektel wärädas*.[43] Čäbo and Guragé, Hayqoč and Butajira, Jibat and Méça, Känbata and Hadiya, Märhabété, Mänagäša, Mänez and Gišé, Sälalé, Tägulät and Bulga, Yärär and Karayu and Yefat and Temuga were *awuräjjas* during imperial period.[44] As 1984 census report Greater Šäwa had an area of 85,500 square kilometer and a population of over 9.5 million inhabitants, such a figure resulting from the size of the capital and the population density, sixty-eight inhabitants per square kilometer.[45] The territorial limits with its population extended on the highlands far as the Blue Nile canyon on the border with Gojjam in north and as far as Mount Abuyä Méda on the border of Wollo. To the East it plunged into the Afar Triangle to the borders of Harärgé that followed the Awash River as far as Awash Station and included the middle Awash River valley.[46] Its southern limits ran along the Waläyita mountains and met the Omo canyon to the West on the borders of Käfa.[47] To the North-West, Šäwa extended as far as Baqo on the Gibé River sharing there the Méča highlands with Wälläga.[48] This Greater Šäwa inhabited mainly by Amhara with an important Oromo minority on the borders of Wollo. To the West and to the Southeast of the capital, the Oromo were predominant and the Afar was present in the

[41] Office of the Population and Housing Census Commission, Ethiopia 1984, *Population and Housing Census Preliminary Report*, Vol. 1, n° 1, (Addis Ababa, September 1984), pp. 58-59.
[42] Gascon, "Shäwa, Ethiopia's Prussia: Its Expansion, Disappearance and Partition," p. 91; Alain Gascon cited in Hovarth Ronald J., "Towns in Ethiopia," *Erdkunde, Archiv für wissenschaftlische Geographie,* vol. XII, n° 1, 1968, pp. 44-45.
[43] Yäţäqelay Gezatoč Amädadäb 'State Provinces Arrangement,' IES, 1364,(Addis Ababa, 1942), p. 11
[44] Ibid.
[45] Central Statistical Agency (CSA), Office of the Population and Housing Census Commission, Ethiopia 1984, p, 60.
[46] Encyclopedia Æthiopica, "Geography of Šäwa", Vol. 4 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005), P. 552.
[47]*Ibid.*
[48]*Ibid.*

lowlands of the Awash River valley. Also part of Šäwa the highlands situated west of the rift had a dense Guragé, Hadiya, and Känbata population relying on *ensät* cultivation.[49]

The 1987 administrative reform was unveiled on the Parliament opening day; it split Greater Šäwa into four regions: Addis Ababa, East Šäwa, West Šäwa, South West Šäwa, and North Šäwa.[50] The Šäwa Ţäqelay Gezat Diocese that run under the *Beşu Abuna* Gorgoryos before it divided into four administrative regions became homework to Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church too.[51] Wäsän noted in the book of "*Zekrä Abäw"* about the division of the Šäwa province into four directional divisions and the necessity of new archbishop appointees in the respective regions in 1987 and *Abunä* Eferém Şädalu appointed as Archbishop of North Šäwa Diocese in this year, one of the divisions of Šäwa province. "This hasty reform meant to show that the Därg era was over and that from then on the country was stepping into stability with the proclamation of the People's Socialist Republic of Ethiopia."[52]

As soon as military government demolished, it seized power in Addis Ababa at the end of May 1991, the transitional coalition government put on its agenda as a priority the partition of the Ethiopian territory on ethno-federalist lines.[53] It quickly started to divide the country into "homogeneous" state-regions (*kellels*) according to "ethnic" characteristics, on linguistic criteria.[54] The 1994 constitution of transitional government later endorsed the division and extended the content of autonomy, going as far to recognize the right for every people, nation, or nationality to secede.[55] While "multi-ethnic" Greater Šäwa was unified and centralized did not fit with the principles of the new constitution. However, Greater Šäwa confined to the status of zone, a subdivision of a "homogeneous" *kellel* and the *awrajjas*, which were subdivisions of the former regions no longer, exist. As new, administrative structured, West-Šäwa, South West, Northwest Šäwa, and East-Šäwa are parts of the Oromia/Oromiyaa

[49]*Ibid.*

[50] Wässän Abäbä, *Zekrä Abäw: Beşu Abunä Eferém, Yäsämén Šäwa Hägärä Sebekät Liqä Papas ena Yäqedus Sinodos Abal, (*Addis Ababa: Ramep Printing, Genbot 2011 E.C/ May 2019), pp. 230 and 237.

[51]*Ibid.*

[52] Svein Ege, et al. ed."Shäwa, Ethiopia's Prussia: Its Expansion Disappearance and Partition," *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (*Trondheim, 2009), p. 88.

[53] T.S. Twibell, *Ethiopian Constitutional Law: The Structure of the Ethiopian Government and the New Constitution's Ability to Overcome Ethiopia's Problems*, 21 Loy. L.A. Int'l & Comp. L. Rev. 399 (1999), p. 410. *http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ilr/vol21/iss3/2, accessed* on 21 January 2020.

[54]*Ibid;* Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopian, Constitution of 1995, Article, 39 basically support the right to succession not the unity of the state that might lead the state into instability and egoistic outlook of the regional governments in the state instead of cooperativeness, p. 35.

[55] Twibell, p. 449.

kellel.[56] North-Šäwa assigned one of the zones in the Amhara *kellel.* On the other hand, former South-Šäwa divided between the Oromiyaa and the Guragé-Känbata-Hadiya kellel without considering the former limits. Moreover, the latter *kellel* integrated in 1994 into the South Qäbälé, which also experienced a revised distribution of its zones when the Silté zone created.[57]

In the new administrative structure of Šäwa, the Oromo and Amhara *kellels*' cereal cultivators in the highlands have in their majority closely mixed farming for over a centuries and the winding limit between North-Šäwa and North-West Šäwa was particularly difficult to draw.[58] The Šäwan, metropolitan conurbation that links the capital to Nazrét, city in the country enjoyed a remarkable development in different economical values and steady population growth in the towns and cities that good road and railway connections facilitated. Among the Amhara Regional State districts, the Ethio-Djibouti Railway crossed Menjar-Shenkora at Malka Jilo is one of the sole district with train station, which has grew steadily from among North Šäwa districts that had frequent relations with capital.

The contemporary, North Šäwa Zone, in the historical accounts mentioned as the central part of the Šäwa Kingdom, which radiated from Mänez that divided into the nine provinces: Menjar, Bulga, Yefat, Gidim, Tägulät, Mänze, Gishe, Morät and Šäwa-Médathat administrated under loyal governors to the central rulers.[59] Dachasa mentioned in his dissertation, the region of Menjar probably mentioned as part of Šäwa Kingdom in the reign of *Märdazmač* Amäha Yasus. During his reign, the territorial expansion was usually conducted in the Bulga, and Menjar-Šänkora regions.

Various historical works cited, Menjar-Šänkora had strong Oromo legacies from the 16th century to the first half of the 19th century.[60] Heruy Wäldä Selasé described in his book, the military campaign waged under Sählä Selassé's army in the southern Šäwan Kingdom

[56]*Ibid*; Maimire Mennasemay, "Preliminary Reflections on Ethiopian Democracy in the New Millennium" *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Tsehai Publishers, Winter / Spring 2008), pp. 49-90, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27828892, accessed on 20 December 2019.
[57]*Ibid;* Svein Ege, p. 88.
[58]Svein Ege, p. 92.
[59]Volker Stitz, "The Amhara Settlement of Northern Shoa during the 18th and 19th Centuries", *Rural Africana* 11, 1970, p. 75; Major W. Cornwallis Harris, *The Highland of Ethiopia*, Vol-III, Second Edition (London: Paternoster Row, 1844), p.30.
[60] Cornwallis Harris, p. 30; Gété Heruy Wäldä Selassé, *Yä Iteyopya Tarik Känegst: Kä Saba Esek Talaqu Yä Adewa Edel, 'Ethiopian History from Queen Sheba to Great Victory of Adewa' (*Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 1920 E.C/1927), pp. 42, 43 and 52; Gétačäw Haylé, PP.18-19.

realized overwhelm over in the region of Menjar-Šänkora that dominantly inhabited by Oromo before. Gäbru was assigned to govern of Menjar with his soldiers, assistances, and people who later became the dwellers in the region who currently called Menjar-Shenkora.[61] In fact, this beginning the region manifested with strong relationship of the neighboring peoples that tied them in social, economic, political, and cultural relations for a past period.[62] This historical phenomenon had brought the various changes of the geo-political history in the region, expansion Christianity with this event than before.

Among administrative districts of Yärär-Käräy *Awurajja*, since 1940s, Šänkora *Wäräda* was one the prominent administrative entity at capital of Balçi Town, currently called jointly Menjar-Šänkora.[63] Menjar was *Mektel wäräda*(sub district) at capital of Bollo of Šänkora *Wäräda*.[64] However, when request realized, Ararti town became the capital of newly recognized, Menjar Wäräda since 1972/3.[65] According to the 1984s study, Menjar Wäräda had thirty-eight käbälés with 44,785 inhabitants of Amhara and Argobba who were the farmers and cattle breeders.[66] On the other hand, Šänkora Wäräda was divided into thirty eighty käbälés with about 24,042 Amhara and Oromo inhabitants who engaged in mixed farming.[67] However, prior of the *Därg* regime most of the käbälés had personal names associate with administrators, and the *rest* owners that scratched and renamed since 1975s.[68]

[61] Yä Menjar Šänkora Astädadär Şefät Bét, *Hedasé Menjar-Šänkora,* p. 10; Gété, p. 68; Major W. Cornwallis Harris, *Highlands of Ethiopia: Described During Eighteen Months' Residence of a British Embassy at the Christian Court of Shoa* , Vol. 1 (London: Gilbert and Riving ton Printers, St. John's Square, 1844) , p. 143.
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] *Informants*:Sähelä Asäfa, Abatä Wändä'aferaš, Mogäs Bälaynäh and Endalä Bäyänä
[64]*Ibid.*
[65]*Ibid.*
[66] Yä Iteyopya Behéräsäboč Ţenat Ensetityut Yämäsk Sera Buden Hulät Naus Buden aned, *Bädäbub Šäwa Awuräjja Känähäsé 10-14 ena Nähäsé 17,1976 A.M Yadärägäw Gubñet Zägäba* ('Institute of Ethiopian Nationalities Study Field Work Team two Sub-team one,' *The Observations of South Shewa from August 17-21 and August 24, 1984)* IES, MS: 4828 (Addis Ababa: Nähäsé, 1976/ August, 1984), p. 64.
[67]*Ibid.*
[68] Informants: Aţelaw Yemäru, Mogäs Bälaynäh and Sähelä Asäfa

1.3. Demographic and Socio-economic setting of Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda

According to population study conducted in 2018 in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda, 161,352 inhabitants found with different nations and nationalities. Among these 83,123 are males and the rest are females and most of the populations were the inhabitants of rural.[69] In terms of religion, as district Communication Office indicated that 91% of the populations were adherent of Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwahedo* Christianity, 7% Muslims, and 2% were the Protestants. The majority of inhabitants of the district were the 94% Amhara, 5% Oromo, 0.4% Argobba and the remaining 0.6% was other different ethnic groups.[70] In accordance of the 2007 national census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, *wäräda* had a total population of 128, 879, an increase of twenty six point six five percent over the 1994 census, of which 666,918 are men and the rest are women; Among these number, 12,237 were urban inhabitants.[71] The 1994 national census reported the total population of wäräda was 99,402 in 17,787 households, of whom 51,537 were males and the remains were females. The three largest ethnic reported in the wäräda were 93.78%) of Amhara, Oromo (3.11%), and Argobba (2.65%). As report indicated, Amharic spoken in the 96.93 percent of the inhabitants as mother language followed by *Oromifaa*. The majority of the inhabitants, 94.74 percent were adherents of Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Christianity, while 5.15 percent were Muslims.[72] These different religious followers and ethnic groups have been lived together for several years in the district with harmonious living conditions.

The economy of the inhabitants of this *wäräda* based, on agriculture, trade, and animal husbandry. Cultivation has taken place at forty eight thousand eight hundred three, which depended on rainfall that take place between June to August, twenty thousand three hundred fifteen point four six hectares also serve for grazing and remaining hectors are forest land, construction land and others.[73] The fact, for long period, the economical manifestation of the people of Menjar-Šänkora *wäräda* has depended on mixed farming. Most of the people of the

[69] Menjar Šänkora Distrct Communication Office, "Yämenjar-Šänkora Wäräda Aṭäqalay Gäṣeta," (The Total Feature of Menjar-Shenkora District), (Ararti: Communication Office, 2010 E.C/ 2018), p. 1-2.
[70] *Ibid*.
[71] Census 2007 Tables: Amhara Region Archived, 2010, p. 11-14. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menjarna-Shenkora, accessed on 21 February 2020.
[72] Central Statistical Agency, *The1994 Ethiopia Population and Housing Census: Results for Amhara Region*, Vol- I, part- 1 Archived in 2010 (Addis Ababa: CSA, 1996), pp. 11-15.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menjarna_Shenkora, accessed from online on 21 September 2022.
[73] Menjar Šänkora Wäräda Culture and Tourism Office, "Yä Mejar-Šänkora Wäräda Aṭäqalay Gäṣeta" (Ararti, 2010/2018), p. 2.

area were herders and farmers. In small scale, irrigation has practiced in the district using the rivers, Jiru, Baraya, Šänkora, Burka, and Käsäm.[74] On the other hand, beside of agriculture, trade was one of the most prominent economic activities that occupy a central place in the history of the people of Menjar-Šänekora *wäräda*. The different crops and animal products from the *wäräda* usually sold at local markets and most peasants produce consumed at home. The most crops which dominantly cultivated in the region include *teff*, wheat, sorghum, maize (*zea mays*), onions, bean, and barley are among the cereal crops and vegetables.[75] In line with this, it is worth noting the fact that the livestock had been the main source of meat and dairy products for the people. As one of the articles written in 2018 stated, the livestock population of the district estimated to 93,682 cattle, 39,157 sheep, 54,408 goats, 31,010 equines, 4,294 camels, and 136,338 poultry in 2008.[76] In some extant people also assisted their economy in engaging handcrafts like woodwork, preparing leather products, potteries, waving, and blacksmithing.[77]

Pertaining to the vegetation coverage of the Menjar-Šänkora wäräda is dominated with scattered trees, shrubs, grasses and human made forest at Gara Bokan. The natural vegetation that can be expressed in an area depends upon the physical conditions. The natural equilibrium of plant associations can only exist in the absence of human interference. When people remove trees and use the land for cultivation, cultural vegetation dominates over natural vegetation. As a result, both the physical conditions and the type of species that might have existed change and the question of land use comes in. There are only small patches of woody vegetation, which is characterized by homestead and scattered field plantations of Eucalyptus trees and small bushes. The most of the plants are indigenous and exotic tree

[74] Hélän Feker and Yaréd Mängestu, "Yäfälägä Heywät Tadagi Kätäma Mäsärätawi Pelan Zegejet Ṭenat ena Eqed Riport" (Bahir Dar: Amhara Regional State Towns Plan Institute, December 2011 E.C/ 2018), P. 9; Dechasa Abebe, "Peasants and resistances against Italian occupation in North Shewa (May 4, 1936-May 5, 1941)," *Ethiop.j.soc.lang.stud.*Vol.3, No.2 (Addis Ababa, 2016), p. 23, *ttp://www.ju.edu.et/cssljournal*,accessed on 21 March 2020.

[75] Hélän and Yäréd, pp. 21-22; Menjar- Šänkora Wäräda Agriculture Development Head Office, "Bä Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Yamizaru Sebloč Ena Mertamanätu," 'Crops and Its productivities in the Menjar Shenkora District' (Ararti, 2018), pp, 1-3.

[76] Bizuwork Terefe et al., "Assessment of marketing systems, customer preference and health management of chickens in free range and intensive poultry production systems in Minjar Shenkora District, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia," *Ethiopian Veterinary Journal*, 22 (2), 2018, p. 16.

[77] Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Trade, Industry and Market Development Office, "Industrial Inputs and Progress in Menjar Shenkora District", (Ararti, 2006 E.C/2013), pp.2-3.

species.[78] Most of the indigenous tree species have depleted in abundance as they have cleared to make way for croplands, for fuel wood, charcoal making, and for the construction of homes and fences.[79]

On the other hand, the district also endowed with the wild animals includes rabbit, hyena antelope, tiger, baboon, monkey, and reptile species.[80]An existence of well-organized preservation service towards the wildlife added the steady natural imbalance in the region.

Among the recent good achievements in the district, the towns of Ararti and Balçi accessed relatively potential water supply from beginning of 1987 onwards.[81] However, most of the inhabitants of the *wäräda* are insufficient access to clean water even after this year onward, but still confronted with challenging lives due to scarcity of water supply. The usual sources of domestic energy in the district are firewood, dung, and crop residue. Beside of these, from the beginning of recent historical development, electric service becomes dominant multifunctional source of energy in the towns and in some rural inhabitants. *Wäräda* has implicated existence of good potential for industrial activities like flourmills, meat processing, skin and hide processing, sand stone, ceramic, and timber productions.[82]

The Menjar Šänkora Wäräda has various public service institutions that render different functions for societies. These include government public service institutions, religious institutions, and none governmental institutions. The district endowed government health institutions: one hospital, five clinics, and twenty-seven health stations.[83] On the other, education is a process of facilitating learning or a method of gaining knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits that take place either formal or informal settings. Historically, until the right time of 20th century, Ethiopian formal education was confined to a system of religious institutions organized and presented under the leadership of Ethiopian Orthodox Church

[78] Menjar Šänkora Wäräda Agriculture Development Head Office, Department of Forest Preservation Annual Report, 2010, pp, 2-3.

[79]*Informants:* Gäzahäñ Anebälu and Bäqälä Wändäsän

[80] Menjar Šänkora Wäräda Agriculture Development Head Office, "Yämejar-Šänkora Wäräda Aṭäqal Gäşeta" (Ararti, 2010/2018), p. 2.

[81] Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Water and Wastage Service Office, "Yäwuha Aglegelot Ajamamer ena Edegätu" (Ararti, 2000 E.C), PP.2-3; Informants: Dämäkä Mulunäh, and Šäwangezaw Zäwugä

[82] Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda Trade, Industry, and Market Development Bureau, p.3.

[83] Hélän Feker and Yaréd Mängestu, "Yäfälägä Heywät Tadagi Kätäma Mäsärätawi Pelan Zegejet Ţenat ena Eqed Riport" (Bahir Dar: Amhara Regional State Towns Plan Institute, December, 2011 E.C/ 2018), P. 32; Menjar Šänkora Distrct Communication Office, "Yämenjar-Šänkora Wäräda Aṭäqalay Gäşeta" (Ararti: Communication Office, 2010 E.C/ 2018), pp. 1-2

aiming preparing pupils for clerical activities as well as for other religious duties and positions.[84] Hence, this was happened in the study area that an active boy starting from the age of five is sent to *yäqés temehert bét* (local priest school) and even now a day after the completion of this education, he or she is sent to primary school that used as a kindergarten. Those sons or daughters who do not show competence and who are considered as passive will not be sent to either of the schools, rather, they remain at home and herd livestock; and when they grow older, they will become peasants. Currently, Ethiopian government used educational accessibility, equitability and quality as a policy. On the other hand, modern school service, which inaugurated in the district since 1946 with *Qäñazmač* Mäkurya Wäldä Selassé Primary School while currently increased into 68 government and private schools; among these four are secondary schools. The institutions like police stations, court offices, agriculture offices, industries, and market places, and transport offices are the important public institutions that render the considerable public service to the inhabitants of the district. However, there were no any bank or insurance institutions in the *wäräda* until 2011. However, as mentioned above, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia opened its branch at Ararti town in this year, but later there are additional Commercial Bank also opened at Balçi in 2012.

Besides, of a number of government and private institutions, religious institutions have played remarkable role in the district. The district endowed currently more than eighty Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo churches that have been rendering religious service in their respective foundations. Indeed churches are not solely religious institutions for societies but also the source socio-economic issues in the region. Among a historic Churches and monasteries in the *wäräda,* Sama Sänbät Monastery, Guramba Monastery, Dofa Mikael Church, Arerti Maryam Church, and Šänkora Yohänes Church are the prominent historical sites, which have been rendered different vitalities for inhabitants through attracting peoples into the region because of its existence of the *ţäbäls* services and religious arena there.[85]

[84] Robert Van De Weyer, "The Monastic Community of Ethiopia With Two Comments," *An Ethiopian Journal*
[85]Bäläţä Abäbä (*Liqä Kahnat*), *Yämesrač Tämeräñaw Ţäbäl: Enäho Denähäl* (Addis Ababa: np., 1987 E.C/1994), P. 12-13.

1.4. The Historical Background of Christianity and Monasticism in Šäwa

The basement for the development of the monasticism life strong coincided with religion of Christianity. Narrating some aspects of the monasticism is the clue for this thesis work. In line with this, Krzysztof stated the term monasticism is emanated from a Greek word "mono" meaning single in which the seclusion of oneself from the society or the world.[86] Monastery is a place reserved for prayers, which may be chapel, church, temple and also may serve as a cache for different peoples. Hence, Monasticism is not exceptional for only Christianity, but also Monks of Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism were lived in the monastery before the birth of Jesus Christ. However, Christian monasticism is different from others in distinctive way.[87]

The introduction of Christianity in the Middle East led to the beginning and development of Christian monasticism to be as devotional practice of individuals who live a recluse and typically cloistered lives that are dedicated to Christian worship. Monasticism used as to denote the building for the communities of monks and nuns who are differ from regular friars, regular canons, regular clerks and religious congregations whose role is theological activities.[88] In fact, Monasticism is a specific form of inner life, that emerge spontaneously and those Monks and Nuns are people called by God to live Christian life. Hence, those Monks and Nuns live in a special way by secluded themselves from worldly life, quite solitude, loving God creations, pray for the world peace, and provide hospitability to those people who seek.[89]

The foundation of Christian monasticism traced back to 320 AD that was begun by an Egyptian Saint Anthony who was known as a founder of monasticism in which his life first attracted and led thousands of followers. He lived for years alone in the cave in Egypt was widely known, and held in reverence for the purity and simplicity of his character. Multitude followed his example and the caves of Upper Egypt were disseminated by his disciplines.[90] Later on, monasticism spread in the East from the hermits living in the desert of Egypt to Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and to the Nile Delta as well as to the water ways of the Red sea

[86] Blazewicz Krzysztof , "Ethiopian Monasticism", *Institute of Oriental Studies*, XII(2), (Warsaw University 1999), pp. 31-46;
[87] *Ibid.*
[88] *Ibid.*
[89] John Parkinson, "Control System in Medieval English Monasteries", *Journal of Organization Culture, Communications and Conflict*, Vol. 21, Issue- 1, (York University, 2017), pp. 1-13.
[90] Michael Fuseini W., "Christianity in Africa: A Beacon of Hope for Christianity in Europe", *Journal of Advocacy Research and Education*, Vol.2, (Ghana: KAU International, 2015), pp. 92-94.

that the sayings and acts of the desert fathers and mothers came to be recorded and disseminated. However, the monastic movement in the West spread more slowly than Asia and Africa in which the western monastery was generally organized and directed from 529 AD onwards.[91]

Literatures in the twenty century devoted that Egypt, Nubia, Ethiopia and North Africa were known as the beginners in the history of Christianity in Africa. This was evidenced that, the origin of African Christianity traced back to Coptic Church of Alexandria in Egypt and Ethiopia.[92] The beginning of Church and Monastic history in the Nile delta must be understood as closely related to the life of Jewish Diasporas on the Mediterranean coastal areas and Nile basin. In fact, the waterway of Nile delta made possible a rapid expansion of Christianity from the delta and adjoining monastic centers to Upper Egypt and the three kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia.[93]

Monasticism in Africa started in Egypt when social dislocation or crisis occurred in Egypt in the third century. Moreover, Africans become the first people who preached the gospel to the non-Jewish people and lore of African Church fathers defined the Christian faith for us as we understand it today that even numerically, out of 59 countries in the continent of Africa, 31 of them have Christianity as their dominant religion. However, beside the above impressive historical development of early Christianity and Monasticism, most of Sub Sahara African countries came in to contact with Christianity through European missionary efforts of nineteen and twenty centuries.[94]

Christianity introduced in the kingdom of Aksum and since, the conversion of king Ezana to Christianity by Freminatius who received his bishop patronage from Egyptian Saint Athanasius had taken as a landmark for Ethiopian evangelization of Christianity in the fourth century.[95].

However, George Gerester dictated that king Ezana conversation to Christianity was aiming to get share in the geo political areas of Mediterranean and Red Sea by creating goodwill with

[91]*Ibid;* J. Abbink, "A Biography on Christianity in Ethiopia", *African Studies Center*, (Netherland: ASC Working Paper 52/2003), pp. 8-17.
[92]*Ibid.*
[93] Bengt Sunkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of Church in Africa* (London: Cambridge University press, 2004), pp. 34-37.
[94] Fuseini, p. 93.
[95] Sunkler and Steed, p.34; and also see Michael Geddes, *The Church History of Ethiopia* (USA: AGES Software, Albany, 1997), pp.12-17.

the then powerful Christian Roman Empire.[96] This was due to Christianity became the state religion of Ethiopia like that of Roman Empire. Anyhow, the adoption of Christianity as the state religion during king Ezana, in the fourth century was a turning point in the history of Ethiopia that led to completely new epoch lasting to the present day even in maintaining independence through centuries in time of isolation.[97]

Important historical thoughts that clearly enlightened, the introduction of Christianity in the northern Ethiopia gradually enhanced its expansion in the other parts of Ethiopian regions beginning from the fourth century A.D after conversion of Ezana to Christianity. In the early time, most historical accounts implicate, the expansion of Christianity was confined in the northern Ethiopia, but has gotten momentum following the arrival of the so-called, Nine Saints from Eastern Mediterranean countries to Ethiopia.[98] Most sources dedicated that the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church further consolidated after the episodic arrival of the Nine Saints towards the end of the fifth century.[99] Most of these saints mentioned, came from Syria and other neighboring countries, ruled then by the Roman Empire.

Sergaw, and Gorgoriyos stated, the Nine Saints tasks beside of expanding of the religion toward the masses and consolidation of monasticism in the state, they also translated the Bible and other religious literatures from former Greek language to Ge'ez that later remained the church language in the Ethiopia. Establishing and expanding monastic movement, in building churches as well as monasteries, in developing literacy and liturgical activities and they were intermediaries in transmitting Christian message to illiterate mass.[100] Among the monasteries, Däbrä Damo is founded in the first decade of six century AD by one of the Nine Saints called *Abunä* Aregawi. *Abba* Pentalewon, *Abba* Liqanos, *Abba* Garima, *Abba* Guba, *Abba* Aftse, *Abba* Tsehma, *Abba* Yamata and *Abba* Alef were also established their own monasteries at Aksum, Adwa, Mudama, Yeha, Sedenya, Gere'alta and Bihezan, in the northern Ethiopia.[101]

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[96] Ashenafi Kebede, "The Sacred Chant of Ethiopian Monastic Church: Music in Black Jewish and Christian Communities, the Black perspective in Music‖, Vol. 8, No.1, (Spring, 1980), pp.20-34; George Gerester, *Church in Rock: Early Christian Art in Ethiopia* (New York: Phaidon Published Inc., 1970), pp.25-27.

[97] Gerester, p.36; and also see Sergew Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270* (Addis Ababa: United press, 1972), p. 97.

[98] G. Mokhtar, *General History of Africa-II: Ancient civilization of Africa* (California: Heinemann, UNESCO, 1981), pp. 401-420.

[99] Wallis Budge, tra.,*Synaxarium: The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church* (Garland: Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Däbrä Meherät St. Michael Church, nd), p. 670.

[100] *Ibid.*

[101] Mokhtar, pp. 401-410; Stuart Muno-Hay, *Ethiopia: The Unknown land A Cultural and Historical Guide* (London: I.B. Taurus Publisher, 2002), pp. 41-42.

As time went, monasticism expand towards of south into Amhara region through systematic evangelizations of the newly conquered areas that started with Iyasus Moa of Däbrä Haiq monastery in the Wollo and later Täklä Haimanot of Däbrä Asbo (Däbrä Libanos) in the thirteen and fourteen centuries respectively. Especially the Amhara people who claimed themselves as the descended from Solomon and they admire the book as well as song of David plays a great role in the expansion of Christianity in the region.[102] Among the well-known disciples of Hayeq Iyäsus Moa Monastery who played considerable role, *Abunä* Täklä Haymanot of Šäwa materialized establishment of churches and monasteries in the Šäwa plateau and other regions. Däbrä Asibon was the first monastery established by him in Šäwa in 1284 A.D.[103] Within his footsteps, Däbrä Besrät of *Abunä* Zénä Marqos in Morät, and Däbrä Bägge of Häşan Mo'a in Bulga founded in 14th century, and Zeq^{w}ala of *Abunä* Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus at the top of the mountain were monasteries established in Šäwa.[104]

Practically, one of the tale's fact, the expansion and military campaign of king Amdä Şion in the fourteen century taken as a land mark for the Christianization as well as evangelization of in Šäwa at large. However, there is no consensus among different peoples when and where Christianity and Monastic life introduced in the Šäwa province, which become a paradoxical issue in narrating a correct historiography of Christianity and Monasticism and in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda was central point. The classification of hierarchical organizations of the churches of the Christian communities is manifested in its unique church designs. Obviously, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has its unique church designs with different administration titles namely, rural based Church designs, *däbr* and *gädam* (monastery) is not exceptional to Šäwa Province as well. This is also one of the parts Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda tale that classified as *däbr* and *gädam*.[105] In fact, there is big difference between *däbr* and monastery. According to the historical accounts cited, *däbr* is a Ge`ez word, meaning hill, in which those churches hoisted in the towns and historical places named as *däbr* that was an example of scarification of saints in Qermelous Hill, Jesus Christ publicize secret of his power

[102] Mokhtar, p. 417; and see also Taddesse, *Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 24-26.
[103] Ibid; Tadesse, p. 112; S, Kaplan, "The Rise of Monastic Holy Man in the early Solomonic Period," ed. In G. Goldenberg and B. Podolsky, *Proceedings of the Six International Conference*, Tel Aviv, 1980 (Rotterdami: A.A Balkema, 1986), PP. 347-348.
[104] Encyclopedia Æthiopica, "Province of Šäwa", Vol. 4 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005), p. 554.
[105] *Informants*: Mogäs Gäbräşadeq, Girma Wudehäh and Šemäles Täräfä.

in Tabor hill as well as memorizing his preaching in different hills.[106] Hence, *däbr* is deeply rooted in the society that belongs to the symposium from which its clerical and lay ministers are drawn. It is an essential element of the societal life maintained and administered through the same means as the center of worship, learning, matrimony, burial, consolation or even recreation. As such, it was recognized, revered and cherished by each community. The multiple functions of the *däbr* required a sizable corps of functionaries who, in accordance with ancient traditions and the political life prevailing in the society, was hierarchically structured.[107] In the area, that research was conducted is not exception from these influences. As communities elders told that Balçi Amanuel, Sama Sänbät, and Gura Amba were manifested their status as both *däbr* and monasteries, were also fulfill the above-mentioned characteristics. They had a right to give the titles like *gera géta* (left lord), *qäñ géta*(right lord), *liqa abäw (*intellectual leader), *gäbäz (*custodian*)*, *yäçeqa šum*(earth officer) and *mäçäné* and also there were a nucleus for smalls, simple chapels known as the *yägäţär aţebia bétäkerstianat*, located at a distances within the jurisdiction.

Gädam is also on the other hand a *Ge`ez* word to mean forest, desert that after Jesus Christ succeeding his deeds at Gädamä Qoräntos, society of monks, nuns, hermits and retired people were began to live in desert or forest areas as a landmark for the beginning of monastic life.[108] Monasteries were the spiritual laboratories of their day. The goal was to create stable, spiritual communities that through the application of spiritual disciplines might bring about righteousness for the individual and the larger community. The monastery was the designated place of worship; regular hours were set up so that worship might continue all day long and musical forms were developed that remain in place today. Monasteries were distribution centers for mercy ministries: food and lodging were often available. Finally, the monks did provide an important intellectual service to their society by copying, preserving, and cataloging written sources.[109] Beside the above developments in the expansion of Monasticism and Monastic life in Ethiopia, traditions and some sources stated monasticism in

[106] Yalemzewd Dessie, "A History of Märtulä Maryam Monastery from Its Foundation to the Present," (MA Thesis in Aksum University: Department of History and Heritage Management, 2019), p. 17.
[107] Asamenew Kassa and Zerayehu Semie, *Yä Bétäkerestian Astädadärawi Mäwaqer* (Addis Ababa, 1996), pp. 47-59; and see also *Abba* Gorgorious, pp. 87-31.
[108] Asamenew and Zerayehu, pp. 47-59. And see also *Abba* Gorgorious, pp. 87-31.
[109] Blazewicz Krzysztof, "Ethiopian Monasticism", *Institute of Oriental Studies*, XII/2/, (Warsaw University, 1999), pp. 31-46

Šäwa in general and in the Menjar-Šänkora in particular probably established from 13th and 19th centuries respectively.[110]

In fact, the local elders told that about monasticism, peoples admired God's work and leave their worldly life joined monastic lives of Šäwa monasteries, the research which conducted areas in Sama Sänbät, Balçi Amanuel and Gura Amba monasteries a like.[111] However, those females who scram from marriage, peoples who are very old and helpless, those peoples who are unable to bear a child, children's who are forwarded to church by their parents to give service as a virgin, poor peoples and sick peoples joined in to live in ascetic life within the monasteries as much in the region. It is better to understand, the common guidelines of the monasticism in one of monasteries to be monks or nuns. Hence, there is no any detail requirement to enter the monastery, yet every people who wanted to enter the monastery are expected at first repent their devil activities, gave service, fasting, praying and burden their body for about three years without *qob*.[112] Then after all monks who have finish their monastic prerequisite test have a hand cross made from bronze, silver as well as wood for blessing the believers, and also they have a rosary *(mäquṭäria)* consisting of forty one beads and a prayer book placed in a leather sheath hung over the shoulder required to be monk.[113]

Another monasticism manifestation lined with in Šäwa in general and in the Menjar-Šänkora in particular, almost all monks in monasteries are duty to pray and feed themselves accordance of some monastic rule guidelines.[114] Basically, within the monasteries monks met each other in a day, for the canonical hours start at midnight that the whole is sung and read Maria's Miracles *(Tamerä Maryam),* in the time of two priests recite Pray of the Myrrh (*Şolotä et'an*), and then the Lord's Prayer takes place and the recitation of Apostles Creed. Then Psalms and *Sinksar* are read. At the end of officious, one of the senior monks recites the prayer of the congregation that consists of prayers for the monastery, the church, diocese, government and for the country. At noon, all the monks gather in the churchyard where they devote themselves to rosary and *mehla* in absolute silence. The monks expected to mail only a day after receiving food everybody goes to his cell to eat it in peace. The last hours of the monastic day are passed at individual prayer or work in complete silence. The monks for the

[110] Tadesse, pp, 103-107.
[111] *Informants:* Mogäs, Girma and Šemäles
[112] *Ibid.*
[113] *Ibid.*
[114] *Ibid.*

last collective pray of the day also present that consist reading of the Bible, collective singing and a blessing from the abbot. After that night quiet starts, ordered by the rule of Saint Pachomius and the church door remains locked until the ceremony starting the next day.[115] According to Ashenafi, there are four basic principles of Ethiopian Monastic habit in general *qämis, qenat, qob* and *askéma*, which are formally acquired by the novice at different stage of his carrier.[116]

Qämis: In everyday monks wear coarse garment that is either black or yellow robe *(megonaşäfya*) covered by a coat of similar color that indicates their ascetic life in this world, whereas, black robe indicates their sadness in this world that they pray for the sake of to save the world from devil activity. They did not allow removing the *Qämis* in time of sleeping.[117]

*Qenat:*is wearing around the neck connect with flank as a *sash* made from leather, iron and string inside their *qämis* or robe. Hence, iron indicates to memorize Jesus Christ nailed to large wooden cross die, whereas, the string aiming to memorize Jesus Christ.[118]

Qob: All monks including those beginners wear black or yellow hats in their heads that is similar in color with their *qämis* or robe indicates an oath of all monks and nuns living in a chaste and virgin life.[119]

Askéma: Given for those monks who lived for a long period in ascetic life, discernible, who was firm in his faith, and who saw a revelation wear a special twelve crosses sheeting hat commonly taken as a crown.

According to Greenfield descriptions, the round, as well as pentagon Churches of Monasteries of Ethiopia characterized by three basic corresponding building structures: *qené mahlét* (chair), *mäqdäs* (nave) and *qedusä qedusan* (holy of holies).[120]

Basically, Ethiopian Monasticism had its own hierarchies namely, the *Abbot, Mägabi, Gäbäz, Wäré Mägabi, Liqä Kahinat, Iqa Bét, Mämheran* and the last hierarchy of the monastery is monks who live in the compound of the monastery either in cave or forest. In fact, each

[115] Ashenafi Kebede, "The Sacred Chant of Ethiopian Monastic Church: Music in Black Jewish and Christian Communities, the Black perspective in Music", Vol. 8, No.1, (Spring, 1980), pp. 20-34.
[116]*Ibid;* Tadesse Tamiat, p. 164.
[117]*Ibid.*
[118]*Ibid.*
[119]*Ibid.*
[120] Richard Greenfield, Ethiopia: A new Political History, (New York: FREDERICK A. PRAEGER, publisher, 1965), p.24.

hierarchy has its own duties and responsibilities in the day-to-day activities of the monastery.[121] Monasticism in Ethiopia is important for the creation, development and preservation of Ethiopia culture. It played a pivotal role to avoid illiteracy, it is considered as a home of producing, developing, and preserving manuscripts that produced in parchments (*berana)*, it gave health care services,[122] a center of church life as well as theological traditions and also served treasure houses of Ethiopian literature.[123] Moreover, economically as monasteries possess rich in tangible and intangibles heritages, territory, and gastronomy that they gave an opportunity to develop tourism industry which is important for the community and even for the country.[124] Generally, Ethiopian Church and Monasteries, however, received patronage from the monarchies and become center of learning and artistic activities.[125]

With above of the monastic lives of monks and nuns were expected to perform in the regions of well-known historic monasteries of Šäwa region, as part of Ethiopian monasteries, probably in the Menjar-Šänkora region, Sama Sänbät, Gur Amba, Balçi Amanuel and Šänkora Yohänes churches had its own monastic historical entities throughout its foundation. Indeed, some sources tell us to say about these churches establishments to be as monasteries before the entry of the Derg regime clearly implicated from the church manuscripts. Except nuns monastery of Šänkora Yohänes founded in the recent the rest until disrupted the right to own the church land, most the ecclesiastical services in the churches were performed in relatively the monastic manner from its developments strong in the Sama Sänbät and Guramba Qedest Maryam monasteries. As local informants and manuscript notes realized Balçi Qedus Amanuel Church was regarded as the both monastery and the church characteristics from the beginning of Menilek's II recognition since c.1868 as noted gospel manuscript reference.[126]

[121] *Informants: Mämheré* Sahlä, *Mämheré* Mogäs and others.
[122]Ashenafi, p. 25; and also see Kumlachew Sifraw, "The Socio economic Roles of Religion: The Case of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches in Addis Ababa," (Department of Social Anthropology, Addis Ababa University, June 2015), pp. 20-23.
[123] Gerester, p.44
[124] Silvia Aulet, et al., "Monasteries and tourism: interpreting sacred landscape through gastronomy", *Brazilia Journal of Tourism Research,* Sao Polo, 11(1), (2017), pp. 175-196.
[125]Taddesse, p.25.
[126]*Informants:* Mamheré Endalä, Abba Yoséf Tamänä, Alemayehu Atilaw, "A History of Balchi Amanu'el Church from its foundation to Present" (Jimma University: Department of History and Heritage Management BA Thesis, 2012), p.5; (See Appendix-III).

CHAPTER -TWO

2. Historical Survey of Monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora Region

2.1. Expansion of Christianity in the Menjar-Šänkora Region

The over view of the introduction and expansion of Christianity in the region is considerable important. So that the tale of Christianity is one the historical epoch that hold significant historical arena, which further influence mighty Ethiopian region as much. In contemporary period, the region of Menjar-Šänkora was parts Šäwa kingdom where the much Christian historical phenomenon deeply involved beginning from actual priesthood practice of Christianity inaugurated in Ethiopia since 4th century AD. Before presiding to the history of Christianity in Šäwa, the facts we cannot deny according to historical accounts deduced, prior of the introduction of Christianity to the region peoples were expectedly worshiped different gods and goddesses on the different objects like river, tree, stone, mountain, animals and so on. The evidence that noticed, much of the Ethiopian people was not exceptional from this type of trains as well though types of gods' representation might differ. He presented incontestably about the existence of the principal local gods, like *Astar, Mahrem, Baher,* and others in the Aksumite Kingdom before introduction of Christianity.[127]

As various church historical accounts stated, central Ethiopian region, Šäwa renowned by Christianity but the exact time to mention introduction of Christianity into region is difficult. As of Tadesse's description, Christianity expansion into Šäwan region was with elements that northern Ethiopians had practiced.[128] It is clear, introduction of Christianity and its expansion in the region encouraged the farther establishment and developments of churches and monasteries. Accordingly, one can assert that Šäwa was one of the Ethiopian regions that deeply Christianized under the influence of a number saints in the region since 1300s that coincided with foundation of Däbra Asebo Monastery.[129]

In the manuscript version of *Dersanä Ura'el* described that, the twins Aksumite kings "Abreha and Aşebäha built seven churches in numbers on Mount Yärär that dedicated to

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[127] Täklä Şadeq Mäkurya, *Kä Ta'ot Amelko Wädä Kerstena (From Paganism to Christianity),* (Addis Ababa: Berhanene Selam Printing Press, 1941 E.C/ 1948/49), p. 33; Sergaw, Ancient *and Medieval Ethiopian* …, p. 95.

[128] *Ibid;* Sergaw, "Introduction of Christianity to Shäwa," *Bulletin of Ethiopian Manuscripts*, (1), 1974, p. 1.

[129] Heruy Aremyas, *Mäzgäbä Tarik*, 4th ed. (Addis Ababa: Tawahedo Mäşehaf Mädäber, 2012 E.C/ 2019), pp. 8, 151-153.

Mika'el, Gäbr'el, the Four Heavenly Creatures, a Kérubél and the Angel Surafél, Twenty Four Heavenly Priests*"*.[130] The text also described, the two kings erected Däbrä Yärär as their seat of government, the location being in the center of Ethiopia. According to this manuscript clearly shows us the introduction of Christianity into Šäwa was in the 4th century. Similarly, Yeka Mika'el and Ofena *Qedus* Amanu'el churches in Šäwa, Tädäbab Saint Mary Church in Wollo and Märtula Maryam Monastery in Gojjam establishments also mentioned during the reign of Abreha and Aşebäha.[131] To this instance, for the sake of justification, these historical descriptions assist us to say the introduction of Christianity to Šäwa is not far from the year of actual introduction Christianity into the Ethiopia.

As many accounts asserted, the expansion of the Christianity was mentioned mainly during the medieval period since following the restoration of the "*Solomonic"* dynasty in the heartlands of Šäwa.[132] Tadesse noticed that most of Christian rulers during the Christian Highland Kingdom were practiced religious influence over the regions they occupied besides of the territorial control over. In the Medieval Ethiopian history, the kings control most of the regions of formerly Muslim Sultanates to under their schemes and the construction of churches and monasteries conducted in the Šäwa as much than before. According several accounts noticed timely rulers utilize the tactics to expand religion the military assistance, particularly during the king Amdä Şeyon, was mentioned as one of the expansionist of the Christian rulers in consolidating Christianity throughout the large parts of the Ethiopian.[133]

The historians evincive works recognized that, in the 14th and 15th centuries were period of the large-scale of territorial expansion of the Christian Kingdom and Christians were employed pressure on the non-Christian people areas to embrace Christianity.[134] The coincided event beside Christian kings' territorial expansion, the Šäwan saints also employed vital role in

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[130] André Caquot, "L'ho-mélie en l'honneur de l'archange Ourial (Dersanä Ura'el)", *AE* 1, 1955, pp. 62 and 64f, quoted in Deresse Ayenachew, "Le kätäma: la cour et le camproyal en Éthiopie (XIVe–XVIe siècle), espace et pouvoir," (Ph.D. thesis, Université Paris-I Panthéon-Sorbonne 2009), pp.354-357.

[131] Bamlaku Aseré, "Yäbahel ena Turizem Yämäräja Mäşehét" (Culture and Tourism Information Pamphlet) (Debre Berhan: North Shoa Zone Culture and Tourism Office, 2011 E.C/ 2019), P. 17; Beyene Chekol, "Veneration and Elation as Proceeds of Pilgrimage: A Practice in Exemplar Orthodox Churches of Addis Ababa" *Cogent Arts & Humanities* (Peter Stanley Fosl: Transylvania University, 2007), p. 3, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2016.1277453**,** assessed on 12 August 2022.

[132], *Ibid.,* P. 108.

[133]*Ibid.* p. 112.

[134] Dässé Kälä'ab, *A Chronicle History from Menilek I to Menilek II* (Addis Ababa: *Yä Iteyoeya Ortodox Täwahedo Bétäkérsetyan Mahebärä Qedusan,* 2007 E.C (2015), pp. 153-154; Tadesse, pp. 132-42.

cementing the religion through erecting of churches and monasteries in the newly occupied regions.[135]

The Ethiopian saint who got the recognition including in the Alexandrian Coptic Church, Abunä Täklä Haymanot of Šäwa evangelized the people non-Christians through establishing of churches and monasteries in the Šäwa and other regions. Däbrä Asibon was the first monastery established by Täklä Haymanot in Šäwa in the 1284.[136] His legacies also consolidated foundation other monasteries like Däbrä Besrät of Abunä Zénä Marqos in Morät, Däbrä Bägge of Häşan Mo'a in Bulga, and Zeq^{w}ala of Abunä Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedusare among the prominent monasteries established by saints in the Šäwa still exist without loss of their monasticism status.[137] The thesis, which conducted, one of the monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora, Sama Sänbät is one of the prominent which had listed the monastery after its foundation had close relation with the Zeq^{w}ala of Abunä Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus monastery.[138] (See Appendix-I)

Däbrä Libanos Monastery documented in several historical accounts in producing religious saints, like *Abunä* Ya'iqob one of who opened evangelization program through organizing the "products" of the monastery during the reign of king Amdä Şeyon that vitally geared their legacies of Christian teachings in the masses of Šäwa.[139] In the1332 AD, Abunä Ya'eqob re-organization of the monastic groups in Šäwa and Amhara variously described in the traditions of the church, and it is only natural that the spirit of rivalry among these communities should reflect in the stories.[140] Bishop intended to cover all the corners of the province of Šäwa.[141] Tadesse mentioned among the missionaries, four assigned to evangelize in the east, direction of the Muslim frontiers were Matyas for Fätägar Tadéwos for Şelalish, Yohänes for Kilat, and

[135] Tadesse, p. 87; Dässé Kälä'ab, *A Chronicle History from Menelik I to Menelik II* (Addis Ababa: *Yä Iteyopeya Ortodox Täwahedo Bétäkérsetyan Mahebärä Qedusan*, 2007 E.C (2015), pp. 153-154.

[136] Ibid; Tadesse, p. 112; S, Kaplan, "The Rise of Monastic Holy Man in the early Solomonic Period," ed. In G. Goldenberg and B. Podolsky, *Proceedings of the Six International Conference*, Tel Aviv, 1980 (Rotterdami: A.A Balkema, 1986), PP. 347-348.

[137] Mulualem, pp 26-27; Encyclopedia *Æ*thiopica, "Province of Šäwa", Vol. 4 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005), p. 554.

[138] Manuscripts found in the Sama Senbet Monastry Treasurer House, p. 144.

[139] Tadesse, P.175.

[140] *Ibid.*

[141] *Ibid*, p. 176.

Qäwistos for Mähagil.[142] The habit of evangelizing that may supported under the 14th and 15th centuries kings in the Šäwa, realized the expansion of Christianity and establishment of churches in the region.

However, the one of the important currently mentioned as monastery in the region, Sama Sänbät Monastery's ark of covenant was found at the Yärär Mountain before the region under siege of Ahamed Gragn war of campaign in the first half of sixteenth century, that miser the golden age of Ethiopian churches and monasteries progressive period.[143] From this beginning, the historic churches and monasteries were burnet to ash, peoples were Islamized, treasures were taken, the population movement, and shift of political center had taken place after this event. In many parts of the country, the historical accounts clearly insight us to say the churches ruined due to this interstate conflicts in the 16th century.

To overcome the threated constraints, timely Christian rulers employed the joint military campaigns against the war of Ahmäd Grañ and the young leader, Gelawdiwos, in first realized his ambition after defeating the contending power at the battle of Wäyena Däga, Zäntera in 1543 opened chance in some extant.[144] Nevertheless, the dream of the king was coincided with the fresh threats: the Oromo population movement that tackled replacement of royal camps to the former central part of Ethiopia seems discouraged the usual progress of church and monasteries in the Šäwa as the kings expected.

Post the war of Ahmäd Grañ, the establishments of churches and monasteries in the state took the gradual progress. In the 19th century, the establishments of Churches and monasteries development had seen in the Šäwa. As some historical sources enlighten, many churches and monasteries establishment took place in the Šäwa kingdom in the reign of Sahelä Selassé (r.1813-47), Haile Melekot (r. 1847-1855), and Menilek-II and later in the 20th century. Currently called Menjar-Šänkora region churches and monasteries were mentioned in the sources in most in the 19th century. The thesis, which has conducted in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda mostly, realized the 19th century historical developments of monasteries during the

[142] Tadesse, p. 182. He asserted the Mätyas for Fätägar cited from Gädla Filipos, loc. cit, or. 769f; clearly described how much the religious father waged significant role to expand Christianity in Šäwa, the part of this region was one of the currently called Menjar Šänkora, p. 182.

[143] Tadesse, pp. 71-75; Dässé Kälä'ab, *Tarikä Nägäset … Kä Menilek Kädämay Esekä Menilek-II,* pp. 225-228.

[144] Marcus, p. 34.

reign of *Negus* Sahelä Selassé and King Menilek II respectively.[145] As mentioned above, the historic monasteries which considered to be established in the Menjar Šänkora region: Sama Sänbät and Guramba monasteries were parts of these kings. On the other hand, the churches, which established in the early period, were renewed under these leaders and their successors in the study area are considerable historical facts. This is true in some extent; historical sources recognized the continuity of the Christians dominance and expansion of Christianity until the imperial regime came to an end in 1974 was important fact in the region.

In the medieval Ethiopian church history, the establishment of the churches in the areas of Bulga and Menjar-Šänkora regions was the important historical development. One central point of the discussion of this thesis is focused on the survey of monasteries but assessing early development of Christianity in the region is crucial issue. Within this fact of historical narrations, the earliest church established in the region still in line of its services is associated with the Rarati Maryam. As local historians informed this church was established before the restoration of Solomonic dynasty since in 1250s. This clearly shows us the influence of Christianity has long last historical legacies in the region before the king Amdä Şeyon's territorial expansion in the 14th century realized into the Menjar-Šänkora formerly called Fatagar Sultanate.[146] The region was no longer a forbidden ground for Christian religious activities, and the disciples of Täklä Haymanot were busy in the teaching Christians, in the non-Christian society's particularly local chiefs.[147] Whatever the fact is most of the churches establishments came to be realizing in territorial region during the Amdä Şeyon's territorial expansions onwards.

As mentioned in the above descriptions, Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* was the parts of the Fatagar Muslim Sultanate that came under the rule of Christian Kingdom beginning from the reign of Amdä Şeyon (r. 1314-1344).[148] Indeed, Fatagar was a long historical region possibly, once a Muslim Sultanate was located in the southeast, Šäwa region, on the northern shore of the

[145] (See appendix-II and III).

[146] Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church North Šäwa Diocese Šänkora *Wäräda* Bétäkehnat Şéfät Bét, "Bäsämén Šäwa Hägärä Sebkät Bä Šänkora *Wäräda* Wust Yämigäñu Abyatä Kerestiyan Märäja" (List of Churches found in North Shoa Diocese in Shenkora District), (Balçi: Šänkora *Wäräda* Church Office, 2009 E.C), p.1.

[147] Tadesse, p. 186.

[148] Marcus, p. 22; Tadesse, 133-143; Arab Faqih, *Futah al Habaša "The Conquest of Abyssinia (16th century)*," Paul Lester Stenhouse, trans. (London: Tsehai Publishers and Distributors, 2003), p.71.

Awaš River is present day of Menjar-Šänkora.[149] As *Abba* Yoséf, the abbot of the Balçi Amanu'el told the strategic position region of Šänkora between the Christian Empire and the eastern Muslim communities enabled to be a royal camp of king Dawit-II (r. 1380-1412) formerly called at Telq.[150] Sources enlighten in the course of the 14th and15th centuries, Fatagar progressively integrated into the Christian Empire.[151]

Still historical church which bearing significant tale in the Šänkora that established in the 14th century during the reign of Dawit-II is Bäsa Qedus Mika'el Church where his son Zära Ya'eqob baptized.[152] The local informants stated regarding there was the royal camp of Dawit-II in the fourteen century where he was born his sons and grandson spent their life span at Telq. The other site where Dawit-II established his court was at Ţelq in Fatagar, and it also is looked towards the eastern frontiers. The supportive evidence for this argument is also associated with Taddesse's noted in the *church and state* history book about birthplace of Zära Ya'eqob is at Telq in 1399.[153] He also described as King Zära Ya'eqob also established two churches dedicated by Saint Mika'el at Telq and Yätäbaš.[154]

However, as its old agedness the church has no as such historical artifact remains which recognize the authenticity to be that of the periodically established. As some brusher documents and oral information recognized establishment of Bäsa Qedus Mika'el Church under the influence of the king Dawit. The controversial historical survey regarding to church during Ahmed Grañ and how was passed this destructive period requires the future deep investigation in the region. Despite, the caves and the gorges of the stone landscape might the coverage for next existence in the region in later but region dominantly occupied the Oromo. Nobody tells about the early name of the Bäsa that later got its name regarded from the local Oromo aristocrat of the region called *Ebesa.* From that beginning since 16th century onwards, still name remained as it was and the church name Bäsa Mika'el.[155] In fact, the names of the

[149] Encyclopedia Æthiopica, "Fatagar", Vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005), p.504; Arab Faqih, *Futah al Habaša "The Conquest of Abyssinia (16th century)*," Paul Lester Stenhouse, trans. (London: Tsehai Publishers and Distributors, 2003), pp. 29, 48, 60, 177, 187, 236, 262, 330, and 334.

[150]Encyclopedia Æthiopica, p. 505.

[151] Mulualem, p. 33.

[152] Debre Berhan Qedest Selasé Bétäkersetiyan Säbäka Guba'e, "Däbrä Berhan Abiye Haymanotki Wänbärki Fäqädä Lämärqos Hägärä Zära Yaqob Wämenilek Wähayelä Selasé Negusä Nägäset" (Däbrä Berhan: n.p. Hämlé 7, 2004 E.C, July 14, 2012), p. 4.

[153]Tadesse, pp. 152 and 220.

[154] Tadesse, p. 152.

[155]*Informants:Ato* Abatä Wändafrash, *Mämheré* Endalä, and *Ato* Fäţänä Yeţena.

region clearly show the influence of the Oromo: like Menjar, Šänkora, Eranbuti, Bollo, Çälé, Miti Kora …and others. Getachew also clearly noted about the Oromo influences in the region of Menjar-Šänkora that might responsible for scratch of the former names of the region and replacement under the new Oromo names in the region.[156]



Figure 1 Bäsa Qedus Mika'el Church considered found in the 14th century, photo by Fekadu Mersha on November 20, 2022

One supportive roughly listed by Balçi Wäräda Church Office the years of the churches were established slightly shows to us the three churches alone established prior war of Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim in the region.[157] Some sources clearly cited, there were early churches in the region established before the war of Ahmed Gerañ. In rumor manner, the Menjar-Šänkora area as well that some storytellers state about the existence of hidden arks of covenant at the cave of Šefnu Gäbre'al Church around the Gara Bokan Mountain during this destructive period that requires the deep investigation of the scholars respecting to the findings.[158]

The three oldest of the church in the region is also Gara Bokan Qedus Märqoriwos which established during the reign of Bä'edä Maryam-I since 1470s. After the war of Ahmed Gerañ

[156] Getachew Haile, Yeabba Bahriy Dirsetoch oromochin kemmimmelekketu leloch senedoch gara or The Works of Abba Bahriy with Other Documents concerning the Oromo (Minnesota: Avon, 1995 E.C/ 2014), pp. 18-19.

[157] EOTC North Šäwa Diocese Šänkora Wäräda Bétäkehnat Şéfät Bét, "Bäsämén Šäwa Hägärä Sebkät Bä Šänkora Wäräda Wust Yämigäñu Abyatä Kerestiyan Märäja" (List of Churches found in North Shoa Diocese in Shenkora District), (Balçi, Šänkora Wäräda Church Office 2009 E.C), p.1.

[158] Tadesse, pp. 152-153.

many churches and some monastic communities were established in the region. Among the immediately established in the Menjar-Šänkora post the war of Ahmed in 1548 recorded is Balçi Qedus Amanu'al Church. Etiča Abunä Täklä Haymanot is also the prominent historical church in the Šänkora region established around 1617.[159] As Girma Tsege and Mulualem in their thesis noticed, Šänkora Yohänes Chuch was also established 1628. Another churches established in the Menjar-Šänkora in the 17th century besides of the above-mentioned are Eranbuti Abunä Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus,[160] Gawgaw Kidanämehrät, and Bolo Qedu Selasé.[161]As study conducted the district church office in 2019 implicated, in the eighteenth century the two churches alone: Qerešoaţer Qedus Egeziabehérab (c.1736) and Wälénsu Qedus Giyorgis (c.1785) were established as mentioned the year in the brackets.[162]

The remaining churches and monasteries in the region are since the 19th century historical developments. Qumbi Qedus Mika'el (c.1819), Ararti Qedest Maryam (c.1820), Sama Sänbät Monastery (c.1826), Waša Qedus Giyorgis (c.1830), Çälé Qedus Gäbre'al (c.1833), Gur Qedus Mika'el (c.1837), Deré Qedus Mika'el (c.1849), Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery (1868), Dodota Qedest Selasé (c.1871), Amiti Mädehani'aläm (c.1880,), and Agamesa Qedest Maryam (c. 1894) are established respectively as listed years in the brackets.[163]

The in the current situation, Menjar-Šänkora is endowed more than 90 churches with holding the long lasted historical developments with regarding to the many aspects of Christianity influences in the region.[164] I inspired to conduct survey about the monasteries in the region in the past period and the historical influences in the region are the central points of the thesis discussion in the bellow. The legacies of monasticism and monastic life existence in the past in the region needed the study conducted in the four selected Christian communities. As local information and recorded documents enlighten one of the prominent monasteries of the

[159]EOTC North Šäwa Diocese Šänkora Wäräda Church Office, "Bäsämén Šäwa Hägärä Sebkät BäŠänkora Wäräda Wust Yämigäñu Abyatä Kerestiyan Zerzer Märäja" (Balçi, 2009 E.C), p. 1.

[160] Samu'al Täklä Maryam, "Zekrä Tarik", 2005 E.C, pp. 1-2.

[161] Menjar *Wäräda* Bétäkehnät Şefät Bét, "Bämenjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Yämigäñu Gädamat Ena Bétakerstiyanät Wana Wana Yämäräja Ţenat" (Ararti, 2011E.C/2019), pp. 1-3.

[162]*Ibid.*

[163] Mulualem, p. 36.

[164] Menjar *Wäräda* Bétäkehnät Şefät Bét, "Bä Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Yämigäñu Gädamat ena Béta Kerstiyanät Wana Wana Yämäräja Ţenat" (Major Survey of Churches and Monasteries in Menjar Shenkora Distric), (Found at Menjar *Wäräda* Archive Office), (Ararti, 2011E.C/2019), pp. 1-3.

region, Sama Sänbät had remarkable tale in the past around two centuries.[165] Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery is also another selected for this investigation which it described it was established by *Abba* Ṣämera Mika'el, and the collaboration of the royal families realized in it inauguration in the1868.[166] This monastery authorized under the assistance of royal families until end of the imperial regime. On the region, which was the center of administration town of Balçi, Qedus Amanu'el Church was popular in region with its monastic services performance from the early 1860s onwards.[167] These three monasteries were run under abbots until situation became misery following the downfall of imperial regime and lost value of landownership rights that was the backbone of the income sources to the inhabiting monks and nuns. The historical fact is one of the common effects to monastic communities in the Ethiopian region was during *Derg* regime.[168] As some sources found in the churches treasurer houses, the manuscripts recorded by the timely existing religious fathers are the torch bearing evidences for this historical survey.

The study also assessed Šänkora Qedus Yohänes Church nuns' monster established in the 21st century by historic industriousness bishop of *Abunä* Epherém of Noth Šäwa Dioces above one millions of pilgrims attracted into the region per a year.[169] This historical progress is recent development of the church due the foundation of holy water in the second half of the 20th century that realized the visible nunnery foundation today in the region.[170] In general, Menjar-Šänkora is endowed remarkable historic religious sites deliver multifarious values to the local inhabitants in particular, and the neighboring region peoples as much.

[165] The Handbook like Foolscap document had written from 1924-1974, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office, clearly stated the monastery's activities run in the different period and the land of monastery discussed in the document, pp. 23-40.

[166] Girma Atilaw, "A History of Gur Amba Mariam Monastery (since 1860)", (Bahir Dar University: Department of History BA Thesis, 2015), p, 6; *Informants: Mämheré* Mäsälä Gäberä Ṣadeq, and *Ato* Čärnät Masräša.

[167] Alemayehu Atilaw, "A History of Balchi Amanu'el Church from its foundation to Present" (Jimma University: Department of History and Heritage Management BA Thesis, 2012), p. 5. See Appendix-III.

[168] Haile Larebo, "The Orthodox Church and the State in the Ethiopian Revolution, 1974-1984", pp. 148-150; *Informents:Abbä* Yoséf Tamänä, *Abbä* Wäledä Amanu'el and Mäsälä Gäbrä Ṣadeq.

[169] Hélän Feker and Yaréd Mängestu, "Yäfälägä Heywät Tadagi Kätäma Mäsärätawi Pelan Zegejet Ţenat ena Eqed Riport" (Bahir Dar: Amhara Regional State Towns Plan Institute, 2011 E.C/ 2018), P. 25.

[170] Eliyas Zänäbä, "Historical Foundation of Mäţmäqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Church" (Arerti: Tourism Development Promotion Office, 2017), p.1, unpublished document found in Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bauru of Documentations.

2.2. The Historical Foundation of Sama Sänbät Monastery

The early historical narration about the 16th century of the war of Ahmed Gerañ associated with the church of Sama Egizia Sänbät was one of the churches established at Yärär Palace before the war campaign there.[171] In the time of the war, the churchmen migration from the region of affected by war to less one was the part of its tale in the 14 years of campaigns in the time that manifested the Muslim dominance in the region. Despite, as Gorgoryos stated, the most of arks of convent and treasures mysteriously kept in the caves, or other sites that they expected to save until the difficulty pass over. After the demolishment of Ahmed Grañ's dominance,[172] some evidences enlighten, churches endured and Christianity expanded in the Menjar-Šänkora. With this much, among the ark of covenants, Sama Egizia Sänbät was one these covered at Mugaré Zäla in Bulga through carving the tree that later materialized its existence in the region found so fare. This ark of covenant was hidden there for several years until it was uncovered unconditionally during the reign of *Negus* Sahelä Selassé and dwelled at Ankober Mädhanaläm Church until it replace to the region currently called Sama Sänbät Qäbällé where the historic monastery was found.[173]

The various recorded documents and oral sources clearly enlightened the existence of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda. As the evidences indicated, probably the pioneer of the region in its foundation is the Sama Sänbät Monastery, established around the first half of 19th century under the tireless efforts of *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot during the reign of *Negus* Sahel Selassie. The manuscripts found in the church treasure house stated that, the monastery was established eighteen years later of the coronation of *Negus* Sahelä Selassé (r. 1813-1847) of Šäwa Kingdom.[174]

In the region before the establishment of the monastery, the three monks who were immigrated to the region from Gonder dwelled in the caves at the gorge of the Ţäbo River with the ark of covenant of Saint Täklä Haymanot, which surrounded by Yärär, and other mountains of the region. In the pamphlet of the church listed the three of the monks as: *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot, *Abba* Woldä Häwaryat and *Abba* Zäwoldä Maryam.[175] As also indicated in it

[171] Sama Monastry Parish Council, *Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Hentsa (The New Building of the Sama Monastry* (Mahelet, Genbot 27,1987 E.C/1995), P. 4.
[172] Gorgoryos, *Yä Iteyopeya Ortodox Täwahedo Bétäkerstiyan Tarik*, pp. 52-53.
[173] Sama Monastry Parish Council, p. 4.
[174] Manuscripts, Raye Maryam, and Senkisar, See Appendix-II.
[175] Sama Monastry Parish Council, Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Hentsa (The New Building of the Sama Monastry, (Mahelet, Genbot 27,1987 E.C/1995), P. 4.

timely the region was under the control of the Oromo that forced the monks confined in the river gorge of the Ţäbo that later basement to the foundation of the historic of monastery there. In the gorge, they were prepared the historic caves for their inhabitations, and for praying church cave with ark of Täklä Haymanot inhabited for more than a decade and later ark of Egzia Läsänbät. This tale of Däbra Asebo of Täklä Haymanot foundation is similar with Sama Sänbät Monastery foundation with some extent.[176] As Tadesse stated in his book, "*At first the monastery of Däbrä Asbo only consisted of a small cave divided into two to make room for a church. And also for the living quarters of Täklä Haymanot and his disciples: Abunä Täklä Haymanot kept the tabot (consecrated) in the name of St. Mary in half of the cave, which he partitioned with a curtain of straw.*"[177] This did in the Sama by the *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot similar way through excavating the caves for arks of convent and his disciples until the foundation of the monastery actually realized.



Figure 2:- The partial views of Sama Sänbät Caves carved by the early founders of the monastery that currently became the part of the monastery tale and the center for tourist attraction. Photo by Fekadu Mersha

[176] *Ibid.*
[177] Tadesse, p. 171.

The early situations of the ark of covenant elaborated in the pamphlet prepared by the church parish council in 1987 E.C stated as follow:

> "The processes for the foundation of the monastery is associated with the event enlightened by the local farmer who tried to cut the tree found at Mugaré Zala in the Bulga where the *tabot* (ark of covenant) Egzia Läsänbät covered centuries ago. When he was cut the big tree to build his house he was saw miracles when the tree secrete the milk, and blood then he was too much amazing because of unusual event that was happening when he was cut the tree. Then he decided to tell the event what was happened when he was cut the tree and told to local clergy everything what was going in the time of cutting tree. Within the new displayed to them the clergy with local people marched to region they told and cut the tree together and discovered ark of the convent covered in it. The amazing this historical new, discovery of ark of covenant, reached to hear of the timely ruler *Nuges* Sahlä Sellassé and he recommended clergy given the special guardian to the covenant at Ankober Mädhanaläm Church. However, the ark of covenant showed various the miracles and became unstable in the church. One of the important as Christian believes the deep praying was employed by his father's local hermits to get signs from God what will do and where it was found in the early period before hide in the tree at Mugaré Zala. The hermits presented their revelation as they saw to the king in stating this ark of covenant was found at the one of formerly at the churches of the Yärär that dislocated by the religious fathers during the war of Ahmed Gerañ towards the region of currently discovered. Then the hermits also to king, the ark of covenant should give one of the monks through calling the three monks who was inhabiting at Ţäbo gorge and the church establishment will realize by the monk who receive at the site where inhabiting the place currently called Sama in the Menjar-Šänkora. The king sent the messengers to the monks urgently come to his palace, Ankober, and among the monks, timely who was youth, *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot received the ark of covenant and returned to their destination."[178]

[178] Sama Monastry Parish Council, "Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Hentsa" or The New Building of the Sama Monastery, (Mahelet, Genbot 27, 1987 E.C/1995), P. 5.

The local historian, *Mämheré* Mogäs told that *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot was not only received the ark alone but also deacons and other contingents from the king at Ankobär. One of the deacons who discomforted dispatch from the Ankober to Sama noticed presenting this historic poem to the sender, king in this regard:

ከአንኮበር ወጥቼ ከሄድኩኝ ምናኔ፣
ሳመሰግን እጂ ሳማ አልሔድም እኔ።[179]

Prior of the establishment of the currently Sama Sänbät Monastery, church was firstly attempted to established at Abaw Agär, secondly at Kurfo Amba Guba and thirdly at Mändefro Agär though ineffective. Whatever the efforts of *Mämher/Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot was realized after the decade with dwelling jointly with ark of Täklä Haymanot in the cave.[180] As local informants stated with having the situation was going one of the day *Mämher Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot saw revelation the church will establish a places with beautiful green grass, surround the of sea and the candlelight at center of the sea where currently the monastery locating. *Mämher* Gäbrä Hiwot established church of monastery dispersing the soil and holy water which brought from Holy Land at Jesus grave and River Jordan respectively.[181]



Abba Gäbrä Hiwot was one the three monks who pray at the gorge of River through excavating the caves to their inhabitation for praying. He was also mentioned the founder of the Sama Sänbät Monastery in the first half of the 19th century under the assistance of *Negus* Sahelä Selassä of Šäwa. He was also the religious father of the monks of Zekola Abune Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus Monastery still has commemorated in the church social gatherings. The correlation of the Sama Sänbät Monastery also regarded the common economic assistance between the two monasteries besides of religious manner. (See Appendix- I and II)

Figure 3: *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot painted by Molla Kassa and the wood cross handle by hermit, photo taken during the fieldwork at the treasure house by Fekadu Mersha in June 21, 2022

[179] *Informant: Mämheré* Mogäs
[180] Sama Monastry Parish Council, Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Hentsa, p. 5.
[181] *Informants: Mämheré* Mogäs, and *Mämheré* Seläši.

The establishment of the Sama Sänbät *Gädam* attracted hermits, higher clergies, teachers, priests and monks from different parts of Ethiopian region to enjoy monastic community.[182]As local informants told the monastic village of Sama Sänbät were built using the same materials as the local poor people. Each monk had his own hut, in which he had a skin to sleep on, a drinking guard, a bowl for food and prayer books.[183]As of the other great monasteries of Ethiopia, the center of the monks' life is praying that performed from the early beginning by those religious men in the monastery were morning office (sa'atat), office at midnight, the Mass (*qidassé*), the daily pray…totally seven times a day.[184] Besides, of these, livelihood, eating, old age and death, *Abba Eminét*, *Afe Mämher*, the monastery school, profession, leaving the monastery, hermits… are the important activities and parts of the monastic life in the monastery of the Sama Sänbät. The existence of monastery for thus much in historic phenomenon saw various effects in its tale. As storytellers stated, among the much of miracles have seen in the monastery, the local historians and some recorded documents cited during the Italian occupation since 1936 the 66 dropped bombs at the church on October 20, 1936 became ineffective to destroy the building.[185] These types of miracles also told too many churches of the region like Balchi Amanuel, Rarati Mariyam and Dofa Micheal as well .The historical accuracy towards this ideological thought true for believers' expectation in much. Other miraculous also associated with the holy water that most of the patients cured from their pains and evil spirit.

After the long passage of the various misery periods, unknown accidental fire destroyed the church of Sama Sänbät monastery to loss the early thatched building physical structure at night on *Mäskerem* 28, 1979.[186] The escaped ark of covenants were dwelled at grave house of *Abba* GäbräHiwot for seven years in delivering the religious services there until the new church building were realized in 1986 E.C. Ark bishop of *Abunä* Täklä Haymanot was visited the monastery in *Ţeqmet* 21,1980 E.C and recommended to rebuild through basing the cornerstone of foundation.[187] The distracted the old church of monastery opened the opportunity for the new form of buildings that realized after tireless efforts of the Christian communities of Ethiopia.

[182]*Ibid.*
[183]*Ibid.*
[184]*Ibid;* Sama Monastery Parish Council, Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Henetsa or The New Building of the Sama Monastery, (Genbot 27, 1987 E.C/1995), P. 5.
[185]*Ibid,* p. 6.
[186]*Ibid.*
[187]*Ibid,* p. 8.



Figure 4 The engraved Cornerstone inscriptions on the wall of the church edifice in the south side of Sama Sänbät

The construction main committee members established on *Tekemt* 16/1979 E.C played vital role in organizing the subordinate construction committees in the Adama /Nazeret/, Dädrä Zä'yet, Mojo, Walançiti, Arärti and Sama Sänbät monastery as well. In the church pamphlet noted regarding to financial allocation the Adama participants were played the vital role as much in order to accomplish the buildings.[188]

The monastery had passed through several advantages and constraints prior of it demolished by fire in 1986. The monastery land was considerable source of income for nuns and monks of usual life in from early foundation to the recent human phenomenon.[189] The monastery also benefited beside of agriculture from the long distance trade, which passed around the region through collecting custom duet in servicing the security for their movement in the region, which guided under the command of abbots of the time. The resting site of merchants currently found not far from the monastery called Makseňit Gebeya.[190]

On the other hand, the monastery was the institution of the justice where delivery conducted in many years in the region regarding the land issue in more.[191] This historical development recorded in the church manuscripts and report files. The monastery with documentation can describe intelligence of the timely existed personals how much educationally matured enough in the monastery as well.

[188] *Ibid.*
[189] See Appendix-I.
[190] *Informants: Qés* Mogäsé and *Qés* Germa Wudnäh.
[191] See Appendix-IV; The Handbook like Foolscap document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office, clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery pp. 14-96.

2.3. History of Guramba Monastery Since 1868

Guramba Maryam Monastery is considered another prominent historic one found in the Menjar-Šänkora established in the second half of the 19th century currently nominal. Getachew Haile described the monastery as *Däbrä Mädhanit* that made to him invaluable religious assistance to him future life span as religious prospection that most Christians commonly believe.[192] The foundation of the monastery coincided with monk /hermit/ *Abba* Şämera Mika'el who considered gain the royal assistances from timely Ethiopian of the King Menelik and Empress Taytu Bitul.

The Guramba is geographically, the historic site situates at the upper side of Kesem River surrounded by the gorge landscapes in the west, south and east directions. In fact, its geographical location is the mystery; of its establishment in some extent associated with the religious prospection as much. On the other hand, in order to overcome the timely insurrections unusually occurred in the region and wars around the region might be one of the eventful factors for its establishment inside of the abyssal gorged part of the landscape.[193]



Figure 5 the landscape of the Guramba Maryam Monastery and the Partial View of the Church established by Emperor Hailessé I in 1958; Photo taken during the field work by Fekadu Mersha.

[192] Getachew, *Yeabba Bahriy Dirsetoch Oromochin kemmimmelekketu leloch senedoch gara or The Works of Abba Bahriy with Other Documents concerning the Oromo* (Avon: Minnesota, 2002), pp. 20-21.
[193]Ibid, P. 23.

This also true as Tadesse stated about *Däbra Asbo was very well placed for its future offensives against the pagans of the region. It was clearly chosen to serve a double purpose: tucked into a cliff difficult of ' access, it could pass unnoticed by the hostile pagan neighborhood; and being within easy reach of the plateau, the small community could gradually spread its influence on the local people.*[194] Whatever, still placed at the hill in circled as local oral informants and written documents noticed the year of its foundation though the month the cornerstone, steeping for inauguration of the establishment is not stilly clear.

The legacies of monasticism, which solidified in the history of the north of Ethiopia, still associated with individual saints or monks of the time. The foundation of Guramba Monastery is no exception. One of the part of its foundation that associated in the sources describe the a little bit of biography of the founder, *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el.[195] The aboriginal birthplace of *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el was at Däbrä Mawit Saint Merry Church, Adet Wäräda, former called Méça *Awurajja* in the province of Gojjam *Ţäqelay Gezat.*[196] He was access to get the church education from the surrounding church schools in his childhood to adulthood in considerable manner and delivered the church services in different churches and monasteries of the surroundings. As in the church pamphlet described, he was coined his livelihood at the Ţana Islands Monasteries for many years and encoded the monastic life under the influences of monks and learned education in courage manner than former.[197]*Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el capable educational qualification enabled him the abbot of Hebere Sellassie Monastery and other monasteries and churches in the Gonder province. When he was at the Gonder Province, the Emperor Tewodros II who came to power after the elimination of the Price Era had ambition to modernization and unification of Ethiopia, which governed under the strong central government.[198] In order to realize his reforms, the enacted church land policy faced stiff resistance from the church clergy. Among the churchmen, *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el was one of the discontent personals who presented his disagreement about the emperor's policy towards

[194] Tadesse, p. 170.

[195] Mulualem, pp. 36-37; Girma Atilaw, "A History of Gur Amba Mariam Monastery since 1860", (Bahir Dar University: Department of History BA Thesis, 2015), p, 6; *Informants: Mämré* Mäsälä Gäberä Ṣadeq, and *Ato* Čärnät Masräša.

[196]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), pp. 3-4.

[197]*Ibid; Informants:*Mäsälä Gäberä Ṣadeq, and Čärnät Masräša.

[198] Bahiru Zewude, A History of Modern Ethiopian 1855-1991, Second edition, (Addis Ababa: University Printing Press, 2002), pp. 31-35.

the church standing in front of him condemning his actions toward the churches land utilization and reduction of the priest and deacons.[199] The relation between the two became quarrel that emperor decided to kill him. The strong threat of the emperor pushed *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el decide to displace towards Šäwa province that found far from Begemider. His emigration to Šäwa enabled him inhabit in Nebgé Abunä Qäwistos Monastery in Bulga.[200] Then later he changed his destination to Enjorar Gebre'al Church with his usual praying capacity and courage miracles under his life span popular among the inhabitants of the region. Among the miracles had done *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el as mention in the pamphlet, in the time of he was living in the Enjorar Gebre'al Church as head, the conflagration destroyed the twelve grave houses and reached to main church was excommunicated by him it's burning and saved the church from destruct to ash using his religious courage.[201]

The process of the foundation of Guramba Monastery realization was the gradual process of that realized by this courageous religious hermit. As local historians and some written historical accounts asserted, the Šäwa kingdom lost its autonomous during the Emperor Tewodros-II and the defeated son, Menilek-II was under the siege of the emperor until he was escaped from Meqedala Amba since 1865 was also part of its foundation.[202] When he was king of the Ṣäwa heard about the popularity of *Abba* Ṣämera Mika'el in his kingdom, whom migrated from his former destination due to the discontent with Tewodros and he decided to meet with this religious man. In fact, as local informants mentioned, even the Empress Taytu was knew *Abba* Ṣämra Mika'el popularity when she was at Gondar.[203] King Menelik's invitation of the hermit, *Abba* Ṣämera Mika'el towards his palace realized him Däberä Beserat Zéna Marqos Monastery as *Abba Emnét* at king's fatherland of Moret.[204] However, administration was over there because of the clergy and deacons discomforted to him as monastic way of life as he expected to run in it. In expecting good monastic life through founding his own monastery, he abdicated himself and chose to stay foretime being at the Menilek's palace, but one of the king's vassals, the *gult* owner at Balçi in the time *Ras* Nadaw

[199]*Ibid.*
[200]*Ibid.*
[201]*Ibid;*
[202] Tekle Tsadik Makuria, *Aṣe Menilek ena YäItyopeya Andenät,* (Addis Ababa: Kuraz Publishing Agency, 1983 /1991), pp. 23-25; Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), pp. 3-4; *Infomant:* Maseräša.
[203]*Ibid.*
[204]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.4.

asked the monk to be abbot at Balçi Amanuel church that Menilek was recognized as of *Nefro Gädam*.[205]*Abba* Şämera Mika'el accepted the invitation of *Ras* Nadaw and marched towards the one of the historic site of the region of formerly called Ţelq, the royal camp of Aşe Dawit, the father of Zära Ya'eqob, Šänkora.[206] When he was the administrator of there up one of a time saw the revelation that led him to realized foundation of his new monastery. In accordance of his apocalypse, the place where found at gorge, with green forest, and water flow from the center of forest within geographical signs as much defined to him.[207]

After his revelation through directed the finders as he saw with his relatives to find the site that implicated to him materialized two days of finding. As local historian and noted in the pamphlet described the finders he sent to find realization opened the opportunity *Abba* Şämera Mika'el as he wished found his own monastery. When he got the news from the finders, storytellers told he marched with his disciples combined with the ark of Saint Merry, and the soil which was brought from Jerusalem that flow on the ground where they reached the expected site with as miraculous manner.[208] With that historical happenings, the monk began utilize the possible means how to realize inauguration of monastic life there. As local historians told too, existing caves found in the monastery today were the firstly prepared by *Abba* Şämera Mika'el for inhabiting his disciples and at one cave the ark of covenant with him dwelled as early beginning since 1868.[209]

In fact, one of the early relationships of the monk with the royal family initiated him request the assistance of Menilek build the church of monastery and his goodwill. *Emperor* Menilek II and *Empress* Taytu accepted the requests presented by monk, and played crucial role for construction of the church by local materials importing from Bulga timely wood materials available there. This seems early foundation of the monastery church during the Abbot of its founder. On the other hand, the established early church in the later seemed rebuilt in 1893 under the initiation of the empress. The empress had strong commitment towards construction through assigning the masonries from Addis Ababa. This historical argument also supported in the book written by Getachew Haile in stating in this manner: *"ቦታዋን አፄ ምኒልክና አትጌ ጣይቱ ከመሰከንታቻው ጋር ነብኝተዋል:: ቤተክርስቲያኗ እንድትታደስ ሐሳብ ያቀረቡ የተቀደሱትና የታሪኳ እመቤት እቴጌ ጣይቱ*

[205]*Ibid,* See Appendix-III.
[206]*Ibid.*
[207]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik,* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.3. See figure-3
[208]*Informants:*Mäsälä Gäberä Şadeq, and Čärnät Masräša.
[209]*Informants:*Mäsälä Gäberä Şadeq, and Čärnät Masräša.

ናቸው። ቤተክርስትያኗን የሠሯት አናጢዎች፣ ገምቢዎች፣ ሠረተኞች በሙሉ ከነደሞዛቸው ከአዲስ አበባ ከቤተ መንግስት ታዘውና ተልከው የመጡ ባለሙያዎች ናቸው።[210] roughly to say, *The place was visited by Emperor Menilek and Empress Tayitu with contingent officials. The project of renewing proposal first presented by sublimates historic Empress Taytu. Builder of the church carpenters, masonries, workers at all with salary sent from Addis Ababa under the command of palace.*

The above argument assisted that presented in the magazine prepared by church parish council and the pamphlet written by district tourism office in 2017 clearly cited renewed church construction realized in1893. The construction of the church building realization under sent workers congratulated by king and empress with hot celebration that took five days of celebration in Guramba.[211]

The monastery heritages found so fare also the additional evidences that delivered from Empress Tayitu in 1893. The manuscripts of Tamera Marya, sealed by the Empress Taytu stated in Ge'ez language in this regard. "ዛቲ መጽሐፍ ዘእቴጌ ጣይቱ ብርሃነ ዘኢትዮጵያ ብእሲቱ ለደግማዊ ምኒልክ ንጉሠ ነገሥት ዘኢትዮጵያ ዘአጥረየ (ታ) በንዋያ ወወሀብታ ለደብረ ማርያም ዘሀገረ ጉራምባ እንተ ይእቲ ደብረ መድኃኒት ከመትኩን ላቲ መርሀ ለመንግስተ ሰማያት በ፲፰፻፹፭ ዓመተ ምህረት ... ::"[212] *rough meaning to say, this book given to named, Guramba Debre Medhanit Maryam by the wife of Emperor Menilek-II the light of Ethiopia ... her own property in wish to realize eternal salivation of heaven in 1885 E.C.* This historical evidence consolidated the authenticity of the above explanation, which seems right enough to say the year of renewed church accomplished in the mentioned period.

On the other hand, the evidences cited that from to the foundation to the Italian occupation monastery was under the considerable progress in the region.[213] During the Italian occupation, the life hood of the monasticism in the Guramba was staged for five years. As Mulualem in his thesis described the landscape of the Guramba was the suitable for guerrilla fighters of the region that made monastery monks and nuns displaced to the different parts of the region.[214] In the coincided with above misery period, the early church of monastery built by the

[210] "Yegojjam Tarik", EMML 4802, P. 202 coted from Getachew Haile, P. 21.
[211] *Ibid; Informants: Mämré* Mäsälä Gäberä Şadeq, and *Ato* Čärnät Masräša.
[212] Getachew Haile, P. 21. Manuscript book of Tamra Maryam, p. 2f found in the Guramba Monastery Treasurers house.
[213] Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik,* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.3.
[214] Mulualem, p. 52.

assistance of the royal family was destroyed by fire at about 1941 that added constraints to monastery delay the considerable progress until the new build realized under the reign of imperial regime that directly emperor was 40, 000 birr financed for required expenditures for the existing church building since 1960s.[215] The amazing historical event was the stone for the building carved at Kotäbe, Addis Ababa and transport by both tracks and human labours.[216] Whatever the heterogeneous constraints challenged the monastery from the beginning, administers of monastery, abbots were appointed from the royal family until the downfall of the imperial since 1970s.

2.3.1. Merits of Abba Şämera Mika'el for State and Government Affairs

The founder of Guramba Monastery, *Abba* Şämera Mika'el seemed active participant towards government affairs from early period. For instance, as oral historians and some recorded documents enlightened he was discontent the Tewodros's policy towards the church and tried to present his thoughts how the emperor should implement towards the clergy.[217] He was also one of the advisors of the king Menilek regarding to administrative sphere in the kingdom too. One he had done the exemplary of *Abba* Şämera Mika'el is the peace settlement regarding the two discontented Emperor Yohanes-IV and king Menilek-II Šäwa with timely the abbot of Sama Šänbät Monastery.[218] Their involvements in the historic Liche Agreement of 1878 clearly presented at the wall panting in the Balçi Amanuel Church in said of women's standing. Nevertheless, the names described on the paintings are not much with the name of *Abba* Ţämera Mika'el. See for better understand the paintings presented below.



Figure 6 Paintings regarding the *Liche* Agreement at wall of painting, Taken from Mulualem's Photo gallery on September 12, 2022

[215]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik*, (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.7.
[216]*Informants:*Mäsälä Gäberä Şadeq, and Čärnät Masräša.
[217].*Ibid*.
[218]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik*, (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.3.

However, the names of the abbots describe on the painting are *Liqäkahenat* Eçäyä Téyoflos and *Liqäkahenat* Gäbrä Selassé. In fact, the early relationships of *Abba* Ṣämera Mika'el might make him play the significant role in facilitating the negotiation possible means to the king.[219] The Liche Agreement was one of the fundamental resolutions that saved the possible bloodshed between the Emperor Yohänes and Menilek of Šäwa, and material destruction in the region.

On the other hand, another historical event that coincided with *Liche* Agreement was king Menelik and *Empress* Tayitu inspiration to visit the monastery of *Abba* Ṣämera Mika'el. The visit of the monastery by the royal family in 1878 opened unexpected the opportunities to the Saint Merry Monastery proclaimed by king administrative authority services should run under its own without interference of any local vassals.[220] Beside of this, the fief, rest land and one tenth of custom duty collected on Saturday at the Arerti authority had given to the monastery in order to generate income to the monks and nuns.[221]

The another historical event is also associated with the insurrection of *Ras* Mängäša Yohänes of Tigray and the attempted campaign of Menilek that finally realized through peace negotiation since in the 1893s coincided with amazing visit of the monastery. As sources described the big church construction, which was run under the command of Empress Taytu, was congratulated in May 1893 that five days of congratulation ceremony conducted in the monastery.[222] Then after five days of station, the king and empress with their contingents back to Addis Ababa through the historic region of Šänkora.[223]

The sources also describe the administration and the timely appointed abbots' contributions in the monastery and its surroundings. In the sources, listed individuals were basically appointed from the royal family had in most quality of administrative powers of the monastery that discussed in the unit three of the thesis. The another amazing church built by Emperor Haile Selasse-I that all raw materials brought from Addis Ababa is also the another historical developments of the monastery after the Italian occupation.

[219]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik,* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.5.
[220]*Ibid.*
[221]Ibid.
[222]*Ibid,* p. 6.
[223]*Ibid.*

2.4. Balçi Amanu'el Church

As sources found in the church and local historians the foundation of the church attempted to mention at about the end of the first half of the 16th century. The written in the manuscript of the gospel found in the church treasure house describe the church was established on December 9, in 1547 during the reign of *Aşé* Gäläwdéwos at the top of hill that look surrounded by gorges in the both sides of church its boundary limit with Bäsa Qedus Micha'ell Church in north. For clarify the evidence obtained from the church stated that "ባልጫ አማኑኤል ቤተ ክርስትያን በ፲፭፻፵ ዓመተ ምህረት በዘመነ ማቲዎስ በተጋሣሥ ፩ ተመሰረተ፡ ዘመነ መንግስቱ አፄ ገለውዴዎስ።"[224] Balçi Amanu'el beta kerstiyan bä1540 amätä mehrät bäzä mätiwos bätahesas 1 tämäsärätä zämänä mängestu *Aşé* Gälawdéwos. *Roughly to mean, Balchi Aanuel Church was established on December 9, 1547 during the reign of Emperor Gelawdiwos.*

Among the culture and tourism office emphasized heritage registration documented in the region is this church today. For the historic sites in the district, Balçi Amanu'el Church is center of tourism because of one in its old aged wall paintings existence, which described timely historical events regarding cultural, religious, social, and political messages on it. Liche Agreement that took place between Menilek-II of Šäwa and Emperor Yohänes IV on 20 March 1878 painted in the standing of women said is that manifested political situations during the time.[225] As describe above in the history of Guramba Maryam Monastery, the two monks painted on the wall at right and left of king Menilek and Emperor Yohänes IV were consider the abbots of Sama Sänbät and Guramba Maryam monasteries.[226] As sources described these wall paintings enhanced by the timely *gult* owner in Šänkora region, *Ras* Nadew who brought the painter from Gonder at especial place called Enda who received in return of his service 300 Maria Theresa Thaller.[227]

The coincided events with the paintings were also congratulation that undertaken through inviting of king Menilek-II. Then the king was prioritized the church consolidate the authority in the region with recognize the status of administration run as both church and monastery

[224] See appendix-III
[225] See figure 5.
[226] *Ibid.*
[227] Informant: *Mämheré* Endalä,; Gospel, p. 12f. In the Gospel the Amanu'el church historical foundation and its timely progress recorded in Amharic Version found in the church treasures house; Bamlaku Aseré, "Yäbahel ena Turizem Yämäräja Mäşehét" (Culture and Tourism Information Bulletin), (Debre Birhan: North Shoa Zone Culture and Tourism Office, 2011 E.C/ 2019), pp.23-24.

under the abbot seems science c.1866.[228] In the gospel, stated the first monk appointed by king as abbot of monastery was *Abba* Häbetä Maryam Wäldä Dengel. In the gospel manuscript stated in this regard ከ፲፰፻፺፰ ጀምሮ ድንግል መነኩሴ እየተሾመ ገዳሙን እንዲገዛ አድርገን አባ ሀብተ ማርያም ወልደ ድንግል ሾመናል።[229] roughly to say *from 1866 the appointed virgin monk administer the monastery and Abba Häbetä Maryam Wäldä Dengel was appointed*. As local historians also tolled too from that beginning, he was loveable religious father in his courageous administration quality in the monastery. For the additional church services, numbers of clergies in the monastery were punt into effect within the land income. As local historians told, the administrative system was conducted under the appointed abbots continued in accordance of the Menilek's recognition unlit the Italian occupation of the region since 1936s.[230] The surroundings of the church divided into three respective settlement regions in accordance of the evidence noticed in the manuscript. The area found around the cave, which found in the northern part of the church that was served as *Nefro Gadam* locally called *Abba* Hebte Maryam Cave. See the following picture for better to understand the praying site of abbot of the monastery.



Figure 7 *Abba* Habte Maryam Cave, photo took during the fieldwork, by Fekadu Mersha.

[228]Ibid.
[229] Church Gospel Manuscript found in the treasure house, p. 12f; See Appendix-III.
[230]*Informants:Ato* Mamush Mezgebe Selassie, *Mamhere* Endalä, *Ato* Negatu and *Abba* Yosef Tamene,

In order to consolidate the sources of income for newly recognized monastery allocated to posse the authority of gain the church fief from the region. As sources left by the timely church recorded evidence in the church today slightly torchbearer to say the monastery had possessed around forty *gasha* land that inhabited by local farmers directly responsible in paying the fief to the monastery and church ecclesiastical services. The church land, which allocated to the monastery administration ways, cited in the manuscript that in stating land retained under the owing farmers and the land taxes recommended for the monastery. In the manuscript the statement that assisted the above descriptions stated, --- አርባ ጋሻ መሬት አፈሩ ለባለ መሬቱ ሁኖ ግብሩ ለገዳሙ እንዲሆን አድርገናል።[231] roughly to say *forty-gasha land owned under the farmers, the tax to be for the church authority proclaimed that shows how much of land the monastery was possessed in time.*

The common historical event in the Ethiopian history is the Italian occupation that passed with negative legacies in the history of Ethiopian monasteries. These multifarious negative legacies over the Christian communities were common in the monasteries found in the Menjar-Šänkora region where the historical survey conducted. Among the monasteries, Balçi Amanuel was one of the regions confronted with the Italian soldiers who were resided around the monastery that limited the monks and nuns performance in the monastic life experience. As local historians told, however, the facts might be sometimes exaggerated the conditions had passed regarding to the escapement of the church of the monastery from the Italian destruction due of the miracles had done by God. As informants stated, the Italian soldiers tried to destruct the church through dropping the destructive bombs and other types of modern weapons but the miracles they had seen push them limit the measurements towards the church.[232] Later on they were respected the existence of the church of monastery through restricted control of the church communities under their watching tower. This was true, among the three camps found in the Menjar-Šänkora, the Balçi currently called Kambo in the eastern side of the Balçi Amnuel Church. As Endalä and Negatu Gezaw memorized as his decedents told to them, beside of retaining of the church of monastery, the Italian general who was called *Bergédlé* Tilinté was participant of the social gatherings ceremony in the church in contrary the people expected because of the miracles had done in it until the evacuation was

[231]Gospel, p. 12f. In the Gospel the Amanu'el church historical foundation and its timely progress recorded in Amharic Version found in the church treasures house; Bamlaku Aseré, "Yäbahel ena Turizem Yämäräja Mäṣehét" (Culture and Tourism Information Bulletin), (Debre Birhan: North Shoa Zone Culture and Tourism Office, 2011 E.C/ 2019), pp.23-24. See appendix-III.
[232]*Informants:* Negatu Gezaw, Abatä Wändafraš, and Gorfé Mäkurya.

achieved.[233] If it was true, it was amazing historical happening in the region, which required investigation how Italian aggressors forced to recognize the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that associated with miracles. In contrary on the other hand strong resistance of the patriots after the death of *Abunä* Petros that cemented ineffective administration of the occupied region might force Italians to respect the churches and monasteries in some extant. As sources enlightened regarding to the Arada Giyorgis Church in Addis Ababa that rebuilt by the Italian government that still that bearing its evidence that associated the construction expected with the strong resistance of the patriots in the state. Therefore, the escarpment of the early historic Balçi Amanuel Church from destruction on the other hand might be coinciding with patriotic resistance in the region.

On the other hand, as indicated in the Mulualem's thesis in accordance of information he obtained from informants and some archival sources assisted, Balçi Amanuel Church was the storage of the other sites invaluable heritages during the Italian occupation.[234] One of the archival source that is mysterious letter written from *Fitawurari* Mamo Seyum to Prince Asefa Wosen Haile Selassie seems clearly indicate, it was.[235] However, even though this explanatory description is to show some extent about the condition of churches and monasteries during the Italian occupation but not about to check the question raise was/were there any monastery in the region.

However, despite the main central issue of this investigation tried to centralize to answer, were the monasteries and monasticism in the region is some extent seems righteous in accordance of the sources that described in the manuscripts of the timely existing in the church. Despite the facts of overall whatever that historians that traced, the evidences obtained from unrecorded and recorded the Bälçi Amanu'el Church was to say manifested the existence of monastic life of monks and nuns communities that administered under the abbots that opened the investigation to this is supportive one to the others. The existing evidences that I got in the time of fieldworks, the heritages of the Bälçi Amanu'el Church found today clearly indicate the similar historical linkage with Sama Sänbät and Guramba Maryam monasteries found in the region. Among the many, the crosses found in the Guramba

[233] *Informants:* Endalä and Negatu.
[234] Mulualem, p. 56.
[235] Letter Written from *Fitawurari* Mamo Seyum to Prince Asefa Wosen Haile Selassie, Heir of the King of Kings of the Ethiopia Government, Tahesas 23, 1959 E.C, Ref. No. 17/1576/339/59, File No. 2.2.74.04, Folder No. 2.2.74, coted from Mulualem, p. 56.

Maryam, Balçi Amanuel has uniform cross designs, and period of deliver close each other to the events that they describe. In fact, as above described, the founder of the Guramba Maryam Monastery, *Abba* Şämera Mikael was abbot of for the time being that indicate the priority of Balçi Amanuel Monastery existence.

2.5. Šänkora Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam

The recently came to exist in the 21th century under the tireless effort of the head of North Šäwa Diocese, *Abunä* Epherém opened the opportunity to discuss for this thesis.[236] Whatever developments exist in the latest period, historical narration about the early developments of the monasticism in Šäwa is important for this discussion to cement the existing evidences with formers. With this regard, the monastic communities' developments in the Šäwan regions coincided with inauguration of Däbrä Libanos Monastery service in the end of 13th century that consolidated many changes towards monasticism in the central Ethiopian regions, however, lack of experience was seriously showing in the organizational difficulties of the monastic communities.[237]As some of evidences cited, one of the most serious constraints in the monastic communities was the difficulty of effectively separating the living quarters of the male and female members. As tried to narrate in the above explanations among the Šäwa regions, Menjar-Šänkora came under the influence of king Amedä Şeyon since 14th century, however, it was probably monasteries and a monastic life engagement in the region was the recent phenomenon. The recently established nunnery which overcome the historically the difficulty of effective separating the living quarters of male and female members, Šänkora Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam is currently the sole nuns living quarter monastic community in the Menjar-Šänkora.

As tried to describe in the first chapter, the *Mämher Agär* Šänkora Yohänes Church established in the first half of the 17th century inevitable under the influence of timely existing monks. The recorded and oral traditions historical sources relegate there were both monks and nuns who delivered liturgical services from the early foundation of church but it is difficult to say it was monastery because the further survey requires to prove it.[238] Mulualem in his thesis tried estimate the existence of a few in number monks in the *Mämher* Agär Qedus Yohänes Church in mentioning like "*Mämher* Säreşä Wäled, *Abba* Gädelä Birhanu, *Abba* Dawit, *Abba*

[236] Mulualem, p. 94.
[237]Tadesee, *Church and State* …., p. 117.
[238] Mulualem, p. 91. *Informants:Abba* Woldä Amanuel Aschanaki, *Abba* Kenfa Abebe and *Ato* Terefa Tsega

Täklä Şädek and others probably dedicated pass their lives span in the dense forest constructing thatched roof huts around the church."[239] These monks also associated as quondam to the foundation of Šänkora Yohänes Church. As local historians and Mulualem stated in the 20th century tale of church was the center of the traditional education as of the monasteries delivered for children too. Mulualem noticed in thesis *Abba* Täçané was the teacher of church education in the church for community boys.[240] He also mentioned *Abba* Didimos Dameţaw, *Abba* Tayu Dametaw, *Abba* Berehanä Ayahubayené, *Abba* Asenaka, *Abba* Gäberu, *Abba* Menda Zäläqä ….were the prominent monks who passed their lives in monastic life span in the dense church through delivering ecclesiastic service in the community.[241]Another the coincided event to increase monks and nuns in the church that consolidated the marching of monks and nuns to the region that materialized the foundation of the existing monastery is the inauguration of holy water service in the second half of the 20th century. Usually as local informants memorized *Abba* Haylä Maryam Aberha who marched from Lasta to attain holy water became the messenger to patriarchate office of the situations regarding to holy water and the peoples to attain it under the assistance of the office that finally became fruitful for this mushroom consolidate of the church.[242]

Within this historical progress, the situation radically changed from former administrative structure to North Šäwa Diocese noteworthy authoritative umbrella. From the beginning of the last quarter of the 20th century onward, the church administration run under the monks directly appointed from diocese. As Mulualem described, "*Abba* Hayelä Giyorgis, *Abba* Benyam Asäfa, *Abba* Bäläţä Ţeruneh, *Abba* Wälda Mädhen Däbäbä, *Abba* Wäldä Amanu'el Aschänaqi and *Abba* Aberham Dañačäw were appointed directly as administrators of the Šänkora Yohänes respectively."[243] The local historians and the recorded documents enlighten this crucial progress population of monks and nuns have been embodied mimicry monastic life in the church. As former abbot of Šänkora Yohänes monastic church, *Abba* Wäldä Amanu'el told that this church was not well known as seen today but it was run by few priests and monks who employed by the parish inhabitants. Associating with this he told even the church had historical linkage with monks and nuns servants in the past it is idealism towards monasticism because there is no evincive historical evidence to ensure it was.

[239]*Ibid.*
[240]*Ibid,* P. 92.
[241]*Ibid.*
[242]*Informants:* Abatä Wondafrash, Terefa Tsega, Wärqu Asäfa, and Anebälu Käbädä
[243]Mulualem, p. 92.

Mulualem also described that the monks administered the church from the beginning of 1990s seems in some extent indicate the beginning of the monastic feature, however, it is difficult to say cloister, became Därä Mänkerat with admired financial strength.[244] The population of monks and nuns growth since 1970s related with the holy water to gain healing from various diseases and bad spirits.[245] Indeed, as informants asserted, the inhabitation of monks and nuns in the Mämher Agäre Šänkora Yohänes steadily increase and began to settle grueling manner not as monastic structure requires until the first half of 21th century in the church. As mentioned above actual foundation of first Nunnery, Šänkora Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam in January 2005.[246]

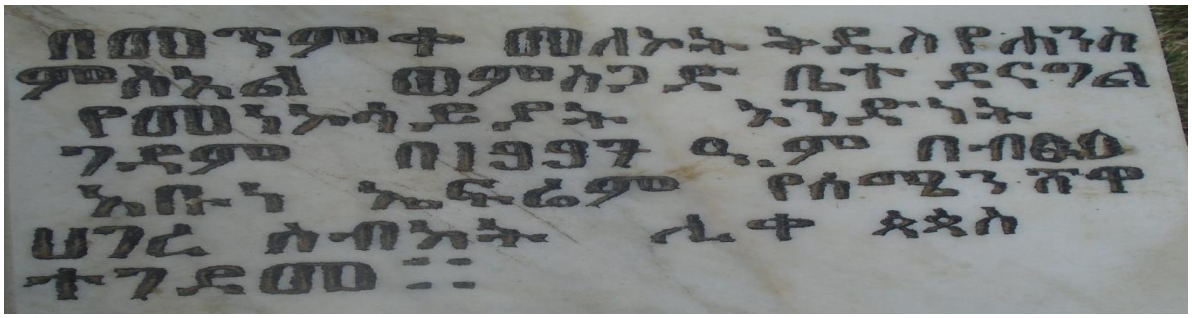


Figure 8:- The foundation cornerstone inscription found in the entry the Nunnery in the eastern side of Šänkora Yohanes Church, Photo by Fekadu Mersha.

With regarding to the process of the foundation of the nunnery, finding the historical facts about the existence of the nuns in the region is the important issue that enables the long last effects in its history. In the 20th century among the historic nuns, local historians memorized about the *Emahoy* Ehetä Maryam Abuyé who was servant about two decades in the Šänkora Yohänes Church.[247] *Emahoy* Ehetä Maryam life span as local people believed the hermitic still her home found at road of the holy water entry, on right side of the early church. She served church as *aqabit* and with producing oil lives, locally in church language, *kändil*, oil use to anoint for sick people.[248]

The initiative factors for establishment of the recent monastery in the church were the immigration of nuns into the region from different monasteries and problem of housing to

[244] Mulualem, p. 93.
[245] *Informants:* Abate Wondaferaš, *Abba* Mankälkelot Täsfa, and *Abba* Kenfä Abäbä.
[246] Engraved inscriptions found in the entry of the Nunnery; *Informants:* Abba Wäledä Amanu'el, and Emahoy Ţersitä Maryam.
[247] *Iformants:* Abata, Wärqu Asäfa, Anebälu Käbädä and *Emahoy* Feqertä Maryam.
[248] *Mulualem, p. 94. Ibid.*

them.[249] These nuns who came into Šänkora Yohänes Church in order to attend the holy water that inaugurated in c.1965 from different monasteries confronted the housing constraint that made them fall into harassments, because the nuns inhabiting with common people was inconvenienced. *Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam stated that, the immediate factor initiated the foundation of the nuns' monastery in Šänkora Däbrä Mänekrat Mäţmäqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Church related with the history of *Emahoy* Aşädä Maryam, who was the holy water attainder, came from Balé Goba Nuns Monastery, inhabited for about twenty-seven years in the monastery before arrive into Šänkora since 1990s.[250] She had bad spirit that made her life miserable. When she arrived into the Šänkora Mäţemqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Church to attain the holy water, however, the challenging threat to her was where to be dwell, as monastic life require to her. Nevertheless, the last decision of her with fear, was renting the temporal private dorm in the community inhabitants because the church was not capable enough to handle such request for the time being. The fear of *Emahoy* Aşädä Maryam was not groundless but it was authentic.[251] The threat that faced Aşädä Maryam became the lesson for other nuns and urged the foundation of the nuns' monastery in the church. This setback got ending when *Abunä* Ephrém inaugurated first Nunnery for nuns, Šänkora Mäţemqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam in January 2005.[252]

The recognized Nunnery foundation is the recent phenomenon as stated above but was not the easy task to the religious fathers that consumed both the time and resources.[253] As informants reminded that the tireless efforts of *Abunä* Ephrém, *Abba* Wäledä Amanu'el, *Ato* Fäkadä Dämäsa and the Church's Parish Council members conductance of the holistic discussion in order to realize its foundation but it was challenging for much times resulted for this nunnery. The final considerable cornerstone for foundation of monastery grounded at the two thousand meter esquire that later consisted sixteen dorms to nuns inhabitation who will if decide to join the monastic life with four of the founder nuns.[254]

[249] *Informants*: *Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam Aserat, *Abba* Wäldä Amanu'el
[250]*Informant*: *Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam Aserat (*Ema Mnét* of Nunnery).
[251]*Ibid.* Sämén Šäwa Hägärä Sebekät, Bä Šänkora Mäţemqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohanes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Yä'adenät Gädam Mätädadäriya Däneb (North Shewa Diocese, Šänkora Matemqa Malakot Qedus Yohanes Bétä Dänagel Nuns Monastery Administrative Regulation), (Debra Berhan, 2000 E.C), P.1.
[252]*Ibid,* Engraved scripts on the cornerstone found in front of the entry of the Nunnery.
[253]*Informants: Abba* Kinfä, *Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam and *Abba* Wäledä Amanu'el.
[254]*Ibid.*

As informants reminded that, in the time of inauguration of nuns' monastery in Šänkora, inexistence of enough nuns that run the monastery as well was challenging event, though four were the founders of the monastery confronting with coming problems in many directions.[255] These were *Emahoy* Tersitä Maryam Asrat, *Emahoy* Mänbärä Täqäba, *Emahoy* Wälätä Giyorgis Aserat and *Emahoy* Aşädä Maryam.[256] In the early foundation of the Šänkora Däbrä Mätmäqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam, the abbess of the monastery was *Emahoy* Mänbärä Täqäba. As *Emahoy* Ţérsitä Märyam reminded that she was literate of both the church and modern educations fastened to run that decide to perform in the monastery, not match with Church Parish Council recommended to engage in it.[257] Her programs planned to do sometimes confront with the systems of church and monastery too. Finally, she was youth in the time and return to back Addis Ababa, where she was before, in 2007 and the future administration of the monastery came to the shoulder of *Emahoy* Tersitä Maryam Aserat.

Emahoy Tersitä Maryam Aserat was born in the Bärhät district and learned modern education up to grade nine. However, she had bad sprite and cancer that pool her attained holy water in Šänkora Däbrä Mänekrat Mäţmäqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Church in 2002.[258] She later permitted herself to be nun locking the worldly life that usually thought in her family and herself and decision to be nun in the Šänkora Qedus Yohänes church added the confidence of *Emahoy* Mänbärä Täqäba to run the nunnery decided to found in the future by *Abunä* Ephrém, Archbishop of the North Šäwa Diocese. The modern education attendance left over and she became the pioneer membership of the nunnery founder in 2005.[259] Šänkora Däbrä Mäţmäqä Mäläkot Qedus Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam in the early founded with four nuns currently extended to more than twenty. The nuns have been engaging their life span in nunnery works and the deep praying as rule and regulation of the monastery conducts.[260]

[255]*Ibid, Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam.
[256]*Ibid.*
[257]*Ibid., Abba* Kinfä Abäbä.
[258]*Informant: Emahoy* Ţersitä Maryam and *Abba* Wäledä Amanu'el
[259]*Ibid.*
[260]*Ibid.*

CHAPTER-THREE

3. Administration and Socio-Economic Development of Monasteries in Menjar-Šänkora

3.1. Administration Structures of Churches and Monasteries

The central part of the administration is righteously invulnerable merits of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which has possessed amazing administrative organizations since from the early actual inauguration of the churches. The historically, every administrative columns of the assignations are the religious basement in accordance of biblical thoughts. As many religious scripts state apostles of Jesus Christ were organized in the early church in administrative and evangelization sections. The evangelization activity was conducted in the early beginning under the Apostles whereas Christians who were elected made the administrative activity from the members of the Christians too.[261] This tradition legacy has been bringing along into Ethiopia episodic tale when the first bishop, *Abba* Sälama consecrated in Ethiopia that became noteworthy effect in the church and monastery administrative sphere of life in the Ethiopia.[262] The top of the administrative hierarchical organizational structure, bishops were imported from the Egypt until Ethiopia became independent since 1950 with its own bishops.[263] However, until 1948 the EOTC did not have a board to give general directives on the secular administration of the church. From that beginning, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church had its own ecclesiastical council of administration board that is free from the external administrative machineries.[264]

As the spiritual activities and services broadened in the church, they developed its own administrative structures, which run under the directive of Coptic Church direct command that dispatched since 1959 when His Holiness *Abunä* Basilios consecrated as the first Patriarch of Ethiopian Orthodox *Täwahedo* Church.[265] This administrative structure clearly outlined in its *Qala Awadi*, which is one of its principal, books that assert about its organizational structures

[261] *Informants: Abba* Wäledä Amanu'el, *Abba* Bäläṭä and *Märigéta* Gašačäw.

[262]David Benjamin Spielman, "One Law for Us All: A History of Social Cohesion through Shared Legal Tradition among the Abrahamic Faiths in Ethiopia" (Master of Arts in African Studies, University Of California, Los Angeles, 2015), P.4.

[263]Wudu Tafete, "The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Ethiopian State and the Alexandrian See: Indigenizing the Episcopacy and Foreign National Identity, 1926-1991" (Doctor of Philosophy in History in the College of University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign, 2006), p.216.

[264] ENALA, Fol. No. 63.1.35, File No. 63.1.35.03, *yä Ityopiya Bétäkerestian Heg* (The Law of Ethiopian Church).

[265] Getnet, "Features of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Clergy", P.96.

and responsibilities of hierarchies of the church organs from the top to bottom in concern. The Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church is structured in the Holy Synod, the leading body of EOTC hierarchy in five respective authority organs: Patriarchal General Administration, Patriarchal General Congregation, Diocese, Wäräda Level Parish Administration and Local Church Parish Council respectively.[266] With this historical episode the monasteries administration is not out of these structural organs. Here is the authority hierarchies of EOTC ranging from the Holy Synod at the top of the church down to the bottom of */aţebiya bétäkrestian/* parish Churches/ as a governing decree of the 1999 *Qal Awadi /yäbétäkrestian mätädadäria denb/* improve for the better timely require to the latest administration.[267]

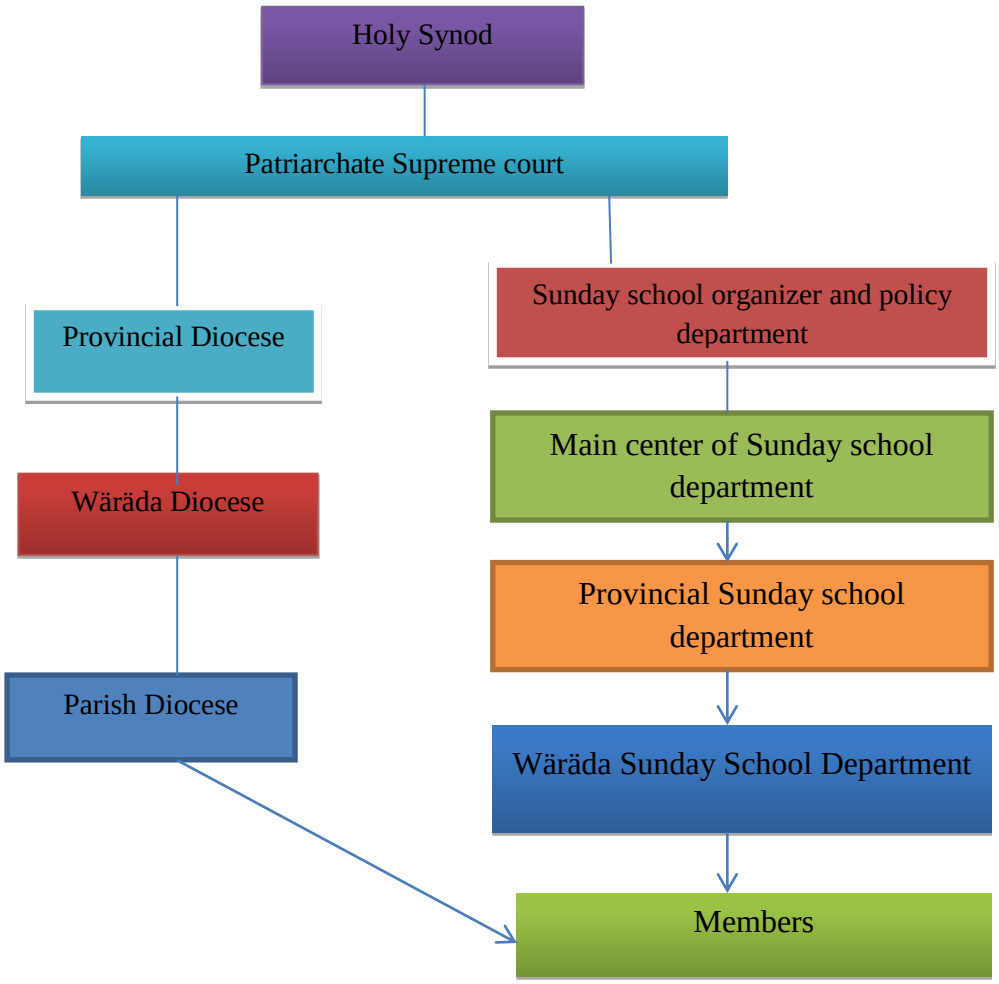


Figure 9:-Administration Structures of EOTC taken from *Qal Awadi /Yebétekristian Mätädaderia dänb* 1999/ that shows the administration structure of EOTC

[266] *Ibid.*

[267] ENALA, Fol. No. 63.1.35, File No. 63.1.35.03, *yä Ityopiya Bétäkerestian Heg* (The Law of Ethiopian Church).

According to the 1999 *Qal Awadi,* the Holy Synod of EOTC is the highest administrative office of church that look an act that break a religious or moral law or seen its diverse activities and arrives at a relevant decision on matters of polices affecting the church and monastery. As article five subarticle168 of *Fetha Nägäst* stated that the decisions made and the directives issued by the Holy Synod are expected to be implemented and taken as a rule as well as regulation, law and other for the administration system in every level of the church administration. Beyond a little, the Holy Synod is responsible in electing and designating the general secretary and deputy secretary of the Holy Synod, appointing commission for development affairs, appointing board of directors for special sections, and also designating the provincial diocese arch bishop. Basically, members of Holy Synod include the patriarch, the archbishop's and bishops.[268]

Patriarchate Supreme Court is the second highest organs of the Synod that is responsible in implementing the decisions, polices, rules and regulations forwarded from the Holy Synod. Indeed, Patriarchate Supreme Court also made decision the appellations emanated from provincial Diocese and controlling that church organizations.[269] The provincial diocese is the third synod hierarchy administered by either Bishop or Archbishop accountable for patriarchate supreme court that their duty is to implement rules, policies and procedures of the Holy Synod and also they are responsible administering monasteries and parish churches as well as *wäräda* diocese.[270]

Wäräda diocese is responsible to control and administer monasteries and parish churches found in the wäräda that is accountable for provincial diocese. According to article 35 of *Qal Awadi,* the *wäräda* diocese has its own administration board, general assembly that came from each individual churches as well as monasteries, work categories and implementing policies and procedures of the Synod. Indeed, article 4 and 37 of *Qal Awadi* recognized *wäräda* diocese over monasteries and parish churches.[271]

Sunday Schools Department is the other branch of the Holy Synod aiming to keep the young people within the Orthodox Church and its dogmatic and spiritual life. It prepares prints and provides materials for all Ethiopia. It works with all the Parish Councils. There is Sunday

[268]*Ibid*; Asamenew Kassa and Zerayehu Semie, *Yä bétäkerestian astädadärawi mäwaker* ,(Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 1996), pp. 25-55 and see also of the 1999 *Qal Awadi.*
[269]*Ibid.*
[270]*Ibid.*
[271]*Ibid.*

school movement in most town parishes, less in the remote villages. It is linked with the association called *Mahebärä Qedusan*, whose work concentrates on organizing Church education and service for Higher education students, in Ethiopia and abroad.[272]

The last but not least synod hierarchy is parish diocese. Church has its own division called *Gädam, Däber* and *Gäţär* respectively. All these three groups of church at *aţebiya* level have their own distinctive feature of administration. Hence, each monastery and Church have a duty in protecting church property and historical relics, rules on church marriages, collecting money from donations and others, administering church finance and establishing school and welfare associations. In addition, many lay officials perform important functions in the local church and also engaged informing and other occupation.[273]

3.1.1. Hierarchies and Administrative structures in the Monasteries

Monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora were one of provincial diocese, which has subjected under the rules and regulations of EOTC directly commended by zonal administrative office since 1990s. Hence, still existing the monasteries have shared the 1999 *Qal Awadi*, the legal document of EOTC that have their own administrators, office of monasteries equipment guardians, secretaries, preaching departments, office of finance departments, auditing departments, planning and development offices, departments of clergy men, departments of rules and regulations, department of volunteer services, spiritual school departments, departments of construction and reconstruction and Sunday school departments are conducting so far in the monasteries.[274] In the previous historical existence of monasteries had no organized manner of documentation offices, which tell much about the early ways of administrative structures of monasteries. However, most of the oral historians of the region remind, the three monasteries: Sama Sänbät, Guramba and Balçi Amanuel had the royal family assistance in appointing the administrators in respect to the authority of the patriarchal responsibility.

From the Menjar Šänora Wäräda Monasteries, Sama Sänbät had received a royal status since from its foundation in the 19th century to the end of Solomonic dynasty of 1974. Moreover, in the course of its history, the monastery inherits honorable title of the leaders' *mämher* in most

[272] *Ibid.*
[273] *Ibid.*
[274] *Ibid.*

of its historical episode with founder of the *Abba* Gäbrä Hiywot and *Negus* Sahle Selassie.[275] The monastery was also the political deeds conducted even to the end of Emperor Haile Selassie in which the various local administrations conducted under the monastery leaders in the region in the time.[276] Guramba Saint Maryam Monastery was not as such differ from the Sama Sänbät, because the founder of monastery, *Abba* Şämra Mika'el had also the close relation with the royal government of the time that assist the development of monastery through direct participation of king and empress throughout their lives span. A number of administers of the monastery were appointed by the royal family that they expected individuals as abbots.[277]

The accordance of the monastic rule and regulation, in the administration of monasteries structured from top to bottom of the authorities of respective bodies as mentioned above. As sources indicated, the head of monasteries were appointed by the royal family under the guidance of religious men that assigned had the title of *mämher.*[278] At the bottom of abbots hierarchically organized individuals assigned in the monasteries to materialize functional works in it.

Nevertheless, the administrative functionality of monasteries lost it status following the coming of the Derg regime. The long last effects resulted with the great cry of land to the tiller by the 1960s student movement leads to the fall of imperial regime and the coming of Derg regime to the power since 1970s was disrupted the former status of monasteries in the region. In fulfilling the 1960s student question of land to tiller, Derg nationalization of land and compulsory collectivization that highly affected EOTC in different regions of Ethiopia came to being.[279] In the meantime as bastions and custodians of Ethiopian Christianity, the Šäwa province equated socialism with atheism of the regime. Hence, monasteries and churches in the Menjar-Šänkora have traditionally been hostile to the central government and have always been resistant to the influx of new ideas as one of the region in Šäwa.[280] The most prominent

[275] Gädlä Täklä Haymanot, p. 107f. See Appendix IV and VII.
[276] The Handbook like Foolscap document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office, clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery p.32; *Informants:Qés* Mogäs, and *Qés* Masräsha, See Appendix-VI.
[277] Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), pp.6-7.
[278] *Informants: Mämheré* Eyasu Gärämaw and *Mamheré* Wändeyé Gäbré.
[279] Mahtama Sellassie Walda Meskel *(Blata Géta),Zekerä Nägär*, (Addis Abeba: Architect Printing Press, 1962), pp. 654-660.
[280] *Informants: Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles and *Qes* Sahle Asefa.

of the region monasteries, Sama Sänbät and Guramba became the victims of the new policies enacted with the coming government that rushed the economic significance that had before. The scletane of the monasteries pontification brought many changes in the administrative structure and the population of the monasteries decrease in number that existed formerly. The most clergies served in the churches of monasteries became the farmers of the region with possession of farming land for their own consumptions.[281] The monasteries of the region lost the authority of the land possession that weakened that had sounded power in the community as well. As local historians memorized the conditions during the time, even the church education deliveries in the monasteries dramatically decreased due to the local children forced to enjoy the modern education than church education.[282]

3.1.2. The titles and Roles in the Monasteries

Even though Ethiopian monasteries and churches have shared common titles, ranks and offices, few monasteries and churches had developed and used a unique title and rank that developed in the course of their history. However, as evidences indicate, in the Menjar-Šänkora, Sama Sänbät and Guramba monasteries were inherited the titles of *Mämher* and *Liqa Liqawnet* with additional title *Abba* become an old titles developed throughout their history but these titles are not unique from the commonly utilized in the monasteries.[283] Beside of the titles of administers and their fellows, monasteries had descriptions of titles and ranks. Sama Sänbä monastery has the title and *Behéra Héwän Sama Egizia Läsänbät Gädam*.[284] On the other hand, Guramba Saint Maryam Monastery has the title *Däbrä MädhanitGuramba Qedist Maryam Gädam.*[285]

The most common titles of head of monasteries were *Liqä Ţäbäbet, Mämher, Liqä Liqawnet, Aläqa, Abba,* in the recent development the titles of *Mäläka Sälam, and Mäläkä Mankerat* commonly used in the monasteries of the region.[286] The most of the titles have given for those who will be head of monasteries of Sama Sänbät, Guramba Qedest Maryam, and Balçi Amanuel as well as an abbot who ended his church education and spiritually reached as a *Qomos* appellation. Hence, the title *Qomos* is given for those virgin monks who have

[281]*Informants:* Endalä, Mogäs, Mäsälä and Mäsräša
[282]*Ibid.*
[283]*Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.
[284]*Ibid.*
[285]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), p. 5.
[286]*Informants:Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.

jurisdiction to bless a new church.[287] Basically, Sama Sänbät Monastery is the only that currently used *Behérä Héwan* title inherit since time immemorial starting might from its foundation solely in the state. The abbots who had inherited various titles beside of administration they had duties like preach on Sabbath day, head of *wäräda* diocese, blessing new church, live always within the monasteries, preparing ground for monks for further education as well as developing their lively hood and responsible in settling any problems faced within the monasteries as well as the *wäräda* diocese. However, the abbots of the monasteries, yet the years they administered the monasteries are not actually certain.

As informants remind the most of the titles below the administrators of the monasteries were the parts of the structural organizations. Among these titles: *Qésä Gäbäz* is either monk or priest elected by abbot of monastery and approved by the Archbishop of provincial diocese.[288] In fact, the selection is based on his overall knowledge as well as his participation in services with his responsibilities. As informants said, sometimes it might short or long but the common life span of elected *Qésä Gäbäz* lasted for about three years; however, his leadership quality of his reign gave an opportunity in exercising the second phase. The role of *Qésä Gäbäz* in the Monastery is protecting properties in general and museum in particular or locally his role is overlooking as *eqa bét or* sacristy but differs as actual monasteries progress. Indeed, he had additional coincided duties but his duty trussed with is protecting historical heritages found within the monasteries and also he was responsible in preparing contusive environment for visitors as well as worked as guidance in the monasteries.[289]

Another prominent title in the monasteries is *Mägabi:* known in his goodwill personality who is expected formally as a *däbtära* appointed by abbot of the monastery serving for about three years. Basically, as the title given for only monasteries, the elected one is responsible in doing different developmental works within the monastery and also he was the leader of clergy associations.[290]

Liqä Deacon: those known deacons who finished their church education that make status of *dequnena* in a well manner receive the appellation and their duty is ordering and administering deacons.

[287] *Ibid.*
[288] *Ibid. Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat
[289] *Ibid.*
[290] *Informants: Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles and *Qes* Sahle Asefa.

Märigéta is also the titles served in the monasteries, being himself a master of *zéma* (chanting), he trains the church chanters, prepares hymn, and chants for the liturgy in the monasteries. During the liturgy, the chanters stand on the left and right of *qené mahlét* and the *liqä mäzämmeran's* task is to achieve a coordinated and smooth performance. *Märigéta*is considered superior to the *liqä mäzämeran*; he expected to act additionally as an expert and a teacher of *qené, zéma,* and *aq^{w}aq^{w}am*. Sometimes *märigéta* is assisted by a *qäññ géta* and *gera gäta*, the head of the singers on the left and right sides of the *qené mahlét*, respectively. *Qäññ Géta* and *Gera Gäta*: those *däbtäras* known in their church service are appointed by *Mämher* of monasteries who is responsible to select three *däbtäras* for *gera géta* and three for *qäññ géta*. In fact, the duty of both *qäññ géta* and *gera géta* is stand on the left and the right side of the monasteries in the usual to harmonize the mass service.

Priesthood *(Qésawest):* The priest who received the appellation of priesthood is expected in completing spiritual education, not less than twenty five years old, known in his communion life and his spiritual purification is witnessed by five innocent peoples and also by abbot.[291] After a priest received his appellation, his duty is baptizing, giving communion, teaching, preaching, asking those patients, specially he advised his soul children's in developing their spiritual activity, no need of leaving the monasteries without of abbots permission. If he leaves the monasteries without permission and hinder the communion service, he receive first warning while, he repeated his fault for the second time, they demotion his priesthood appellation.

Deacon is the one to become deacon appellation, whose age ranges from ten to twenty years old, unmarried, worked as a *Nefqä* Deacon for one years as a perquisite, who have a knowledge of reading and hearing of Ge`ez and his behavior will be reviewed by a church community, *Liqä* Deacon and by five innocent men`s. However, after they reached twenty years old, they are forced to be married through Christian norm or choosing to be continues as virgin and received his monk patronage from abbots.[292] *Nefqä* Deacon: those candidate deacons whose age less than twenty two years old, unmarried, have knowledge of reading and singing, his behavioral purification will be acknowledged by two peoples and abbot and role is assisting the deacon received *Nefqä* Deacon appellation.

[291]*Informamnts:Qés* Mogäs, *Abba* Yoséf and *Mämré* Enadalä.
[292]*Ibid; Informant: Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.

Liqä Abew is also the given who elected and receive the appellation due to his overall church knowledge as well as his paternalistic character and his duty is preparing the ground for different feasts based on the manual rules and regulations of the monasteries and ordering *märigéta.*

Çeqa Šum is the title given a government official but also who performed duties in the monasteries twice in a year namely during epiphany and annual festivity whose work was preparing a tent and the meals for clergy. Though the titles that mentioned above were not alone but also there were other many titles in the monasteries, like *emahoy, ema emnät* … head of nunnery.

3.1.3. Administers of the Monasteries and their Merits

The monasteries from foundation to the existing in the Menjar-Šänkora, the different appointed abbots administered and contributed the work of values and wisdoms there. Among the historic monasteries, Sama Sänbät had basically had close ties among the timely governor of the state from the early its foundation. As Neguse Semegn indicated in his work a number of abbots were administered. Among the well-known *Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot, *Abba* Wäldä Mika'el, *Abba* Kaläwäld, *Abba* Enderyas, *Abba* Wäldä Giyorgis, *Abba* Täkästä Berhan, *Abba* Wäldä Şädeq, *Abba* Zäwängel, *Abba* Gäbrä Selassé, *Abba* Gäbrä Maryam, *Abba* Gäbrä Egziabher (later *Abunä* Filipos), *Abba* Täsfayé, *Abba* Gäbrä Selassé (*Abunä* Péţeros), Mämher Ţelahun Wudeneh, *Mämher* Girma Dämsé, *Abba* Fekrä Selassé, *Abba* Gäbrä Kidan, *Abba* Haymanot Adegäh, and currently administer *Abba* Zädengel respectively.[293] In fact the mention above are nineteen alone but as writer cited the name forgotten administers were exist. These abbots had significantly played the significant roles to monastery and the local people in offering the services of both the religious and related functions for the local community peoples.[294]

As Neguse narrated the two of the administers were not monks but secular individuals that dispersed the monastic regulation of authority of the time though the cause of the appoint of the secular priests was temporary until the respected faithful fathers were obtained to assign or

[293]Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), p. 61; *Informat:* Moges.
[294]*Ibid.*

the refusal of the monks who assigned from the capital, Addis Ababa to the countryside of Sama Qäbälé were the factors that responsible for this occurrence in the monastery's tale.[295]

Another prominent historic Guramba's abbots that contribute their efforts in the time as mentioned in the sources obtained in the Tourism Office of the district, *Abba* Şämera Mika'el was the founder of the monastery and administered around decade.[296] Following the death the successor was who assistant, *Abba* Ţäklä Haymanot that administered the monastery for four years. The death of *Abba* Ţäklä Haymanot had seen succession constraint among the monks in dividing themselves into tri groups that overcame by Empress Tayitu through appointing great intellectual who was formerly, head the four *Liqa Gubayé* in Addis Ababa.[297] During the reign of this abbot, the church education was massively conducted under him who gathered from countryside to attain his courageous educational delivery there that added the population growth of the monastery. *Aläqa* Wäldä Maryam mentioned in the sources that consolidated the monastery of Guramba in organizing the respective clergy of the time in order to deliver the church education in the monastery.[298]Among the teachers of the time in the monastery, *Märigéta* Ešätu was well known who inclusive teacher of *degwa, aquwaquwam, and zéma.* However, shift of *Aläqa* Wäldä Maryam towards Ţära Däbrä Bäg'e Abunä Eyasus Monastery depopulated the inhabitants of monastery of Guramba because of the pupils were emigrated with him to attain their education.

The new appointee of the monastery was the Miţaq Saint Amu'el Church administer, *Abba* Wäldä Mika'el became abbot of Guramba Qedst Maryam Monastery. He was richest monk who had a number of followers still the descendants inhabit in the church as evidence.[299] However, the administration duration was short that opened the opportunity of another abbot, *Abba* Gäbrä Mika'el, formerly abbot of Morät Zéna Marqos Monastery appointed in the Guramba.[300] As mentioned in the church document, his was courageously responsible, honest, industrious and trustful among the monks and he died in the monastery in serving this way in his past life time. Following his death, aboriginal of Jeru, North Shewa the administer of Gärba Giyorgis, Enţoto Däbrä Şähay Maryam, and the teacher of inclusive music (mulu zéma)

[295]*Ibid,* p. 62.
[296]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik,* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C), p.6.
[297]*Ibid.*
[298]*Ibid.*
[299]*Ibid.*
[300]*Ibid.*

was assigned *abba emnét* by Empress Tayitu and served more the two decade in the monastery till he abdicated due to the oldness and leave to his birth place and lived until he was died there.[301] The coming successor of the monastery abbot was Aläqa Gäbrä Eyasus who was the confess of *Ras Betwädad* Täsäma Nadäw, formerly Addis Ababa Qedus Rufa'el Church firs head later became the appointee of the Guramba Monastery. He was served the monastery with hostility, responsibility, and integrity until he was unconditionally leave to Siyadäber the birth place him with no return died there.[302]

Aläqa Wäldä Eyasus the aboriginal of the "Fatagar", Bulga was the formerly the servant at Däbrä Şähäy Enţoţo Maryam from the beginning the reign of Menilek he was called *Aserägaç* Wäldä Iyasus was appointed as abbot of Guramba Monastery. However, the Italian occupation in 1936 interrupted the monastery services and the church treasures were displaced to the region that they expected save it from the destruction for about five years.[303] After five years of the enemy miseries the escaped church building was conflagrated when the cleaning of the surrounding was conducting that added the situation to be elongated another decades. The father who was employed the cleaning and considered factor for the destruction of the historic church building in 1941 was commemorate the day until he was died.[304] During this time abbot who was sent to Guramba was *Mämher* Denbänähebä from the Eremata, Bulga. He was the patriot of five years of confrontation in the gorges of landscape and confessor of *Ras* Abäbä Arägay, the well-known Šäwan patriot.[305] When *Mämher* Denbänähebä appointed the church of monastery was burnt and he returned to Addis Ababa in order to coordinate the Christians to reconstruct it and when his tried to organize the financial assistance from the nobles in the capital, unconditionally he was died without accomplish what he had. Within for this intensity of news, the appointing of another abbot had required and *Abba* Täklä Maryam formerly servant at Addis Ababa Bä'ata Monastery priest consecrated by *Abunä* Basilos in the Guramba Monastery. He was served for ten years though there was significant changes in the monastery under him and replaced by *Liqä Ţäbäbet Mämher* Haylä Giyorgis, who was servant of Mänbärä Mängest Qedus Gebre'al Church in Addis Ababa, and administered about four years but he was not interested to stay in it and the monastery administration and guidance took the attention of the government official of *Ras* Mekonnen Habte Wold, the

[301]*Ibid;Informants: Ato* Čärnät Masräša, and *Mämhré* Mäsälä.
[302]*Ibid.*
[303]*Ibid.*
[304]*Ibid, p.7*
[305]*Ibid.*

minister of finance who assigned to watch over the construction of the church assigned the courageous individual *Liqä Mämher* Mäsfen Habte Wold appointed by *Abunä* Basilos in 1958.[306]

As local historians told, the monastic function later with the downfall of Imperial regime lost it status and became its performance as one of the parish church that administered by the secular priests that mismatched with monasticism as expected before.[307] But the church is still called as one of the monasteries in the region but currently it is the church as one of the region found with its historical value with considerable old aged heritages.

On the other hand the Balçi Amanu'el Church as of the monasteries from it gained the recognition under the Menilek II, the monks were administered it. As elaborated in the unit two historically, *Abba* Habtä Maryam was the first Abbot of the monastery.[308] As Endal told a number of monks were administered the church but the secular priest who administered were more than monks. In spite the church had no full of monastic character; the abbots had played the significant for further existence of the historic church in their lives span in the region.[309]

Another recently became the famous church in the region is Šänkora Yohänes due to the existence of holy water that accumulated Ethiopian people in the confined Felege Hiywot Town that surrounded it. With foundation of holy water, beginning from the last quarter of the 20th century, administrators of the church were monks to this extent that manifested the monastic features in the region that realized the actual foundation of nunnery in the 21st century in the region. Among these monks *Abba* Hayelä Giyorgis, *Abba* Benyam Asäfa, *Abba* Bäläţä Ţeruneh, *Abba* Wälda Mädhen Däbäbä, *Abba* Wäldä Amanu'el Aschäneqi and the recent new appointee *Abba* Aberham Dañačäw were the respectively administrators of the church that manifest the monastic character.[310]

According to informants, the foundation of Nunnery in the region is the result of the inauguration of the holy water service that attracted many nuns from various monasteries and the holy water attainders in the church.[311] Because of this, in the early foundation of the

[306] *Ibid.*
[307] *Informants:Ato* Čärnät Masräša, and *Mämhré* Mäsälä.
[308] See Appendix-III for better understand the historical fact about it was monastery. But most of its existence until the downfall of Haile Selassie-I was economically and administrative centrist strongest than others.
[309] *Informant:Mämré* Endalä
[310] Mulualem, p.92.
[311] *Informants:Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Abba* Bäläţä Ţerunäh, and *Ato* Täräfä Şäga

Šänkora Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam, the pioneer abbess of the monastery was *Emahoy* Mänbärä Täqäba. As *Emahoy* Ţérsitä Märyam told that she was literate of both the church and modern educations that run the administration through employing the possible efforts in the monastery, but unconditionally she displaced her destination in Addis Ababa.[312] In fact, she was youth in the time to resist the challenges which were coming in various directions and forced her abdication in 2007 and the future administration of the monastery, *Emahoy* Tersitä Maryam Aserat came to effect. Still the nunnery is administered under the *Ema menét Emahoy* Tersitä Maryam that significantly changed the nunnery in both religious strength and economic progress of the region.

3.2. Social Activities in the Monasteries

As various historical evidences enlightened churches and monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora are the religious institutions where the social activities have been conducting in many ways. In the monasteries protecting cultural heritages like gifts of different kings, ruler‘s raiment‘s, armaments, ecclesiastical religious as well as norm materials, handover heritages and manuscripts, the monasteries as the property of the community as well as Christian world serving different social activities since from its foundation.[313] Among these, monasteries of Sama Sänbät , Guramba, Šänkora Yohänes Bétä Dänagel Yäsétoč Mänäkosayeyat Andenät Gädam and Balçi Amanuel are the prominent in social activities like social gatherings, religious ceremonies, funereal ceremonies, voluntary activities, and church education are conducting that assist the community peoples in many aspects.

Among these social activities, monasteries are the home of a man who lost his temper, elders, and patients that they lived in the tomb house surrounding the monasteries under the assistance of community people. Hence, the monasteries help the needy of those peoples by asking for help from believers as well as concerned bodies in the course of its history.[314] As local historians told the during the 1958 famine period in the region of the Menjr-Šänkora, many needy individuals were assisted in the monasteries of their daily meal.[315]

According to *Qés* Mogäs remind, Sama Sänbät Monastery had also gave beside of meal service for needy but also psycho social assistance since from ancient times to present for

[312]*Ibid, Abba* Kinfä Abäbä.
[313]*Informants:Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Ato* Čärnät, *Qés* Mogäs, *Mämheré* Endalä, and *Mämheré* Wäldä Hawaryat
[314]*Ibid*
[315]*Ibid.*

those who faced and facing depression, poor as well as no parent children‘, and junkie peoples.[316] Hence, the common to all monasteries of the region, those peoples who have faced psychological problems like depression due to an endless load of life that they need an immediate relief in which the monastery did a lot for those peoples to relieved through different mechanisms like counseling; those peoples who were facing health defects are healed from their health problems by baptizing them through holy water locally call as Ṣäbäl located monasteries. Those economically poor children‘s who lost one or both parents summoned and given to the monasteries in which the monasteries did a lot in giving essential advise by fulfilling different equipment necessary for schooling as well as feeding for them; and also those youths who becomes junkie come to the monasteries as a rallying place and go back to their home as soon as possible their problem solved.[317]

The monasteries besides mobilizing believer‘s participation in annual festivities like St. Mary, Christmas, Epiphany, New year and Ester, and also motivated the people to develop the habit of sharing the fruit of love. Hence, in every Sunday school and Sabbath day the monasteries preach sharing principles, in which those who face problems of hunger and thirst take from those who have more than enough so it is a matter of events the uneven.[318]

The other but the most important social activity of monasteries is motivating those Christian believers to engage and form associations locally called as *edir* and *mahbär.* According to Christian communities, *edir* is a traditional guild and burial association to which members make monthly contribution and receive payment during monthly meeting (the day elected one of the Saint days of the month elected by the members) aiming to cover funeral expense in return. Basically, every adult people at least should be a member of one *edir* in which the association based on neighborhood, work operating along age and gender issues.[319] Since, *edir* also has combating social problems of the community like HIV/AIDS, drought and famine beside of burial service.[320]

However, even if the monasteries did the best in mobilizing the people engage in the various associations and preaching the people to develop the habit of sharing, EOTC in general and Menjar-Šänkora region monasteries in particular respect norms, values, and beliefs that assist

[316]*Ibid.*
[317]*Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Ato* Čärnät, *Qés* Mogäs, *Mämheré* Endalä,
[318]*Ibid.*
[319]*Ibid.*
[320]*Ibid.*

the positive social changes. Beside of these, the monasteries were engaging in the communities to eradicate the constraints like environmental degradation through planting trees, financing for road construction, and in offering psychological advice when the inhabitants tested by both human and natural calamities like famine, and wars to strengthen themselves until situations will pass away.

3.2.1. Social Gatherings

Another significantly the consistent spirits of Ethiopian Orthodox Church is social gathering, which conducted in various aspects among the Christian inhabitants, basically in the monasteries among the monks and nuns. These are significant means of bonds for the Christian societies in order to employ harmonious relationship, collaboration and solidarity in general among the member.[321] It is surprising for one who has the opportunity to visit the countryside of Ethiopia still function among the inhabitants. All societies are bonded each with both religious and other social activities that seems unity is strength. The local societies have performed different activities in addition to their religious activities. These are related with social activities that are made around the monasteries mainly after the usual religious activities have been accomplished.[322]

Most dominantly, the social gatherings are made on Sunday. Among these social gatherings is *mahbär* in which the local Christians organized themselves and come to take part commemorative meals including local foods and drinks.[323] The influential legacies of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church *Mahbär* are associations run administratively, with membership dues, codes of conduct, and a collegiality among its participants. This category of social life represents a significant social resource in the tradition of a mutual-aid society and is an environment where leadership roles are cultivated. It is also noteworthy that can be either religious or secular and it is this ambiguity in categorization that has inspired a discussion that considers the flexibility of *"mahbär"* as a model of community-making.[324] Each *mahbär* has its own *Musé or Agafri*, the leader served to share information to the member and arrange the order of the members for the preparation of meals for the gathering.

[321]*Informants: Qés* Mogäs, *Mämheré* Endalä; Yalemzewud, p. 61.
[322]*Ibid.*
[323]*Ibid.*
[324]*Ibid.*

In addition to *mahbär*, there are also other social gatherings made by the local society or the monks and nuns of monasteries. The central function of the association is harmonizing the community inhabitants in both religious and everyday lives as much. One of these is arbitration which is conducted to reconcile different conflicting groups or individuals who entered into trouble or misunderstanding due to one or another reasons socially or economically.[325] This arbitration is usually led by local elders or monks who have high social position among the society or monasteries. The arbitration activity is conducted around church yards, because that the discontent parts are assumed to speak out only the truth due to feared God.

The other important social bond is *edir* in which one person, who has established his own family, has to be admitted.[326] This social practice has therefore members who are responsible for emerging social duties on events such as death and other difficulties that may appear suddenly such as burning of home. But the central purpose is to help each other during mourning time. In fact, this social gathering is still the functional institution in each life of the Ethiopian societies in the modern era.

3.2.2. Church Education

The inauguration of church education in the history of Ethiopia traced back to the entrance of Christianity to Ethiopia in the 4th century. Since, then Ethiopian school system had been traditionally overrun as well as dominated by Church aiming preparing pupils for clerical activities, religious duties and positions.[327] Basically, Ethiopian church schools can be broadly classified in to reading (*nebab)*, music (*zéma)*, poetry (*qiné*) and book interpretation (*maşahaft)*.[328]

As time went, the introduction of modern educational system in the early 20thcentury, particularly the coming of Derg highly diminished the privileged of Church education.

[325]The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery, pp. 41 and 174. See Appendix- VIII and XII

[326]The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery, p.163.

[327] ENALA, Fol No. 63.1.48, File No. 63, 1, 48, 12, *yä Ityopiya bétäkerestian asefälaginät*. The folder clarify he paramount significance of EOTC to Ethiopia.

[328] Kidane Maryam Gétahun, *Ţentawi yä qolo tämari,* (Addis Ababa: Tensaé Zägubaé printing press, 1980), pp. 15. Christine Chaillot, "Traditional Teaching in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, ed. by Svein Ege, Harald Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw Bekele (Trondheim, 2009), p. 527.

Although the modern education has eroded the demand of church schooling through time, its introduction to and acceptance by the Ethiopian society required persistent struggles by the then Emperor Menilek and Empress Zewdetu.[329] The leaders had to issue imperial decrees threatening to levy taxes on families who refused to send their kids to the modern school which was the only one at that time.[330] To cite as an example, the 1929 education proclamation of Empress Zewditu reads, "All those who do not send their sons and daughters to school so that they can learn writing and reading skills which are necessary to identify the good and evils and develop fear of God and the king, will be punished 50 Birr."[331] This shows us how much the traditional education and modern schools during the reign of Zewditu was strong than before.

Hence, the above traditions indicate that the church dominated the norm, values and cultures of the society to live out of wild socio-economic and political policies.[332] Even if Ethiopian church education privileged diminished from 20thonwards, the church as a whole contributed in the development of modern education as a premise for modern art, architecture, music, poetry, literature, law, theology, philosophy, and medicine.[333]

With this regard, as local historians and some written sources enlightened, the inauguration of church education (*Yäabnät temehert)* in the Menjar-Šänkora Monasteries coincided with its foundations. Since, then students who inspired for education, without age limit came from the locality as well as abroad other provinces and attend their church education in the monasteries. Currently a number of teachers are delivering church school in the region basically Šänkora Yohanes, Sama Sänbät Balçi Amanu'el Church mainly used the teaching and learning methods of EOTC that is basically classified in to reading *(nebab*), music *(zéma),* poetry *(Quiné)* and book interpretation *(maşahaft tereguamé*) were conducting in the region in the past eons.[334] The time needed for completion of each subject depend on student's

[329] Alemayehu B. and Lasser J., *Education in Ethiopia: Past, Present and Future Prospects,* (African Nebula, Issue 5, 2012), p.55; and see also Selamsew Debasu, "The Teaching-learning Processes in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Accreditation Schools of Music (Zéma Béts): The Cases of Bethlehem, Zur Amba and Gondar Ba'eta Mariam Churches", (Addis Ababa University, presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of masters of arts in African studies, 2017), pp. 15-24.
[330] Selamsew Debasu, pp. 15-24.
[331] *Ibid.*
[332] *Informants:Mämheré* Endalä, *Qes* Sahle Asefa, *Mämheré* Aţelaw Yemär and *Ato* Käleläw Käbbädä
[333] *Ibdi.*
[334] *Ibid.*

performance and knowledge. However, student‘s health, interest, their livelihood and shortage of educational facilities are affected students accomplishment of the course.

Reading *(nebab)* is the first stage of every church education that contains word reading (nebab), number *(queţer),* reading *(nebab)* and *dawit mädgäm* (reading of the Psalm of David).[335] After students accomplished reading words and numbers, they transfers and begun reading and cramming verbally reading the Psalm of David *(dawit mädgäm).*The qualification is simply orally talked what they cram the psalm five times without any mistake in front of their teachers.

In fact, most of the time in winter season Menjar-Šänkora communities send their children‘s to the church to passed their vacations in attending church education, whereas, few of them used church education for their students as a kindergarten believing those pupils who attended church education as outstanding who fit in various social positions.[336] However, there is no payment for every people who wanted to attend reading phase whereas, those ordinary church education students are expected to begging food from the community. According to him; reading phase is the most important and taken as a landmark for students future kismet either they continued in mastering one of the professions like music *(zéma*) as well as poetry *(qiné)* or leaving church education and engaged in cattle kipping or as a peasant.[337]

Zéma (music) known as the second category of church education which have four branches; the first is the study of *meraf, şomä degwa* (chant of the main fasting) and *degwa* (the main chant book); the second branch is *qedasé* (mass music); the third is *zemaré* (songs sung at the end of Eucharist) and *mäwäset* (songs related commemorative service and funerals); and the fourth branch of *zéma is Aquaquam* (religious dance).[338] All those *zéma* branches are given for zéma students in Guramba, Sama Sämä, and Balçi Amanu’el in the time. According to *Qés* Mogä Gäbrä Şädiq, who was one of pupils in the Sama, *Şomä degwa* is chanting during fasting season of *hudadé* and *abey şomä* that they sing a song Psalm of David (*mäzmurä dawit*), whereas, *degwa* is focused on hymens that are performed on various ceremonies as assigned to various saint days in Ethiopian calendar like *zämänä Yohannes degwa*, *yä feré*

[335] Selamsew, p. 20.
[336]*Ibid.*
[337]*Informants:Mämheré* Endalä, *Qes* Sahle Asefa, *Mämheré* Aţelaw Yemär and *Ato* Käleläw Käbbädä
[338]*Ibid.*

degwa, yä mäsqäl degwa,yä şegé degwa, *yä astämero degwa,yä zämänä qebäla degwa,yä zämänä fasika degwa* and *yä zämänä kerämet degwa*.[339]

Aquaquam (hymnody) is a means of blending body movement with what they sing while they plays the church music instruments during chanting by using *şenaşel* (cestrum) and *mäquamia* and *käbäro* /drum/.[340] As local *märigéta* informed the *Aquaquam School* has forty seven branches that focused on in different religious ceremonies of Saints deeds.[341] In the various holydays ceremonies that students expected to develop *aquaquam* (hymnody).

As historical aspect, assessing Church Education in the Menjar-Šänkora region and the historical teachers in the time is inevitable events. As local historians reminded during the reign of Menilek-II, there were teachers who assigned in the Balçi Qedus Amanu'el Church that considered sixty *däbtäras* who provided the church services[342] and traditional education to the community children who capable to learning.[343] Guramba Qedest Maryam and Sama Sänbä monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora district were the prominent historical sites in delivering traditional education in the time.[344] In fact, as informants told us, the Šänkora Qedus Yohänes Church was also one of it had its contribution in providing church education to the local children from the early beginning but no inclusive at all.[345] As local historians mentioned *Abba* Täçäné was influential teacher of traditional education in the Šänkora Yohänes that in later successes under *Abba* Didimos Damtew came to be effective but they taught reading and music alone in the community.[346] *Abba* Didimos taught the traditional education in constructing the pupils' huts in the church for inhabitation.

The four level of schooling in their history, three monasteries: Sama Sänbä, Guramba, and Balçi were considerable in their tale. A number of teachers were taught the church education still influence the lives of church community. As Neguse mentioned, in Sama Sänbä, including abbots of monastery, the courageous religious men were delivered the education to

[339]*Ibid.*
[340]*Ibid.*
[341]*Ibid.*
[342] Gospel, 11-12ff; found in the Balçi Qedus Amanu'el churchstorehouse.
[343]*Ibid*.
[344]Girma Atilaw, "A History of Gur Amba Mariam Monastry Since 1860" (BA thesis Submitted to History Department, Bahir Dar University, 2009), pp. 4-6.The Handbook like Foolscap document found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office, clearly stated the monastery's activities run in the different period and the land of monastery discussed in the document, pp. 23-40.
[345]*Informants:* Abatä, Seläši Şädäqä, and Täfära Şäga.
[346]*Informants: Abba* Bälätä, Täräfä, and *Abba* Kenfä Abäbä.

the mass of the community children. As Neguse listed in his work, some of twenty two well-known teachers are mentioned. Such as

1. *Mämher Abba* Gäbrä Hiwot (founder of monastery)
2. *Mämher* Şegé
3. *Mämher* Zäräfä Tenšu
4. *Mämher* Täklé (deguwa)
5. *Mämher* Ţelahun Wudenäh
6. *Mämher Aleqa* Solomon
7. *Mämher Aleqa* Gétahun
8. *Mämher Aleqa* Ţäkalegn (inclusive)
9. *Mämher Aleqa* Semägn Wändemagegn
10. *Mämher Aleq Kidanä*
11. *MämherAleqa Abba Gäbrä Egeziabher (later of Abunä Filipos)*
12. *Aleqa Solomon (another)*
13. *Mämher Gäbrä'ab*
14. *Mämher Mekbeb*
15. *Mämher* Gäzahegn Lägäsä (Aququam)
16. *Mämher* Woldé Täkalegn (Abušaher)
17. *Mämher* Fäläqä
18. *Mämher* Yesaq Zäwudé *(Aququam)*
19. *Mämher Yénéta* Gétanäh (Zéma)
20. *Mämher* Dibäkulu (qené)
21. *Mämher* Maru (qedasé)
22. *Mämher* Nardos (qené)

Source: Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), p.63

Another prominent monastery in the time was Guramba where the church education was delivered in the region. Among the prominent personals of church education teachers *Märigéta* Ešätu, *Aleqa* Wäldä Maryam, and *Mämher* Wäldä Selasé were who delivered four level of education in the monastery until the Italian occupation was disrupted in 1936.[347] Despite post Italian occupation the church education in the region was consolidated through gradual progress in the Sama Sänbät Monastery and Balçi Amanu'el Church when the stability maintained in the region but in the Guramba Saint Maryam Monastery was remain with no church until 1958.

During the *Derg* regime, the traditional church education was discouraged its successive progress following the land decree passed in 1975 that brought the monasteries

[347]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), p. 5.

underdevelopment until the last quarter of the 20th century.[348] In late the church education consolidation deliver in the Šänkora Qedus Yohänes Church surpassed the formerly well known in the region that coincided with inauguration of historic holy water influence in the region which has been capable the church to generate considerable income in it.[349] Since late of 1990s the church economical skeleton endurance initiated the Church Parish Council to pass the decision to reopen the church school interrupted during the *Därg* regime in employing salary payable teachers *(märigétas)* in the parish.[350] However, in fact, Sama Sänbät Monastery and Balçi Amanu'el Church are still influential in the region in delivering the church education. As informants recognized, the population of the students in the each houses are quite differ. Among these schools, the *mäşehaf bét* students are few in number though dominate in population from the others are *nebab bét* and the *qedasé bét* pupils. Besides, the economical reason, the elongate of the time it consumed to accomplish is another considerable factor.[351]

3.3. Economic Development and Sources of Income of Monasteries

As of the timely existing economic system of state, the EOTC had the chance of landownership mean the sources of income of the monasteries basically tied with the feudal historical development in the state. As historical sources enlightened, the most of Ethiopian Orthodox Church Monasteries had *res*t and *gult* rights over the communities land for their consumption in the time.[352] This historical episode was not exceptional in the Menjar-Šänkora region churches and monasteries in time till the downfall of imperial regime. As local historians and recorded sources enlightened from the early beginning of its foundation in the Menjar-Šänkora region, monasteries were engaging their economic activities strongly tied with agriculture productions in producing cereal crops through renting the land like legume plants such as beans, peas, chickpea, lenticels, barley, *teff* and wheat and, rearing animals like

[348]*Ibid,* Abatä, and Seläši.

[349]*Informants: Abba* Kenfä

[350]*Informants: Ato* Abatä Wändafraš, and *Ato* Täräfä Şäga.

[351]*Ibid,* The last stage of the church education is the erudite or elite mainly focused on the interpretation of all holy books in terms of its theological manners. It has several branches of the studies. It takes four years to study the scriptures; three years to study *liqawunt* (church fathers) and *mäşehafä mänäkosat* "which defines the rules and the spiritual discipline governing the life of the monks"; six months to learn *Märha-Ewur*, which deals with computation of the calendar; one year to study the church history; four years to study of arts and crafts. Elleni Tedla "Indigenous African Education as a Means for Understanding the Fullness of Life: Amara Traditional Education", *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol.23, No. 1 (Colgate: Sage Periodical Press, September 1992), p.11, https://www.jbs.sagepub.com, accessed on 26 December 2022.

[352] Tadesse Tamirat, pp. 98-99.

donkey, mules and cattle, sheep and goats. In additions to these incomes also generated from handcrafts, tribute, ecclesiastical religious services like holy water, baptism, weeding, offertory, and different feasts, and from house rent.[353]

As of church historical sources argued, since the introduction of Christianity to Ethiopia, there had been interdependence between the state and the church. Both parties benefited from this state of affairs. The Orthodox Church played as the ideological arm of the state. The king became head not only of the state, but also of the church. The church enjoyed royal protection and patronage, ranging in concrete terms like the granting of land, called the *Rest-Gult* system. The Gult system was an important economic institution and connection between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the state. The system was essentially a political and economic relation between the state, the church and the cultivators. It not only included tribute and administrative rights, but also entailed direct control over land.[354]

As local historians and some recorded sources enlightened, in the Menjar-Šänkora, the monasteries of Sama Sänbät, Guramba Qedset Maryam and Balçi Amanuel had a large land possession opportunity in the time in their parishes and outside that utilized for religious servants and monasteries inhabitants: clergy, monks, and nuns. The rest and *gult right* that extends beside of district to the neighboring's Bosät Wäräda, Lomé Wärädaand the Arsi province.[355] The *hudad* land *per-gasha* control of the monasteries mentioned in the manuscripts found in the monasteries heritage houses had a number of site names with its individual owners.[356] However, in Sama Sänbät most of the monastery land was owned by the *däbtära* individually as well as exclusively in which the monasteries usually did not have an absolute power over its lands, as a land occupied by the *däbtära* on behalf of the monasteries.[357] The land of monasteries had the various names in accordance of the ecclesiastical services in the churches. In fact such names lands which associated with church service delivers individuals and types of services called as *Yäsämon märét, yäawdaš märét ,*

[353]*Informants: Ato* Masresha, and *Qés* Mogas,
[354]Habtamu Mengestie, *Dispute over precedence and protocol: Hagiography and forgery in 19th-century Ethiopia,* pp. 57-65.
[355] See Appendix-X & XI.
[356] *Ibid.*
[357]*Informants: Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä.

yälälit Sa'atat märét, yäma'elt sa'atat märét, yäqesna märét , yädequna märét , yädäbtära märét and like.[358]

The other income of the monasteries was fixed amount of tribute collected from the surrounding communities of peasants and parish members. The payment of tribute by the peasantry and churches to monasteries was usually made partly in the currency of the time, *amolé*(salt bar) and also Maria Theresa Thaller and partly in kind like honey, and animals, etc.[359] In the case of one land grant charter the scale of the levy is adjusted according to the means and the capacity of the peasants to pay tribute per month and annum. Most of the taxes in kind were measured by traditional instrument called *dawula*, and *quna.*[360] According local historians, the tributes were levy variously in accordance of the incomes of the community peasants. Dues were also calculated per area of land under cultivation. Basically, the monasteries gained *amole* (Ge`ez word meaning *semä amlak* in which the costly material given for religious services) from those churches which were constructed as well as blessed under the dominion of the monasteries.[361] Indeed, wheat and other agricultural products were collected every year to meet the special needs of the church from the communities, and also certain villages paid tribute in a certain number of loads of firewood and incense to be used by the churches during services. All the payment of fixed tribute in the form of kind or cash to the monasteries by peasants under the administration of the monasteries was the norm.[362] It is presumable that the payment of fixed tribute was an important incentive to the peasantry to increase their agricultural production. Sama Sänbä and Guramba monasteries had the power to share a tenth weekly market custom dues from the Mäkesäñit Gäbäya and Arerti town repectively. "ከአረርቲ ከተማ በሳምንት ቅዳሜ የሚቀረተውን የገበያ ቀረጥ ከአስር አንድ ለጉራምባ ቅድስት ማርያም ገቢ እንዲሆን ...."[363] roughly to say "the market custom due collected from town of Arerti a tenth of income generated from custom should offered to Guramba Qedest ….". This is implicated the sources of income for monasteries were in multidimensional as much in time.

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[358] Ibid; See Appendix-III and VI; *Æthiopica Encyclopedia,* Vol. IV, pp. 510-511.
[359]The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery, pp. 16 and 54. See Appendix-IV and IX for better understanding.
[360]*Ibid.*
[361]*Informants:Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä.
[362]*Informants:Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä, See Appendix-VIII.The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery, pp. 44-54.
[363]Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik, or Guramba Maryam Monastery Foundation and Its History* (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2010 E.C), p. 5.

On the other hand, in case, rear, sometimes the monasteries also gained income from house rent those believers gave their hose through offering as well as through bequest. According some sources enlightened, the post imperial regime monasteries income miscellaneous religious as well as norm services like feasts or banquets of *fetehat* (requiem when peoples died), *täskar* (commemoration), holly water, baptism, weeding, and major feasts that feed the livelihood of church communities.[364] The importance of feasts or banquets in the economy of the monasteries is not questionable yet its payment varies from people to people, and its service.[365] Beside of the income generating for its own consumptions, dynamical changes of economic development in the region, monasteries had great merits for farther economic consolidation in the region directly or indirectly. Among those monasteries, Sama Sänbät is the sole, unique, historic one in the state in general, which has generating considerable income from the yearly holiday ceremony that celebrated at the half of fasting of *Şomä hudadé* in a year, who marched to the monastery have been contributing in donating gifts in kinds and money to the monastery.[366]

The matter anyhow, the religious perceptions which associated with many aspects raised its vitalities for much consolidations of income generating for both monasteries inhabitants and the region in general.[367]As the results, the governmental offices also assist monasteries during their yearly holiday celebrations in granting security of the region to attain these too hot yearly ceremonies. On the other hand is, government is engaging in the tourism promotion in the region. In facts, the natural and historical heritages endowments of the region: landscape structures, existence of historic caves, miraculous holy water service, and annual holy celebrations in the monasteries had great role to attract different foreign and local peoples to visit. As the results of these and other important factors monasteries had gained great prospection from many religious, governmental offices, none governmental offices, local peoples and others. By using the above all income generating technic in contemporary period, the monasteries constructed magnificent church buildings and paid salary for different ecclesiastical positions overrun by different religious men‘s outside and inside the compound of the monasteries.

[364]*Informants:* Qés Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä.
[365]*Ibid.*
[366]*Ibid;* The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the lands of monastery, p. 68.
[367] *Informants: Ato* Waleta Negus, *Qés* Mogäs and *Ato Čärnät* Masräša.

CHAPTER- FOUR

4. The Development of Treasures in the Menjar-Šänkora Monasteries

4.1. Heritages of Monasteries

The central discussion of the thesis is the survey of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora region that much about the historical heritages. With line to this discussing the precious treasures of the monasteries in the region is also significant evidences about the historical development of monasteries and nunnery in some extant. In fact, the historical merits of heritages in the state today are multifarious that required the deep investigations to bring them open for tourism attraction, in the so far becoming the smokeless industry in the world.

To overview, heritage can be defined as everything that is inherited from the past such as structures, objects, images, ideas, sentiments, and practices, which describes and witness the evolution of man and nature through centuries.[368] Heritages can be classified as natural and cultural. Cultural sites may include large-scale archaeological sites, sacred spaces, ancient monuments, and historic buildings and structures of different ages and sizes. Hence, cultural sites serve as an important role in communities today. They represent a connection to and continuity with the past while envisioning a cultural inheritance for future generations.[369] Cultural heritages classified in to tangible and intangible.[370] Tangible cultural heritages are those remains that can be seen or touch that can be divided in to movable and immovable. Movable cultural heritages are heritages that can be moved from place to place easily, while immovable cultural heritages are not moved from place to place which are simply fixed to the sites with its foundation as existed earlier.[371] According to Ethiopian Heritage administration proclamation No. 229/1958, any man made work that was formed before 1850 considered as ancient heritages. However, heritage research and conservation proclamation No. 36/1982 stated that, in the history of Ethiopia those historically important in art, science, and culture considered as heritages. According to the proclamation human, animal and plant fossils; buildings and monuments; ancient ruins of towns, tombs, cave pictures, vellum scripts, stone scripts, effigies and pictures made by iron, gold, silver, bronze, stone, skin, wood, and

[368] Bägašaw Belay, *yä qerse amäzägagäb seltäna manual*, (Baher Dar: 1997), pp. 2-9.
[369] *Ibid.*
[370] Zälaläm Gétnät, "Assessing Potential and Challenges of Haiq Estifanos Communal Monastery for Cultural Heritage Tourism development", *African Journal of History and Culture*, vol. 10(1), 31 January (2018), pp.15-24.
[371] Ibid.

documentation of cinematography, documents, photographs; coins made from gold, silver and bronze; church, monasteries, mosques; and cultural materials of Ethiopian nations considered as heritages.[372] Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church and Monasteries are comprised various historical and religious heritages which become a symbol of national pride of Ethiopia. This intern influenced Emperor Haile Selassie to concentrate more on heritages found in different churches and monasteries of Ethiopia.[373]

Sama Sänbät, Balçi Qedus Amanuel, and Guramba Qest Maryam monasteries are rich in cultural heritages and also the community of the monasteries had passed in some extent a good habit of preserving and protecting their cultural heritages and transmitted from generation to generation. However, as local informants stated during the Italian occupation enormous movable heritages were lost but remaining heritages preserved using the various traditional protection methods in the time.[374] As part of tale of the monasteries in the region, Sama Sänbät Monastery endowed precious historical heritages.[375] Emperor Haile Selassie who understood the significance of heritages to historical research, in publicizing our country, Ethiopia good will to the world and developing tourism industry to realize its significant one of the monasteries in North Šäwa Province the registration of the heritages conducted was Sama Sänbät Monastery.[376]

Later after the fall of the imperial regime, during the military junta since 1976 the decrees issued which ordered all provinces to begun registering and photographing the heritages found in different ancient churches and monasteries in order to protect from illegal heritages trafficking also became the parts of the Menjar-Šänkora Wäräda churches and monasteries.[377] However, the code of heritages that registered and organized in considerable manner is in the recent historical development, which conducted under the District Culture and Tourism Office of Menjar-Šänkora.[378] These historical heritages registered by culture and tourism office are identified in their types. Types of heritages are grouped as historical buildings and monuments, historical and natural sites, paintings, books and documents, works of art and crafts, both ecclesiastical and secular services which conducted throughout a year in the

[372] Bägašäw, p. 5.
[373]*Ibid.*
[374] Informants: *Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qés* Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä
[375]*Ibid.*
[376] *Ibid.*
[377]*Informants:* Qés Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, Qés Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä
[378]*Informants:Ato* Waletanegus Zäregaw, *Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qés* Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä

monasteries which attracted millions of pilgrims to the sites.[379] Besides registering of heritages in number and name, each heritage is also registered its height, thickness, dimension, stature, mass, shape, number of pictures, number of pages and even the circumstance.

4.1.1. Precious Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritages of Monasteries

4.1.1.1. Church Buildings

Church buildings always indicate a direction for the new ones, but some architectural heritage is kept and restored to remind us how great our civilization once was. The church buildings which found in the monasteries are basically renewed in different times in case of damage or oldness.[380] As local informants remind that the old historic church building of Sama Sänbät established around 1831 was demolished due to the conflagration in October1986 that made a church building heritages with movable treasures to be ash unconditional manner. The church was built from the local materials which brought from the Mugaré Zäla, Bulga during the reign of *Negus* Sahle Selassie of Šäwa and the church was decorated by the wall paintings.[381] The destruction of this historic church building in the monastery also opened another task to construct the currently existing church buildings which accomplished after six years of tireless efforts of the construction committee in 1995.[382] The church building which constructed at the early site church found is the Saint Tekle Haymanot Church building with mode of the former one that painted on its wall.[383] However, there are old historic monuments in the churchyard that registered as part of heritages in the monastery.

As local historians informed, in similarly, the escaped church building of the Guramba *Qest* Maryam Monastery from Italian destruction was also destroyed with its admirable wall paintings that considered as old as Balçi Amanuel Church wall paintings still evident to us timely painting wisdom negate its historical function after all in the monastery.[384] However, the district culture and tourism office registered as one of the historic church building of the Guramba is the existing building established by Emperor Haile Selassie in 1958 with paintings on clothes *(abojede)* donated from the royal families of governing bodies attached

[379]*Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, *Ato* Mogäs Bälayneh and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.
[380]*Informants: Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä.
[381]*Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, *Ato* Mogäs Bälayneh and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.
[382] Ibid; see the engraved Cornerstone inscriptions on the wall of the church edifice, p. 38.
[383]*Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, *Ato* Mogäs Bälayneh and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.
[384] *Informants: Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Mämré Mäsälä G/Şadeq.*

on the wall. The building is rectangular form of structured closely similar to the some churches established at Addis Ababa and outside in the imperial regime. The building technique is unique basically because the wall built from stone alone without utilizing the steel and concrete attachments. See the figure 9 bellow for better understand the building and its design.



Figure 10 Edifice of Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery Church Building established in 1958, Photo taken during the fieldwork by Fekadu Mersha in September 2022

Another still exist in some extent renewed but hold the historical structure of church building is Balçi Amanuel Church with its an old aged wall paintings in the region.[385] The wall of the building established from the local materials which brought from the Bulga. It external thatch roofed church building was retained until it was renewed iron sheet in the middle of 20th century.[386] The structure of the building is divided into the concentric rings, which is common for most rural churches of time. Among these, the church interior building consisted of concentric rings, a square the innermost and the most sacred place of the church building is known as *mäqedäs* (sanctuary) or *Qeddestä Qeddusan.* The wall inside of the main gate is rounded to the top of the roof which has four gates in the four directions.

[385] Melaku Asere, *Culture and Tourism Information*, 2nd edition (Debre Birhan: North Shewa Culture and Tourism Administer Office, 2019), pp. 23-25.
[386]*Informants:Mämré* Endalä, and *Ato* Negatu.

Another important basement for the establishment of nunnery in the Šänkora Yohänes Church in the 21st century is the result of the early establishment of this church since 1628 onwards. As some sources enlightened that its early structure of the church was exist though aftermath of the Italian occupation, the erstwhile-established Šänkora *Qedus* Yohänes church duded because of natural hazards in addition to the Italian bombardments in the region.[387] However, a long retained thatch roofed church building lost its total physical structure due to incident of inferno conflagration demolishment at the end of the first half of 20th century. The modification of the traditional thatched roof church into endurable corrugated iron was the correlate ideal conviction of local inhabitants in order to overcome usual grass cover renewing in the every rainy season and inferno conflagration accidents. The reestablishment materialized around 1958 old church found today as it was as one of heritage. The church erected wall from stone and mud conjugation concocted under local inhabitants the timely architected by *Ato* Gäbrähana.[388] The inward structure of the church is very narrow with three windows and doors accommodated in its architectural designs. As oral traditions indicated to reestablish internally vicious circle existing church building passed oodles vicissitudes that currently serving as found so far in many architectural designs keep almost intact as before established.[389]



Figure 11 the partial view of the early reestablished around 1958 and new building (2009) of Šänkora Yohänes Church, photo taken during the fieldwork by Fekadu Mersha, October 2022

[387]Mulualem, p. 57.
[388]*Ibid.*
[389]*Ibid.*

4.1.1.2. Caves and Its Historical Values

The caves in the Menjar-Šänkora region are not studied as well but the existing caves in the Sama Sänbät, Balçi Amanuel, Guramba Qedest Maryam and Šänkora Yohänes are mostly associated with religious merits founded by the religious men of the time for its service and for praying. The caves which carved by the early founders of Sama Sänbät are the historical one most of the religious manner designated for three monks in the early at both sides of the gorge of the Ţäbo River. One of these caves the ark of covenants: Täklä Haymanot and later Sama Egzia Sänbät were kept there for more than two decades until the church of the monastery was established.[390] As local informants remind still the caves are the home of the hermits and praying center of the monks in some extent. These caves are registered as parts of the historic heritages in the monastery.

The similar associate with the above caves, the Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery has the caves carved by its founder *Abba* Şamera Mikael before the church was established both church service and praying site of the his fellows and later the successive generations from its existence to this extent. As sources stated "… የዋሻዎቹን መግቢያና መውጫ አስጠርገው የያዙትን ጽላት እሰቀምጠው ገዳሟን የመሠረቱና ያቀኑ መምህር አባ ፀምራ ሚካኤል የተበሉ …"[391] *Roughly meaning "…. the entrance of the caves cleaned and the ark of covenant located in it and the founder of the monastery Memher Abba Tsemira Mikael was …"* The structures of caves are not wide but narrowly prepared for individual deep prayers who wanted to isolate from the ordinary people of the monastery inhabitants' daily relation.

As other currently became the center of the pilgrims attracting site in the Šäkora Yohänes Church, the earliest its foundation in the is Yohänes Cave that served for thirty years in safeguarding ark of Saint Yohänes until the church was established since 1628 and later, during the Italian occupation also became as bastion in the misery time for patriots in the region.[392] In internal structures of this cave is so deep from top to down way which has division of entries in it. The cave covered by full of rock with tiny entry but inside of it is wide that has siting stone chair that catch almost five men. As informants told, long years this historic cave was that lost its religious significance and became the home of the wild animals until it was patrolled in 21st century historical development.

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[390] *Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, *Ato* Mogäs Bälayneh and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.
[391] Menjar-Šänkora *Wäräda* Culture and Tourism Office, *Yäguramba Maryam Gädam Amäsärarät ena Tarik*, (Arerti: Turism Promotion Office, 2009 E.C),
[392] Mulualem, p. 58.



At Balçi Amanuel, the Cave of *Abba* Habte Maryam is historic cave; however, it is very narrow prepared for single monk inhabitation. (See at unit two).

4.1.2. Precious Movable Cultural Heritages of Monasteries

4.1.2.1. Manuscripts

Indeed, monasteries and churches in Ethiopia have been the storehouses of manuscripts and archival documents which are the basement for historical researches considerably. The libraries of ancient churches and monasteries located in Ethiopia have preserved large collections of important old manuscripts, most of them unique specimens.[393] These documents are not only valuable for their artistic beauty and ecclesiastical works but also for their content, for they inform on historical issues, astronomy, philosophy, and culture. Moreover, manuscripts are valuable historical records, liturgical and prayer books and the source of information of our ancestors.[394]

During the fieldworks many of the amazing pertinent historical manuscripts had seen in the monasteries which tell much about the persuasive developmental aspects of the time in the past eons. Balçi Amanuel Church and Guramba Monastery have number of manuscripts.

[393]Awäqä Wubé, ‘’Bäkeres Tenat Ena Tebäqa Yeheg Šefän Asefälaginät’’ (Study on the Necessity of Law of Heritage Conservation and Protection) *Journal presented from Genbot 6-8/1995 E.C/2013 at National Symposium* (Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa, April, 1995 E.C/ 2013), p.3;
[394]Belay Gidey, *Ethiopian civilization,* (Addis Ababa: Brehanna Selam Printing Press, 1998), p.32; and see also Denis Nosnitsin, “Ethiopian Manuscripts and Ethiopian Manuscript Studies: a brief overview and evaluation” in *Gazette du livre médiéval*, no 58-2012, fasc. 1, p.2.

However, Şänkora Yohänes also endowed the manuscripts but most of them are the latest in its scripts offered from the individuals since 1990s.

Sama Sänbät Monastery is one of the above mentioned monasteries in which one can find significant number of documentary heritages, manuscripts made of the skin of animals particularly from goats and cows called parchment. As local informants remind, hence, the selection of animals is depending on the size of the manuscript. For instance, if the manuscript is psalm which is short they used goat while, if the manuscript is big like *Senksar* they used cow skin.[395] Basically the selection of goat skin rather than sheep is religiously Sheep symbolizes naivety in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church teaching and is positively accepted, whereas, goat symbolize sinner. To write on the manuscripts they used red and black ink, which was prepared from different plant leaves, flowers, soils and cereals. To accomplish a single book it could has taken a maximum of one year.[396] The inner sheets of many of those books are adorned with various paintings of saints, prophets, martyrs, angels, Jesus Christ and Holy Virgin Mary. Indeed, most of the manuscripts found in the monasteries are wooden leather covered.[397] Fort better understand the availabilities of manuscripts see the following photo taken from Sama Sänbät.



Figure 12 some partial views of the manuscripts of Sama Sänbät Monastery, Photo taken during the field work in August 2022 by Fekadu Mersha

However, manuscripts in the monasteries were subject to both human and natural deterioration and destruction. Hence, once those manuscripts are lost, they are irreplaceable,

[395]*Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.
[396]*Ibid.*
[397]*Ibid.*

any loss at present stage is final, and reconstruction is impossible. The loss of these documents in any reason would be disastrous. Even the loss of parts of a record from these collections in whatever cause is disaster or irreplaceable.

In most of the manuscripts investigation time spent was conducted at Sama Sänbät Monastery. The manuscripts currently registered under the culture and tourism office organized in accordance of codes given to each heritage in the church museum are sixty manuscripts.[398] Listing these valuable heritages is paramount for the further researches in it. So as to this fact the following manuscripts are mentioned at the bellow table of expression found in Sama Sänbät Monastery.

Table 1.List of manuscripts found in the Sama Sänbät Monastery Museum

No	Name of Manuscript	Type	Quantity	No	Name of Manuscript	Quantity	
1	*Abušaher*	*vellum*	*1*	*23*	*Mäşehafä Me'eraf*	*1*	*Vellum*
2	*Amada Meştir*	*vellum*	*1*	*24*	*Mäşehafä Paulos*	*2*	*Vellum*
3	*Arebayitu Ensisa*	*Vellum*	*1*	*25*	*Mäşehafä Qedasé*	*1*	*Vellum*
4	*Arebayitu Wongél*	*Vellum*	*1*	*26*	*Mäşehafä Senkesar*	*3*	*Vellum*
5	*Dawit*	*Vellum*	*7*	*27*	*Meşehafä Aragawi*	*1*	*Vellum*
6	*Degwa*	*Vellum*	*1*	*28*	*Meşehafä Genezat*	*1*	*Vellum*
7	*Deresanä Mehyawi*	*Vellum*	*1*	*29*	*Meşehafä kerestena*		*Vellum*
8	*DersanäGabriél*	*Vellum*	*1*	*30*	*Meşehafä säatat*	*2*	*Vellum*
9	*Dersanä Hemamat*	*vellum*	*1*	*31*	*Meşehafä säatat zämalet*	*1*	*Vellum*
10	*Dersanä Mädhanialäm*	*Vellum*	*1*	*32*	*Meşehafä Säyfä Selasé*	*1*	*Vellum*
11	*Dersanä Mikaél*	*vellum*	*2*	*33*	*Meşehafä Wängél*	*1*	*Vellum*

[398] See figure 11

12	*Dersanä Sänbät*	*vellum*	*1*	*34*	*Meşehafä Ziq*	*1*	*Vellum*
13	*Gäbrä Hemamat*	*vellum*	*1*	*35*	*Ra'eyä Maryam*	*1*	*Vellum*
14	*Gädlä Gäbrä Mänfäs Qedus*	*Vellum*	*2*	*36*	*Ra'eyä Yohanes*	*1*	*Vellum*
15	*Gädlä Hawaryat*	*Vellum*	*1*	*37*	*Şälotä Eţan*	*1*	*Vellum*
16	*Gädlä* Täklä Haymanot	*Vellum*	*1*	*38*	*Şomä deggwa*	*3*	*Vellum*
17	*Gädlä Yohanes*	*Vellum*	*1*	*39*	*Tamerä Eyäsus*	*3*	*Vellum*
18	*Gebrä Hemamat*	*Vellum*	*1*	*40*	*Tamirä Maryam*	*1*	*Vellum*
19	*Haymanotä Abaw*	*vellum*	*1*	*41*	*Wängéla Yohänes*	*1*	*Vellum*
20	*Mahbärä Qedus Akolori*	*vellum*	*1*	*42*	*Yä amät senksar*	*1*	*Vellum*
21	*Mäşehafä Mänäkosat*	*vellum*	*1*	*43*	*Zemaré mäwäset*	*3*	*Vellum*
22	*Mäşehafä Me`eraf*	*vellum*	*1*				

Source: Taken from Sama Sänbät Monastery Museum, see for better understanding figure 11

The most important and questionable manuscripts to be noticed from the above list are an old aged but the date and the writers of the manuscripts are uncertain in most.

4.1.2.2. Crown

During the field works, a crown made from silver tail with cloth and skin founded in the Sama Sänbät Monastery. As *Mämré* Sahlä told that crown was seem one of the timely well known regional ruler was utilized delivered to the monastery.[399] The poor handling made the crown is damaged and lost its former structure as look bellow.

[399] Informant:*Mämré* Sahlä



Figure 13 A photo of crown taken from the monastery museum, August

As illustrated from the above photo, the upper top of crown is open like structure and round of it triangle designed which shows how much of the artistic technics had in the past societies craftsmen.

4.1.2.3. Crosses of Monasteries

Crosses are the main treasures found anywhere with Ethiopian Orthodox churches. The cross is of central importance for a number of liturgical acts and accompanies all the ceremonies and celebrations of the Church from services, baptisms, burials and weddings, to ordinations and blessings.[400] Then these incredible movable tangible cultural heritages found within the monasteries are different crosses made from gold, silver, bronze and wood. In fact, most of those big crosses are sheeting by different words and pictures like, Saint Virgin Merry with

[400] Encylopedia Æthiopica, Vol. I, p. 815; *Informants:Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, and *Qés* Mogäs,

her Son, Holy Trinity, angels that show the ability of the then artisans.[401] Among those a number of silver and bronze crosses found in Sama Sänbät Guramba Qedest Maryam, and Balçi Amanuel are artistically amazing which tell much about the historical value of the crosses in the church to mail the love of Jesus on the cross behalf of human sin.[402] Hence, the cross came out from the monasteries in case of unrest, civil war, drought, famine, disease as well as during socio economic and political crises for the sake of blessing the country from those difficulties. Basically, those crosses are hand over to the monasteries by different kings, queen and from different noble men's of the time.

In Sama Sänbät and Guramba Qedest Maryam monasteries the silver and bronze crosses are donated from Queen Zawuditu Menilek.[403] The among the crosses found in the monasteries of the time the photo present in the bellow are found in the Sama Sänbät Monastery offered by queen in 1918.



Figure 14thepartial views of silver and bronze crosses found in the Sama Sänbät Monastery Museum, photo taken by Fekadu Mersha in August 2022.

As illustrated above, bronze cross is special in its design and pictures it contain in it. The reader should not forget the crosses found in the monasteries are a number that require the deep investigations for another research.

However, even if the monasteries are rich in heritages like crosses, they are simply fasten by one fasten mix with different materials that overshadow the historical value and even due to

[401] See figure 14 which the broze cross is depicted with incredible pictures on both sides of it.
[402] *Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, *Qes* Sahlä Asefa and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat
[403] Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), pp. 41-44 and Inscription on the crosses

lack of preservation of those crosses they are simply begun to rust.[404] Indeed, each cross is lap over the other which is difficult for visitors as well as conserving them from hazards.

4.1.2.4. Paintings

Painting is an important component of Christian education though it was not given high emphasis like that of liturgy, chanting etc… which is necessary in the day to day routine of the Church.[405] The monastery was registered twelve astonishing paintings made from wooden, vellum and cloth. Beside those astonishing paintings, most of parchment books found within the monasteries have many paintings of icons as well as picture of angels.[406] However, neither existing written records nor traditions give a satisfying explanation as to how these icons were painted as well as from where the painters brought to the area to paint and their exact origin.

One of the historic paintings in the region of Menjar-Šänkora Region, wood and wall paintings of the Balçi Amanuel Church today is still bearing the early painting wisdoms of the past painters. As local informants told that wall paintings of the church was painted by one the aboriginal of Gonder province who marched to the region at place called Enda and painted around 1870s.[407] The paintings illustrate the various religious and socio-political conditions of the time.

On the other hand the wall paintings found in the Guramba Monastery since painted around 1960s are also the historic once.[408] These wall paintings were sponsored from royal families of Emperor Haile Selassie-I including him mentioned on the wall. The paintings found only the side of the entry of *qedest.* Today in the newly reestablished churches of Sama Sänbät the beautiful paintings already painted but it is difficult to say historic with time and its continuity for this movement of historical narration. For the above illustration for better to understand see the following paintings found in the Balçi Amanuel church aged around one and half of centuries.

[404] *Informants:Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä
[405] Abebaw, p.23.
[406] See Archive of centers of monasteries in Guramba, Sama Sänbät, and Balçi Amanuel at treasurer houses. The painting at the beginning, middle and the end of the parchments in the manuscripts are common. See Tamra Maryam, pp. 5-46, found in Sama Sänbät Monastery Museum.
[407] Gospel, p. 1-2ff. found at Balçi Amanuel Church treasurer house. See Appendix-III.
[408] *Informants:* Manhré



Figure 15 Photos of wooed box icon paintings of virgin with child snap and wall paintings in Balçi Amanuel Church, photo taken on September 21, 2022.

On the other hand the wall paintings found in the Guramba Monastery since painted around 1960s are also the historic once.[409] These wall paintings were sponsored from royal families of Emperor Haile Selassie-I including him mentioned on the wall. The paintings found only the side of the entry of *qedest.*

4.1.2.5. Raiment

The monasteries had no rich historic raiment but two of raiment found in the Sama Sänbä monastery is profound historical evidence which made from the lion leather and related products. The lion leather raiment was the founder of monastery *Abba* G/Hiwot since 1840s onwards.[410] Another coat like leathered raiment which clothed by the respected noble was delivered from Zawuditu in 1918 is the prominent implicate of the church state relationship in the previous church history.[411] See photos bellow for better understanding.

[409] *Informants:Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä
[410] Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), p. 42
[411] *Ibid.*



Figure 16 the historic raiment which aged above a century found in Sama Sänbät Monastery, Photo taken by Fekau Meresha in August 2022.

4.1.2.6. Ecclesiastical Religious Materials

There are many different ancient and various church heritages found in Sama Sänbät, Guramba, Šänkora Yohänes, and Balçi Amanuel monasteries. These are church heritages that are not found in other monasteries. The type of crosses, church traditional clothes and other important properties of the monasteries are grouped into the ancient one but there is no exact time indicated part of them. Many of church antiquities are offered from kings of believers, queen, empress, nobles and ordinary Christian laities of the time.[412] Hence, it is difficult to illustrating all of ecclesiastical instruments at all in the monasteries, however, sum up in mentioning the general clue about church musical instruments: like k*ebero* (drum), *şenaşel* (the cestrum), holy books, umbrella, crosses, the *tabot* (replica of the Ark of Covenants), *megonaşäfia* (robes) sheeted through gold and silver and others become the dominant in the monasteries.[413]All these musical instruments have their own religious meaning

[412] Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), 42; *Informants:AtoČärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Endalä.
[413] *Informants:* See Appendix-XIV.

Beside the above instruments *şewas* (monstrance) are also the components in the EOTC instruments used liturgical service in the church to present the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ in the time of Holy Communions. So as historic, monasteries found in the Menjar-Šänkora are endowed with different *şewas* in the churches, which served for the religious delivers in the time of Holy Communion in time made from gold, silver, bronze and iron. *Şewas* found in the monasteries contain artisans' wisdom on each of its side as crosses described above.[414]

Guramba Qedest Maryam is possessed one gold monstrance which delivered from Emperor Menilek-II around 1897.[415] Sama Sänbät and Balçi Amanuel also endowed the precious monstrance made from silver with spoons. In fact, the Šänkora Yohänes also possessed silver made monstrance which delivered from individuals but recent regarding to historical narration.[416]



Figure 17 some of the partial views of Bronze and Silver monstrance found in Sama Sänbät and Balçi Amanuel respectively, photo taken during the fieldwork in 2022.

Censer *(ţena)* is also essential ecclesiastic instrument to smoke incenses in the usual liturgical services, which has detail religious meaning. As Mulualem illustrated "*It is a like a dish hanged with three chains terminating to top is a cross, mainly with ornamental ringing vessels swayed or move gently to cause someone to change their opinion with the help of the land only priest handle caused in all accessions."*[417]The bells in the monasteries are also precious which made from bronze, iron and silver which delivered from the royal families of the time and the notable men but divided into *qaçel* and *märäwa*, based on its liturgical services and its size.

[414] See fig 16. On the sides of the comances
[415]*Informants:Mamhré* Mäsälä G/Şadeq, and *Ato* Čärnät.
[416] Mulualem, p. 111.
[417]*Ibid.* P.113.

4.2. Challenges Faced Cultural Heritages in the Monasteries

The EOTC is the central institution which preserved priceless cultural heritages that endowed the identities of communities, and memories came from the past, and still influencing our lives today and future generations. This means that every category of cultural heritages have something in common: there has to be an identity components that represent the cultures of any community.[418] However, those cultural heritages are threatened as well as deteriorating by natural and human calamities.[419] As local informants reminded, the principal climatic factors responsible for the deterioration of monasteries heritages in the Menjar-Šänkora are solar radiation, temperature variation, direct rainfall impact, wind pressure and humidity. Hence, the monasteries cultural heritage specifically the old buildings of the early constructed had strong natural effects that responsible to ruins.[420] The buildings, monasteries fences, old tombs, and old houses in monasteries yards are unsecured as a result of nature. The early stone fence buildings found in the Sama Sänbät, Guramba Qedest Maryam, and Balçi Amanuel are still bearing there its legacies but becoming ruins in the monasteries yards. The impact on floors of church buildings was also the parts of natural calamities which renewed losing the early historical authenticities by news.[421] As sources stated, Balçi Amanuel Church paintings was damaged because of the rain drops until it was renewed by new iron sheet.[422] Similarly, the movable cultural heritages were damaged due to the natural calamities in the past too.

Apart from natural disasters and some biological and environmental causes of deterioration of cultural resources, there are human causes of demolition that arise through socio- political reasons. Such factors are quite different from the consequences of ordinary human activities, such as air pollution, traffic or improper management of heritage resources.[423] Basically, as

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[418] ICCROM, *Protecting Cultural Heritage in time of conflict: contribution from the participants of the international course on first aid to cultural heritages in times of conflict,* (Rome: 2010), p.22; and see also , The U.S.A Fund *for Cultural Preservation Annual 10.11 Report,* (2011), p.12.

[419] Minster of Cultural and Tourism, *Traditional cultural Heritage Management Practice in Church Property: The case of Däqewa Kidanä Meherät, Dabat Wäräda,* (August 28, 2018), pp.4-7.

[420]*Informants: Ato* Cärnä Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräşadeq, *Qés* Mogäs,*Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, and *Qes* Sahlä Asefa.

[421] *Ibid.*

[422] Bamlaku Aseré. *Yäbahel ena Turizem Yämäräja Mäşehét*, "*Culture and Tourism Information Bulletin" (*Debre Birhan: North Shoa Zone Culture and Tourism Office, 2011 E.C/ 2019), pp. 23-25; Alemayehu Atilaw, "A History of Balchi Amanu'el Church from its foundation to Present" (Jimma University: Department of History and Heritage Management BA Thesis, 2012), p. 25.

[423] ICCROM, *Protecting Cultural Heritage in time of conflict: contribution from the participants of the international course on first aid to cultural heritages in times of conflict,* (Rome: 2010), p. 60.

religious buildings are associated with common spiritual values of communities and as heritage sites they possess great significance in the communities.

In the case of armed conflicts between groups of different religious affiliations, they either become the first targets of destruction or are abandoned when communities are displaced.[424] One of the most destructive factors that can threaten cultural heritages of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora emerged from a country‘s instabilities during civil unrest as well as commotions and aggressions of enemies. Since the monasteries were highly demolished during Italian occupation of 1936s, and also during the 1974 popular revolution of Ethiopia.[425] Hence, protection of cultural heritages can be of low priority when human lives are at risk and administrative sectors such as police, heritage guards or rescue services are unable to act properly that opened to illegal heritage trafficking and or demolishment.[426]

Another human factor which becomes responsible for the deteriorating of heritage resources during socio-political crisis is the vandalism and looting of cultural heritages.[427] Hence, as sources enlightened the monasteries heritages were looted by illegal heritage traffickers that currently hide in its existence but found before.[428] As mentioned in the minutes, the list of heritages like gold cross, and gold cloth were found in the Sama Sänbät but currently part of hidden once from heritage in the monastery.[429] In addition to this, as Endalä and Mäsälä told that Balçi Amanuel and Guramba Qedest Maryam Churches had valuable gold made heritages before Italian occupation and later but most of the heritages are looted in the time.[430] Moreover, as oral historians told most of the monasteries heritages looted by the local communities including priests, deacons, monks and noble men‘s of time.[431] Another cardinal error is scour of the scripts of parchments that is contemptible action of irresponsible individuals of the time. The careless preservations of the heritages were also the challenging

[424]*Ibid.*
[425]*Informants: Ato* Cärnät Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräṣadeq, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Šemäles, and *Qes* Sahlä Asefa.
[426] ICCROM, p. 60.
[427]*Ibid*,p. 22.
[428] The minute which written on Mägabit 1, 1930 E.C regarding to reception of heritages from Gäbrä Ṣadeq and Ašänafi to *Mämher* Gäbré Endrias, p. 68. From this list the gold cross was mentioned but this valuable heritage was stolen because currently in the Sama Sänbät is not found as it was. See Appendix-XIII
[429] Ibid; see also The minute which written on *Hamlé* 23, 1929 E.C the listed heritages given to responsible man *Mämhré* Dämesé, p. 14.
[430]*Inforamnts:Mämré* Mäsälä and *Mämré* Endalä
[431]*Informants:Ato* Cärnät Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräṣadeq, *Qés* Mogäs,*Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, and *Qes* Sahlä Asefa

effects loose the former originality and inks to be scour. See the following parts of the manuscripts found in the Sama Sänbät Monastery.

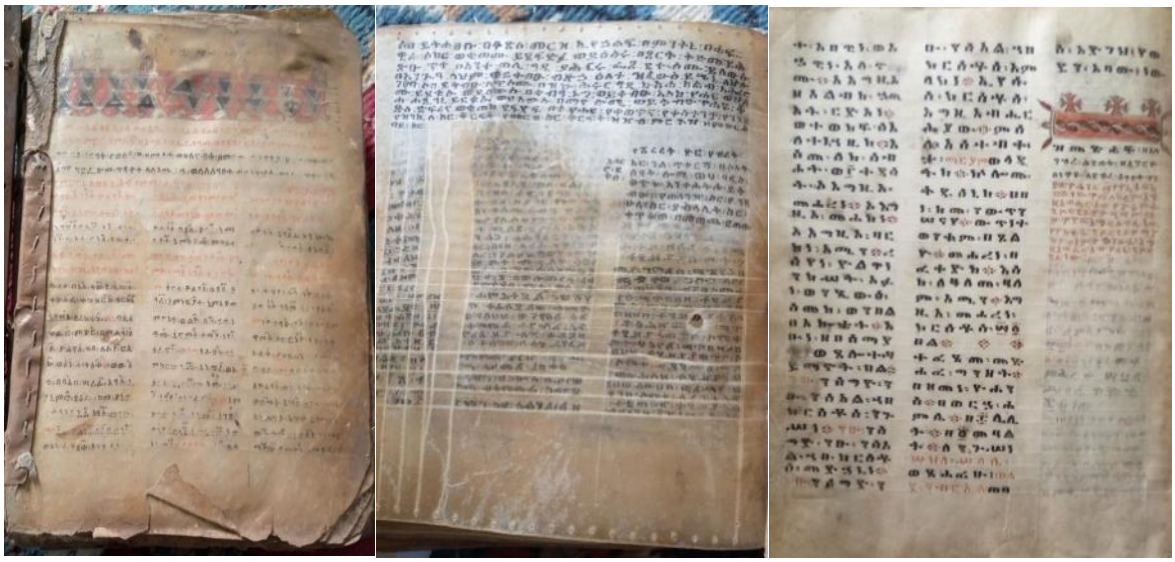


Figure 18the scoured and miss-safeguarded parts of Manuscripts found in Sama Sänbät Monastery, photo taken by Fekadu Mersha in August 2022.

As mentioned by the writers of the manuscripts in most case had seemed to know the future coming consequences on their works and tried to minimize through excommunicating anyone who scratch or thief the heritages that they had offered to the church in stating this way: *ኧረሰ ኃይለ መለኮት ሲሉ ለሰንበት የሰረሁትን የፈረሰ ልጅ እለተ ልጅ እርጉም ይሁን መንግስቱም አይባረክ ብለዋል።*[432] *roughly to say Ras Haile Melkot say "who destroyed that I did to the Senbet should unblessed, the kingship anathematized too"*. Similarly the founder of monastery of Sama Sänbät excommunicated in the manuscripts found in the museum through supporting the king in stating in the following manner. *አባ ገብረሕይወት ምሲሉ ንጉስ የተከሉትን እኔ የሠራሁትን የፈረሰ በሥልጣነ ጴጥሮስ ወጳውሎስ ውግዝ ለይሁን ከመ አርዮስ።*[433] *roughly to say, Abba Gebre Hiwot say "who demolished king planted, he had done anathema by the authority of Paul and peter as on Arian."* However, the existence of these heritages have seen as parts of the historical sources, the irresponsible individuals did not escape themselves from anathemas and in damaging of priceless heritages of the monasteries in particular and the state in general.

[432] Tamera Maryam, p. 98, See Appendix-XIV.
[433] *Ibid.*

4.3. Indigenous Knowledge of Preserving Cultural Heritages in the Monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora Region

Ethiopian peoples have the incredible habits how to preserve the cultural priceless heritages around the communities as they can. As local informants told that this indigenous knowledge of preserving monasteries inhabitants had their own heritage management techniques which have enabled many treasures transferred to the existing generations that aged above a century. Indeed, the timely local rural had played a significant role in preserving those priceless heritages in time of socio economic and political crisis through coordinating with monasteries monks and nuns.[434]

As mentioned tried to elaborate above, climatic factors like solar radiation, temperature variation, rainfall, and humidity became responsible in deteriorating the old building treasures of the monasteries.[435] However, those magnificent heritages survived as a tireless effort of the monasteries population by using their own preservation and handling system of heritages. In fact, in current situations, to modernize the structures of the buildings, the total destruction of old building were happening in the monasteries which loose the early habit of preservation strategies as resulted of globalization impact.

According to Negus's description manuscript collections and other ecclesiastical treasures of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora have suffered throughout time due to war and instabilities in the region in the past period.[436] As a result of this the monasteries, during troubled time, had resorted movable heritages at remote and inaccessible locations to the robbers and wars destruction. For instance, the monasteries communities flee by clasping all movable valuable treasures of the monasteries in general and also those manuscripts in particular to the caves around the region. As *Mämhré* Mäsälä and *Ato* Masräša remind as encoded from his predecessors, during the Italian occupation, most of the Guramba treasures were kept at the caves under the monks until the misery period was come over.[437] Indeed, as parchment books made from skin, they simply tie-up each pages due to humidity. However, the monastery community preserves each manuscripts of each page was slowly stroking through rayon cloth,

[434] *Informants: Ato* Cärnät Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräṣadeq, *Qés* Mogäs, *and Qes* Girma Wudneh.
[435] See note, 96.
[436] Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), pp.44-45; Sama Monastery Parish Council, Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Henetsa or The New Building of the Sama Monastery, (Genbot 27, 1987 E.C/1995), p.6.
[437] *Informants: Ato* Cärnät Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä

coiling parchment book edged through cloths, cover each book through wood to block humidity and put them in dry places in care was implemented in the past human tale.[438] Another indigenous knowledge of the monastery in preserving heritages from socio economic and political crisis yet a risk full is depositing those monastery heritages to the local *balabats* as well as eldest peoples who were exemplary in their spirituality, with the full consent of the local community for better protection. What this preservation of heritages is a risk full, the restoration of those heritages is depend on the intent of each depository. Thought, few of them disinclination in restoring those heritages leads to the monasteries lost few heritages by the local communities.[439]

4.4. Challenges for the Development of Heritage Tourism in the Menjar-Šänkora Region Monasteries

The recent investigation report of the 1998 World Tourism Organization stated that the traveling as well as moving of peoples to and staying in a place outside their environment or normal places of residence reported for not more than one consecutive year aiming for entertain, business, leisure and for other purposes considered as tourism.[440] Tourism is one of the smokeless industries in the world today that as an economic sector came in to being in Ethiopia in the very recently, compared to other countries of the world.[441] As historical evidences cited, in Ethiopia, specifically the government gave an attention towards tourism as economic sector in the second half of the 20th century. Even though there were some efforts during the reign of Emperor Menilek II by establishing the modern institutions that encouraged the recreations in the way of tourism practice through opening first hotel service in 1909 at capital. Indeed, tourism as an economic sector got the attention with opening of university since 1960 consolidated it. Since, in the 1960‘s the government has taken a lot of positive actions to make tourism as one potential economic sector for the country‘s economy, the first positive reaction of the imperial government was establishment of the Ethiopian Tourism Organization. The second reinforcing got the momentum with the invitation of different international organizations and consultants to advise Ethiopian tourism organization

[438]*Informants:Ato* Cärnä Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräşadeq, *Qés* Mogäs, *and Qes* Girma Wudneh,
[439]*Ibid.*
[440] Stefanie Jones, “Sustainable Heritage Tourism Planning in Ethiopia: An Assessment Framework”, (Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for The Degree of Master of Resource Management in the School of Resource and Environmental Management Faculty of Environment, Simon Fraser University, 2012), p.4.
[441]Sentayähu Aynaläm Aseräs, *Assessment of the Potentials Tourism Resources of Choke Mountain and its Environs, Ethiopia,* (Department of Tourism and Development, Madawalabu University, Ethiopia, 2015), pp.1-2.

on tourism development issues, inventory of monuments, archaeological sites, cultural and archaeological artifacts, identifying tourism priority areas and developing short term and long term tourism development plans.[442] Tourism was profound key economic growth sector in Ethiopia as early as 1966 when the first Tourism Development Master Plan was developed in order to enhance its progress. According to 2006 World Bank report, tourism in Ethiopia is the third Ethiopian largest foreign exchange generating sector next to coffee and oil seeds. As this source enlightened, tourism contributed 2% to 7% of the country Growth Domestic Product for state.[443]

Among the pillar segment of tourism, Heritage tourism is an umbrella that comprises both the natural and cultural tourism activity and also taken as the backbone of tourism industry that can be successfully help in preserving resources.[444] Heritage tourism is a form of tourism that specifically targets the art, architecture, history, monuments, museums, theatres, religious heritage, social interaction, food habits, and lifestyle of people in a certain geographical region.[445] According to Jamie and Eric argued, heritage tourism deals with traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories, people of the past, and present that includes irreplaceable historic, cultural and natural resources.[446]

Ethiopia is a land of unique culture and heritage with a history of thousands of years. It is one of the oldest nations in the world having huge heritage tourism potential owing to its natural attractions that include some of the highest and lowest places in Africa along with enormous wildlife including some endemic ones; a very old and well preserved historical tradition with fascinating stales, churches and monasteries.[447] The Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church comprises various historical and religious resources that are internationally recognized and have a potential to attract both domestic and international millions of visitors today.[448] The heritages preserved many monasteries, churches, and church museums as well as religious festivals highly regarded as tourist attraction resources, which have great potential to draw

[442]Ashenafi Tafesse, "The Historic route in Ethiopian Tourism Development", *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure,* vol.5 (2), (2016), pp. 1-13.
[443]*Ibid.*
[444] Stefanie Jones, pp. 60-61.
[445]*Ibd.*
[446]Jamie, Eric R, *Nebraska Heritage Tourism Plan of Economic Development,* (2011), p. 33.
[447]*Ibid.*
[448]*Ibid.*

international and domestic tourists.[449] Sama Sänbät, Gurama Qedest Maryam, and Šänkora Yohänes Monasteries are ancient historic, full of tourism potential sites and well known pilgrimage sites in North Šäwa. Hence, the monasteries comprise both spiritual and secular attractions with immense heritage tourism potential as much.[450]

As described above, the monasteries possess ancient, historic, and religious treasures which have diversified significances for different stakeholders in the region. However, these priceless and irreplaceable treasures for the moment could not be easily accessible for domestic and international tourists to generate considerable incomes for monasteries and the communities because of existence of various hindering setbacks like lack of promotion, lack of awareness, poor handling system of treasures, absence of tourist facilities assistance, and also absence of well-planned and secured modern museums in the monasteries.

4.4.1. Lack of Promotion

Level of promotion is the most determinant factor that influences a number of visitors to visit different cultural as well as natural heritage sites in the state.[451] However, the monasteries of the time were not access to this influence scientifically supportive actions whose financial means are largely collected from the local community, believers, agriculture and to some extent from local visitors, the monasteries did not carry out much promotion.[452] Beside, financial constraint in publicizing the monasteries immense immovable and movable cultural heritages to the public, attitudinal, moral and religious factors are also abstain the monasteries from promotion in the past eons. Until recent development, the monasteries have not its own website that can help to promote.

However, they did not promote the tourism resources either through printing or electronics media due to lack of finance and trained man power that employed for promotion as well. Even there is no single billboard on the way to the monasteries within towns and cities that indicate the historical merits and the geographical locations where the monasteries and churches located in the Menjar-Šänkora region. Due to this and other related hindrances, all

[449] Ermias Kifle Gedech, "Religious tourism potential of Geśän Däbrä Kärbé Maryam, Ethiopia,"*African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure,* (Vol. 3 (1) , 2014), pp. 1-19
[450]*Informants:Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, Qés Mogäs, and *Mämhré* Mäsälä.
[451]Bart J.M. Van der Aar, *Preserving the heritage of humanity? Obtaining world heritage status and the impacts of listing*, (Rijksuniversityit Groningen, 2005), p. 116.
[452] Informants: *Qés* Mogäs, *Ato* Cärnä Masräša and *Mämhré* Mäsälä.

the innumerable and priceless heritages of the monasteries became disadvantaged to gain expected incomes form domestic and international tourists of the time.[453]

4.4.2. Lack of Infrastructure Facilities

Infrastructure is the principal element that can be set as prerequisite the tourists to access to see the heritages and for the development of tourism sector in the state. Hence, the quality of transportation service existence is the most determinant factor for the accessibility of tourist attracting areas.[454] Beside this fact, lack of modern transportation service, tourist sites of Ethiopia in general[455] and monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora particular had remained to be unknown for local as well as foreign visitors until the recent developments of the past time. In fact, the first road that connected the region of Menjar-Šänkora was inaugurated around 1970s in which the first car gave service in the region.[456] Yet as a road from the very beginning become whether road, the accessibility of transportation for visitors was not convenient that made the monasteries of the time which endowed priceless and irreplaceable historical, cultural and natural heritages as well as treasures hidden from the mass of public participation.

As local informants reminded the modern transport service inaccessibility in the region in the past period was not hidden the tourism growth alone but also the usual economic development of the region. The informants added the profound infrastructure facilities began to materialize in the region of Menjr-Šänkora under the FDRE government with construction of road which connected the towns of Balçi and Arerti with the neighboring towns and cities accelerated transportation service in the region which coincided with tourism attracting to the region.[457] Since then, the road played an important role for the monasteries in which those visitors, journalists, researchers, and most of all the religious pilgrims attracted to the Menjar-Šänkora region.

Beside of the government the church of Šänkora Yohänes also involved in constructing the bridge with its own budget at the Garbadi River which overcame the transportation constraints towards the region. This and additional rural road construction materialization in the region in some extent in current situation is in the smart situation than the past eons in the monasteries.

[453]*Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, *Qes* Sahlä Asefa and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.
[454]*Ibid.*
[455] Gizachew Andargie, "Challenges and prospects of Lake Ţana Island Monasteries as a tourist site since 1950s: The case of Kebran Gebreél", *African Journal of History and culture,* Vol. (64), (2014), pp. 45-52.
[456]*Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, and *Qes* Sahlä Asefa.
[457]*Ibid.*

However, the Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery is still not access for modern transport service beside of it gorge because of difficulties of geographical location.

4.4.3. Lack of Museum Services in the Monasteries

The considerable constraints in the historic churches and monasteries in the region of Menjar-Šänkora is lack of museum service for tourists and the religious pilgrims which organized for visitors at all level in the monasteries. Even the monasteries have the capacities in endowment of historic and cultural heritages, any of them are not sill opened for commercial values but simply secured under the treasurer keepers alone. The present building which is built in 1994 temporary serve as a museum located in the western part of main church of Sama Sänbät, movable heritages are amassed and displayed only for the researchers and related manners as much.[458] The existing this one is, indeed, the museum room is very narrow and has not enough space for tourists that made objects are put over each other as well as many of the monastery‘s treasure are kept in a separate house due to lack of space in the museum.

Sama Sänbät Museum room is rich in endowing various collections of organic and inorganic materials: parchment books, different raiment, crosses, crown and ecclesiastical materials.[459] The reset of monasteries were endowed with precious heritages, ordinary treasure houses are prepared to store those important heritages secretly through invisible way to the mass of victory by fearing the illegal traffics and related consequences because of the feeling of insecurity to safeguard from these types of comings. Because of this insured way of preservation the heritages are losing its value and physical damage as the existence of heritages by itself indicate during the fieldworks.

4.4.4. Lack of Tourist Facilities

Even if the number of tourists and religious pilgrims who visited the monasteries as well as the culture of the communities towards tourism increasing from time to time, there is no standard tourist facilities like billboard within the monasteries, restaurants, hotels, lodges, guiders and souvenir shop that established basing for this services in the region.[460] Hence, the above challenges that own the monasteries forced the visitors not to stay more than hours as well as one day in the region. In fact, in most way the improvements in many facilities have

[458]Sama Monastery Parish Council, Addisu Yesama Senbet Gedam Betekrestiyan Henetsa or The New Building of the Sama Monastery, (Genbot 27, 1987 E.C/1995), P. 8.
[459] See note, pp. 88-94.
[460]*Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Qés* Mogäs, and *Mämré* Aţelaw Yemaru.

seen in the region than before basically, the Šänkora Yohänes Church with its monastery is full of religious pilgrims throughout a year because of the existence of miraculous holy water there and the existence of facilities around it which enable the attainders stay for many days as they want.[461]

Guramba Qedest Maryam Monastery is on the other had remote to the visitors with no any facilities around it except houses of the holy water attainders which made the tourists and religious pilgrims not usually participate in the region.

Balçi Amanuel Church is also one of the oldest historic sites from the region but its facilities and opportunities are not still advantageous in attracting and handling the tourists and religious pilgrims even it found around the town.

4.4.5. Poor Handling System of Treasures

The monasteries heritages in the Menjar-Šänkora region have been facing great damage due to poor handling method and lack of standard museums existence which secured the treasures. As stated earlier some of the parchment books were covered with wooden panels, fin leathers and clothes but broken and damaged in most because of poor managements. However, due to oldness and poor handling many of their cover are damaged, even some parts of the parchment scripts are discolored or faded.[462] Placing external materials within the manuscripts cause discolor of paintings within the books. The worst problem is compiling different parts of the different books in mass collection basically at Balçi Amanuel and Guramba Qedest Maryam churches are facing this way of heritages mishandling ways there. Lack of appropriate handling also causes devastation of the manuscripts and other treasures that are found in the monasteries. Lack of conservation due to lack of trained manpower and finance to the monasteries are also serious problem faced on the heritages. This how the monasteries manuscripts faced risk to transfer the next generation and even their position is a brain sick that is not convenient for guiders as well as tourists.[463]

4.4.6. Lack of Awareness

The lack of awareness towards the methods how to hand, how to use, how to offer, how to deliver service … made the monasteries of the Menjar-Šänkora region lost the considerable

[461] *Ibid.*
[462] See note, p. 95.
[463] *Infrmants: Ato* Cärnät Masräša, *Mämhré* Mäsälä Gäbräṣadeq, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Šemäles, and *Qes* Sahlä Asefa.

advantages in the past of its foundation to this extent. Even though the monasteries had immense heritages that can attract the tourists and religious pilgrims towards the region; they are not yet explore properly towards the profound significance to the region due to lack of awareness about them how to utilize for tourism economic sector. As local informants remind, the local community and the clergy have not awareness how to distinguish which elements is tourism attraction part of heritages and which is not.[464] Due to this fact some of the valuable treasures for tourism attraction are invisible for tourists and religious pilgrims.

On the other hand, beside of movable cultural heritages, even the monasteries are endowed with historical old houses, old buildings and even tombs as well, as noted so far, but currently they are not considered as heritages for tourism attraction and no one is giving attention towards for them as part of significant to the monasteries as well as communities.[465] Basically, the artistically techniques of the constructions, the historical values, and the educational significant buildings found in the monasteries yards are humble down because of lack of awareness. This is one of the constraints that hindered the multi functions of the heritages of monasteries to the region in particular and state in general.

[464]*Ibid.*
[465]*Ibid.*

Chapter-Five

5. Merits of Monasteries to the Menjar-Šänkora Region in the Past Eons

Even though, the monasteries had accumulated troubles since from its foundation to existing extent, the presence of multifarious significances to the communities' people and state in general were part of the historical epoch. The monasteries were not only the religious centers in the past but also where the political and socio-economic stratus had employed in many ways directly or indirectly.[466] Hence, in the early church-state inseparable relation in the past eons until the 1974 was part of the strong influences of monasteries in the communities in various aspects as much.[467] The religious doctrine to the communities' people as well as to the children was seen as centers of education deliveries to consolidate eradication of illiteracy in the region in the time where the modern education was not access to the region.

On the other hand, as sources stated, monasteries had the political influence in teaching the kings of the time had divine power including oaths over them and respected once and in some times blessing for considerable powers to sustain for long kingship over the state with moral and norms to the people.[468] In return, the kings of the time also gave the priority to the monasteries towards the socio-economic advantages in the region.[469]

Another coincided significant part of the monasteries was the capacity of cultural preservation that manifested the community dwellers identities in the past to this extent. The historic monasteries of the region had many aspects that expected from this study beyond of the thesis that require the deep investigation in the tale of the contribution. The preserved heritages found in the monasteries are the evidences that enlighten significance in socio-cultural consolidation in the communities.[470] The important educational merit of the monasteries in the region is the long last effect on the lives of the mass in the region of Menjar-Šänkora inheriting to the generation to generation. For general clue the elaborated historical significances of monasteries tried to present at the bellow elaborations.

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[466] *Informants: Abba* Wäldä Amanuel, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, *Qes* Sahlä Asefa and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.
[467] *Ibid.*
[468] *Ibid.*
[469] Minutes wrote on 1927 E. C stated that the king of the time was the determinate to respective to thire actions they did in the time, p. 39; See Appendix- XI, XIV and XV.
[470] See Note, pp.89-90; in the list of the heritages mentioned in the note basically manifested the wisdoms of the monasteries population in the time had various educational strengthen in the time.

5.1. The Dogmatic Educational Significances of Monasteries in the Region for Progress

The final goal of the dogma of the monasteries teaching in the region, since the supreme objective of the EOTC is to be able to become aware of the seeking love of God as is revealed in Jesus Christ and to respond in faith to his love in ways that will help them grow as children and live in accordance with the will of God and sustain a vital relationship with all peoples of the world emanated from the doctrine significances.[471] Among the typical influential sites where the strong doctrine towards religion employed are monasteries in the Ethiopian history for centuries. Most the central, northern and northwestern Ethiopian regions inhabitants are influenced by the teachings of EOTC for centuries that still influencing their generations. Among the central Ethiopian region of North Šäwa monasteries found in the Menjar-Šänkora had doctrine significances in many aspects of the communities in past period. From the foundation to this extent monasteries are important educational institutions and have a greater importance in the production of enlightened societies in the region.[472]

In fact, the legacies of using its own alphabetical arranged system of teaching, the church served as a center of intelligence and make tolerant generation for today's survival of the country.[473] Therefore, before the introduction of modern education in the early 20th century, the educational system was basically run under the monasteries of the region. As monasteries of the state, in Sama Sänbät, Balçi Amanuel, and Guramba Qedset Maryam church education was profound centers in the region of Menjar-Šänkora in the time.[474] The aim of establishment of traditional education was to teach children and other church personalities with the theological dogma of Christianity and to preserve traditional culture of the country that coincide with usual ethical values beside of contributing civilization with in the field of art, architecture, education, poetry, literature, law, theology, philosophy and medicine.[475] These historical facts are the trustworthy developments in the region in the past lives of the Christian population.

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[471]Desalegn Leshyibelu, "Language and Religion: The Case of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church," (A Thesis Presented to the School of Graduate Studies Addis Ababa University, in Partial Fulfilment of the Requerements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Linguistics, 2012), p. 4.
[472]Minychel Ambelu, "The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches to Mitigate Social Problems in Selected Areas of Addis Ababa," (MA Thesis, Department of Social Work: Addis Ababa University, 2017), p. 26.
[473]*Ibid.*
[474]*Inforamts: Qés* Mogäs, *Qes* Girma Wudneh, *Qes* Šemäles, *Qes* Sahlä Asefa and *Mämher* Wäldä Hawreyat.
[475]*Ibid.*

5.2. The Social Contributions of Monasteries in the Communities

Religion is a fundamental that can influence the social, economic and even political aspects of human society. This is because religion offers prescriptions for social order, individual behavior, and collective action. Minychel asserted, "All religious traditions give expression to the relationship between what are acknowledge and understood to be the most compelling objectives of human life and day-to-day conduct."[476] Religion and social support are the coincided historical developments in the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church which go to hand to hand to materialize better social organizations. Therefore, when we say the role of religion on social support, it is to mean that the emotional, informational and material support that individual's gain from religion for better social merits in the region.

Regarding to the contribution and experiences, the information from the selected local Christian informants narrated that monasteries of Menjar-Šänkora had many social contributions to the local people in particular. According to the informants, almost all monasteries had played a great role in the day-to-day life of the societies in the past. This is also part of the existing historical progress that monasteries had a great responsibility to address well social organization as well as mitigating the major societal problems on the religious manner in the societies.[477]

It is very essential to take consideration how every great responsibility of the monasteries has and how very wide scope of functional role it ought to play in the communities in particular and as state in general were the part of the tale. As informants stated, the church is primarily committed to bring religion up on individual and corporate life by the implication of the apostles' mission to build the kingdom on the earth. Furthermore, monasteries play many functions in a society and have abundant contributions in different ways to mitigate social problems.

The common and major function is inspiring and teaching peoples to a useful social ends; for instance, monasteries fostered various societal based organization to serve the people who are in difficult circumstances. On the other hand, the monasteries also act as an ethical source in the region. Monasteries worked a lot to maintain stable society by reconstructing the social

[476]Minychel Ambelu, "The Role of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches to Mitigate Social Problems in Selected Areas of Addis Ababa," (MA Thesis, Department of Social Work: Addis Ababa University, 2017), p. 26.

[477] *Informants: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Abba* Geteya Šémäles, *Qés* Mogäs, Qés Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä.

life in right way in accordance of dogmatic education delivery. To perform these and other activities, the monasteries engaged in cultivating the right character and attitudes in man of the Christian community in the region. As local historians and the some documents of the time stated, the monasteries and churches of the region have been materialized the biblical declaration of caring elders and respecting their sayings.[478]

Now a day, Sama Sänbät, Guramba Qedest Maryam, and Šänkora Yohänes monastic Churches are centers of social services have been activated in addressing through overcoming people troubles by implementing different projects like sanatorium services, elder caring, daily meal providing, and counseling services that usual practiced. The traditional education, traditional arbitration services, fighting against corruption, enduring the habit of industriousness of monks, nuns and common people, ensuring tradition of *edir* practice in the communities in line with churches of their respective and like have been the social significance of the monasteries in time.[479]

The currently existing with monastic names of the churches in the region has been engaged in various social practices to assist the community people as well. Among the social practices, fighting against HIV/AIDS, support to the people living with virus and orphans affected by HIV/AIDS.[480] The conciliation of the churchmen to support each other is equally important to care and support the needy families and orphans around the monasteries and in. The monasteries have great influencing potential the attitudes and decisions of individuals and forced people living with virus attend the holy water within full of righteous surrendered to the God cured them from irretrievable diseases that basically materializing in the Sama Sänbät, Guramba Qedest Maryam and Šänkora Yohänes monastic churches that added beside of religious matter regarding to psychotherapy that optimize their attitude.[481]

[478] Lawi 19:13
[479] Neguse Semegn, *Zéna Ebya Wäkberä Wälelna Läsama Sänbät Gädam* (Addis Ababa, 2018), p. 63; *Informats: Qés* Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, *Qés* Degafe Befekadu *Qés* Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä; The Handbook like Foolscap Manuscript document had written from 1924-1989 E.C, found in Menjar Wäräda Church Office clearly stated the monastery's activities regarding the arbitrations of monastery in the community people, P. 163. See Appendix-XV.
[480] *Informats:* Qés Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, Qés Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä.
[481] *Ibid.*

5.3. Economic Significances of Monasteries in the Region

The economic significance of monasteries in the past period to this extent has been manifested briefly in various ways. In the past, monasteries were the privileged in its economic significance in the region due to the existence of land property in dominant. The lands of the monasteries were the source of income for both monasteries and communities inhabitants.[482] The dominant economic activities of Balçi Amanuel, Guramba Maryam, Sama Sänbät and Yohänes Monasteries were in produce cereal crops like legume plants such as beans, peas, sorgham, *teff*, and wheat from rest land, rearing animals, handcrafts, tribute, ecclesiastical religious services dues (like holly water, baptism, weeding, and different feasts), and the gifts offered from the holy pilgrims to the monasteries. These economic values were part of the resources towards the region directly and indirectly around them.

As local historians of the region remembered, the monasteries were not only the monks and nuns inhabiting sites but also the common people as well. So as they said, existence of monasteries in the region had the great role in multidimensional economic merits for the local dwellers in particular and to the state in general.[483]

The monasteries clergy and youths of the region had job opportunities that materialized in different aspects from early period to this extent. Balçi Amanuel, Guramba Qedest Maryam, and Sama Sänbät in the time of monastic existence, the value of significance in the region was considerable as local elders memorized about the economic privileges in the region.[484] With this regard, the monasteries had much merits in terms of tourist attraction in the name of religious pilgrimage in various holy days commemoration that assisted the communities' inhabitants directly and indirectly.[485] On this line, the temporal job creating for youth in the commercial activities and service delivery in exchange of payment affaires.[486]

Another importantly had seen economic contribution of monasteries lined with state in general is overall accommodation of the transportation service engagement in the name of

[482] *Inforamants:* Qés Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, Qés Sahlä Asäfa and *Mämré* Endalä.See Appendix-VIII and X
[483] *Ibid.*
[484] *Ibid, See Appendix-IX better understand about the previlage of monastery of Sama Sänbät in its economic significance that consumed for monastery inhabitants. On the other hand in the appendix-X the land possed under the Balçi Amanuel and its economic dominance in the region that basically assist the clergy of the monastery of the time and related individuals of the then time.*
[485] Informants: Qés Šémäles Täfärä, *Ato Čärnät* Masräša, *Qés* Mogäs, Qés Sahlä Asäfa
[486] *Ibid.*

these holy places throughout year that generate millions of money for individual and group consumption at large manner in order to generate considerable profits. One this as informants traced their witness regarding to this, the thousands of vehicles marched into the monasteries in the contemporary period for religious and for economic purposes.[487]

In the contemporary history, the economic contribution that materialized in the region is Šänkora Qedus Yohänes Church that accommodate the nunnery but its economic merit is recent historical change that coincidence with the holy water service inauguration since 1960s. In region as local informants reminded it changed not only the oodles significant economic development in the society but also the population demographic pattern.[488] In most from the existing historical sites in the region, Šänkora Qedus Yohänes is well known in the regional and state level in attracting millions of the pilgrims into the region that opened the economic significance for community peoples in particular and state in general. As *Abba* Kenfä told everyday life of the individual around the church and nunnery economic tie is closely attached with new arrivals to the region.[489]

In the nunnery found in the Šänkora Yohänes Church compound is also the engaged in various economic activities that indirectly assist both community peoples as well as the temporal new arrivals to the region. Nuns engaged by planting fruit plants as well as handcrafts that become source of income for both nuns and the local merchants.[490]

Another economic significance is tied with directly sale of holy water that the youth association generated millions of money in facilitating for service finders for those who incapable to arrive to the gorge to fetch holy water to them. However, this is not common feature of other holy place in the church history but practicing in the Šänkora Yohänes Church as usual economic section.[491]

Generally, the economic significance of the monasteries as mentioned above is multidimensional approaches for monks, nuns as well as in large for common peoples in opening the job opportunities in various occasions throughout every year.

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[487] *Ibid*, Abatä, Täräfä
[488] *Ibid.*
[489] *Informant: Abba* Kenfä Abäbä, see appendix-XVIII, The letters written in various period in the Shenkora Yohannes were stated about the existence of the considerable income and the conditions how to regulate it. This income generation is also the opened the extensive job opportunities outside in inside of the monastery as well.
[490] *Ibid.*
[491] *Ibid*

Conclusion

This thesis tried to focus its elaboration with the historical survey and prospects of the monasteries in the Menjar Šänkora in past eons. In fact, unforgettable to anyone is, proceeding from the introduction of Christianity in Ethiopia; Christianity brought profuse historical changes in state annals basically monasticism tale in Ethiopia beginning from the 16th century. Profoundly, EOTC monasteries had played pivotal role in many aspects of the Christian societies in terms of religious serenities, socio-economic continuum cohesive interactions, in preservation invaluable cultural heritages, and the transmission of church cognizance to the generations circumstantiate manner under the EOC in past centuries. As sources enlightened the monasteries in the Menjar Šänkora were legacies of introduction of Christianity and monasticism that influence the communities' people in many aspects. Among these monasteries as survey conducted through acquiring both primary and secondary sources, Balçi Amanuel, Sama Sänbät, Guramba Maryam, and recently Šänkora Yohänes Monasteries centered its discussion the paper considerably.

The primordial origin of the monasteries in the region basically traced back to the 19th century. The earliest of the monastery found in the region was Sama Sänbät since 1820s that became the dominant historical holy place in the region which assisted under the royal families in its past existence in time. With line with another influential monastic churches were Balçi Amanuel and Guramba Maryam became the centers of the religion, socio-economic and cultural manifestation in the past until the end of imperial regime.

The thesis also explored the distinctive features socio-economic and hierarchical administration developments of the Sama Sänbät, Balçi Amauel, Guramba Maryam and recently ŠänkoraYähones monasteries. As sources asserted the monasteries had strong economic dominance in the region in the time. The timely police of strong church state ties also assisted the significant dominance that gained grant from government of the time. The monasteries had best owed with a right to administer lands granted under and the tenants of the region. The source of income was generated from land, usual religious activities performed, church tax tribute from parish churches (constructed under their dominion), and in some extent from customs dues, like Guramba Maryam.

Another considerable tales of monasteries narrated in the thesis, the challenges that confronted simultaneous development to this extent. As sources cited, both internal and external problems were confronted the advantages of monasteries in the time. The external challenge was related to the Italian Occupation that was common to the all of them even the degree of influence was differed. On the other hand, the internal factors that related with the change of the government and the introduction of the new land policy, "Land to Tiller" in the beginning of the last quarter of 20th century was directly hatched the monasteries usual source of income and undermined the dominance in the region as were before. With regarding heritages conservation lack of proper management in the monasteries also affected values of monasteries. The robbers, illegal heritage trafficking and the unconditional conflagration occurrences in the time were another constraints challenged the monasteries in the past. However, with these lacks, monasteries continued the tradition of fulfilling social responsibilities in preserving the remaining heritages to this extent.

The liturgical progress in the monasteries had also seen in the skill of Excellency in writing and preparation of parchment books and dully acknowledged in the expansion of literacy through providing the Church education for communities' children. The church education, which has delivered in the monasteries, was precious for children to accommodate valuable wisdoms in their future lives. The education delivery also creates the children to be ethical and responsible for their tasks in respect of religious teaching in their span of life.

The central points of another discussion of monasteries in the thesis the endowed invaluable different historical manuscripts, great deals of historical materials and natural attractive sites that accompanied the various merits to the communities. The accommodation of the various cultural and natural heritages in the church also snugs the opportunities for tourism development in the region that attracted millions of pilgrims into the region. Still influencing attractions part of the monasteries is annual ceremonies which conducted.

Generally, the tales of monasteries are enormous, which requires the deep investigation concerning with the religious, social, cultural, economic and political aspects related but it is difficult accommodate all issues about the monasteries. The recommend for other scholars who willing to conduct regarding to related issues, this thesis would enlighten some extent of about issues related to the monasteries.

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List of Informants

No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
1	Abatä Wändafraš (Ato)	70	September 21,28,2022 October 16,2022	Bäsa Qäbälé	He was a Chairman of the Bäsa Qäbälé during the Därg regime, gifted in memorizing the oral history of the past happening particularly about the historical passage the region he asked to reflect, influence of Italian occupation in the region heard from ancestors.
2	Atilaw Yemer (Qés)	76	October 20, 2022	Sama Qäbälé	He is currently servant in Sama Sänbät since 1981 to this extent. He well know about the historical foundation of monastery and historical passage in the past in the region as well.
3	Bäläţä Ţerunäh *(Abba)*	66	November 9, 13, 2022	Felega Hiwot Town	He was the holy water baptizer for about two decades in Šänkora Yohänes Church, is the popular in handcrafts' boss of the church. He was important informant about nunnery, in enlightening the church historical background and other concerning issues after his arrival to the region since 1995.
4	Bäqälä Wändäsän (Ato)	40	February 02,2022	Arerti Town	The agriculture office employee who delivered valuable information regarding to the climatic conditions of the region of the Menjar-Shenkora Woreda and the cereals produced in the region as well.
5	Čärnät Masräša *(Ato)*	70	June , 28, July 02, 2022	Ararti Town	He is outstanding oral historian in the region. He was formerly the local inhabitant, Chairman of the Jarra *Qäbälé*, during the *Därg* regime, know live Ararti town, gifted in memorizing the oral history of the past happening particularly about the historical passage of Guramba Maryam monastery, and surroundings, influence of Italian occupation in the region, the nature of resistance, and the historical relations of neighboring churches during the misery time.

6	Degäfe Befekädu (Qés)	65	August 23,29,2022	Sama Qäbälé	He was the monastery priest and secretary serviced more than sixteen years in serving in it. He is gifted in memorizing historical foundation of Sama Sänbät monastery which told from local elders, heritage, income sources, its *gult* land, the monastery developments and challenges that faced during the Ethio-Italian war, during regime and others.
7	Endalä Čärenät *(Mämher)*	65	July 27&30, 2022	Balçi Town	He was boss of the Balçi Amanu'el church, local dweller in Šänkora District; he has a good memory about the historical developments of Balçi Amanu'el and Šänkora Yohanes churches in the region. He has the knowledge of the level of church school, the administrative hierarchy of the church, and the local histories.
8	Eyasu Gärämaw *(Mämré)*	32	June 04, 2022	Ararti Town	He is the Menjar Wäräda Church Office worker, has a good knowledge about the annals of churches found in the district.
9	Feqertä Yohänes Zäkaryas (*Emahoy)*	64	September, 3, 2022	Yohänes Church Compound	She is currently inhabitant of Sama Qäbälé and was my key informant about the situation of the nunnery foundation in the region in the time of her arrival to the region, the church progress in the two decades and its changes.
10	Fätänä Tamerat (Ato)	67	October 21, 2022	Sama Qäbälé	The inhabitant of this Qäbälé who informed valuable information regarding to the monastery of Sama and the surroundings as well.
11	Gäzahäñ Anebälu (Ato)	40	July 7, 10, 2022	Arerti Town	He is Menjar Šänkora Agricultural Office worker in the District Agriculture Office, MA graduated in Fruit and Vegetables well understood the agricultural changes and progress in the region.
12	Girma Wudensäh *(Qes)*	66	August 05, 2022	Sama *Qäbälé*	He is inhabitants Sama and servant of the monastery of Sama Sänbät and he is gifted with oral tradition of about the historical foundation monastery. Girma is equipped with the church education that assisted him to know about the historical books which found in the monastery as mentioned in the heritages of the monastery of Sama.

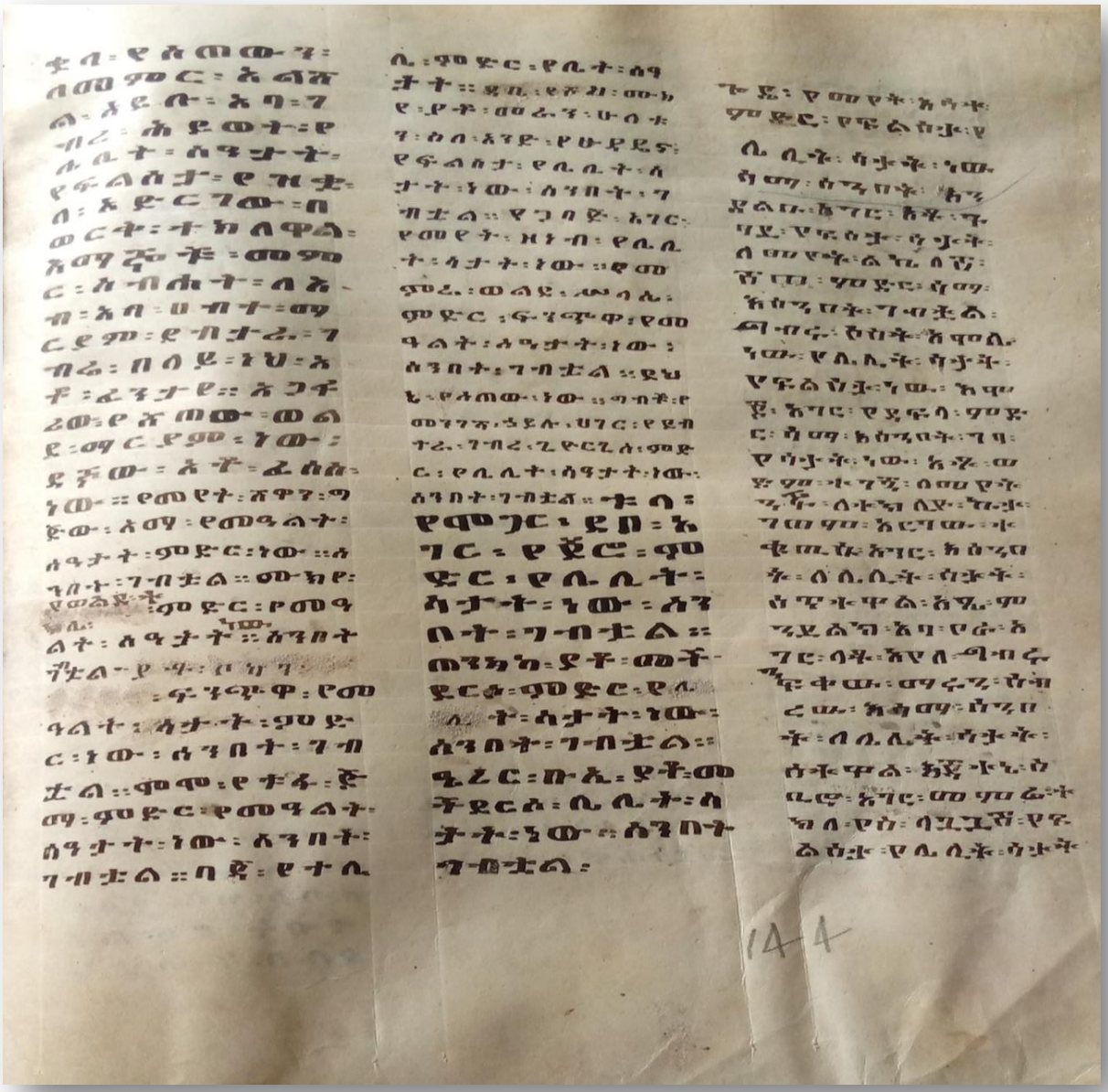
13	Käleläw Käbbädä (Ato)	63	October 04, ,07 , 2022	Sama Qäbälé	He is the habitant of Sama and he know many things about religious services, heritage, its income and different contribution for the monastery of Sama Sänbät, he also told about the miracles of holy water found in the monastery
14	Kenfä Abäbä (*Abba)*	56	Septeber 26, 2022	Yohänes Church	He is a monk, learning modern education at Balchi Secondary school, was the member of the Šänkora Yohänes Church Parish Council, who has good knowledge about the historical background of the church and historical foundation of nunnery in the church compound.
15	Mamush Mezgebe Selassie *(Abba)*	68	June 2, 2022	Bäsä *Qäbälé*	He is the inhabitant of Sama know about historical developments of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora and serve his past life in the churches ecclesiastic services
16	Mäsälä Gäberä Şädeq (Mämré)	86	September 29, 2022	Jara Qäbälé	He is the popular oral historian in the region, the boss of the Guramba Monastery, and he knows about the historical progress of the Šänkora Yohänes Church too.
17	Mogäs Belaynä (Ato)	72	September 26 & 27, 2022	Sama Sänbät	He is inhabitant Sama Qäbälé informed basically about the historical foundation and later historical progress in the past period. He was construction committee of the church for the new building.
18	Mogäs Gäbräşadeq (Qés)	73	July 06,15,2022	Sama Sänbät	He was the best informant about Sama Sänbät monastery from its foundation, it's development progress in different services, sources of income, properties, moveable, unmovable, heritages and different times the monastery challenge during the Italian Occupation and the Derg regime
19	Negatu Gizaw *(Ato)*	81	August 22, 27,2022	Balçi Town	He is inhabitant of Balçi Qäbälé who well informed about the region and historical development of monastery of Balçi Amanuel in the region and the challenges and prospects in the region.
20	Phawelos Masefen *(Ato)*	38	September 02,2022	Menjar-Šänkora Agricultural Office	He is worker in the District Agriculture Office, MA graduated in water technology. He assisted me to acquire the necessary information about the general geographical background of the region in regarding to historical progress of agricultural activities in the region and map of each *Qäbälé* and also

					explained about the natures of the landscape and the cereal production types and the regions that comfortable to its respective regions.
21	Gorefé Käbädä *(Wäyezäro)*	74	September 30, 2022	Balçi Town	She is the local inhabitant with gifted memorization capacity of the past historical events he passed and has the uniqueness talent in narrating stories supporting event with events in critically.
22	Geteyä Šemales *(Abbä)*	84	July 9,18,2022	Sämä Qäbälé	He was the member of Sama Sänbeät monastery Parish Council; he was served in different position more than forty five years that has good knowledge about the historical background of the monastery.
23	Sahlä Asäfaa (Qés)	58	August 10,18,2022	Sama Sänbät.	He is the head of the heritage center of Sama Sänbät Monastery, the *priest* of the monastery. He has a good memory about the monastery development, the administrative hierarchy of the monastery to the lower level and responsibilities of respected individuals to their tasks.
24	Šäwangezaw Zäwugä *(Ato)*	67	July , 28, 2022	Balçi Town	He was formerly Chairman of the Balçi Municipality, gifted in memorize the past events in the region, basically about the Balchi Amanuel Church historical foundation and the merits of the church to the community in many aspects.
25	Šemäles Täräfä (Qés)	55	July 10, 2022	Sama Qäbälé	He is the General Manager of the monastery property and the monastery priest. He was also well known the monastery history from its foundation developments, income source, social services and the monastery heritages.
26	Seläši Şädäqä *(Ato)*	66	June 24, 2022	Basa Qäbälé	The formerly the Vice Chairman of the Šänkora Yohanes Church Parish Council, who assisted the church in many possible contributions, reminds the historical progress of the church and its surroundings.
27	Sisay Arägäw *(Mämré)*	55	July 23, 2022s	Jara Qäbäle	The priest of the Guramba Maryam Monastery, and also the secretary of the church parish council. He knows about the historical foundation of the monastery and the passage of it during the time of constraints
			August,	Šänkora Yohänes	The founder, the abbess of the Nunnery, gifted in remembering the historical

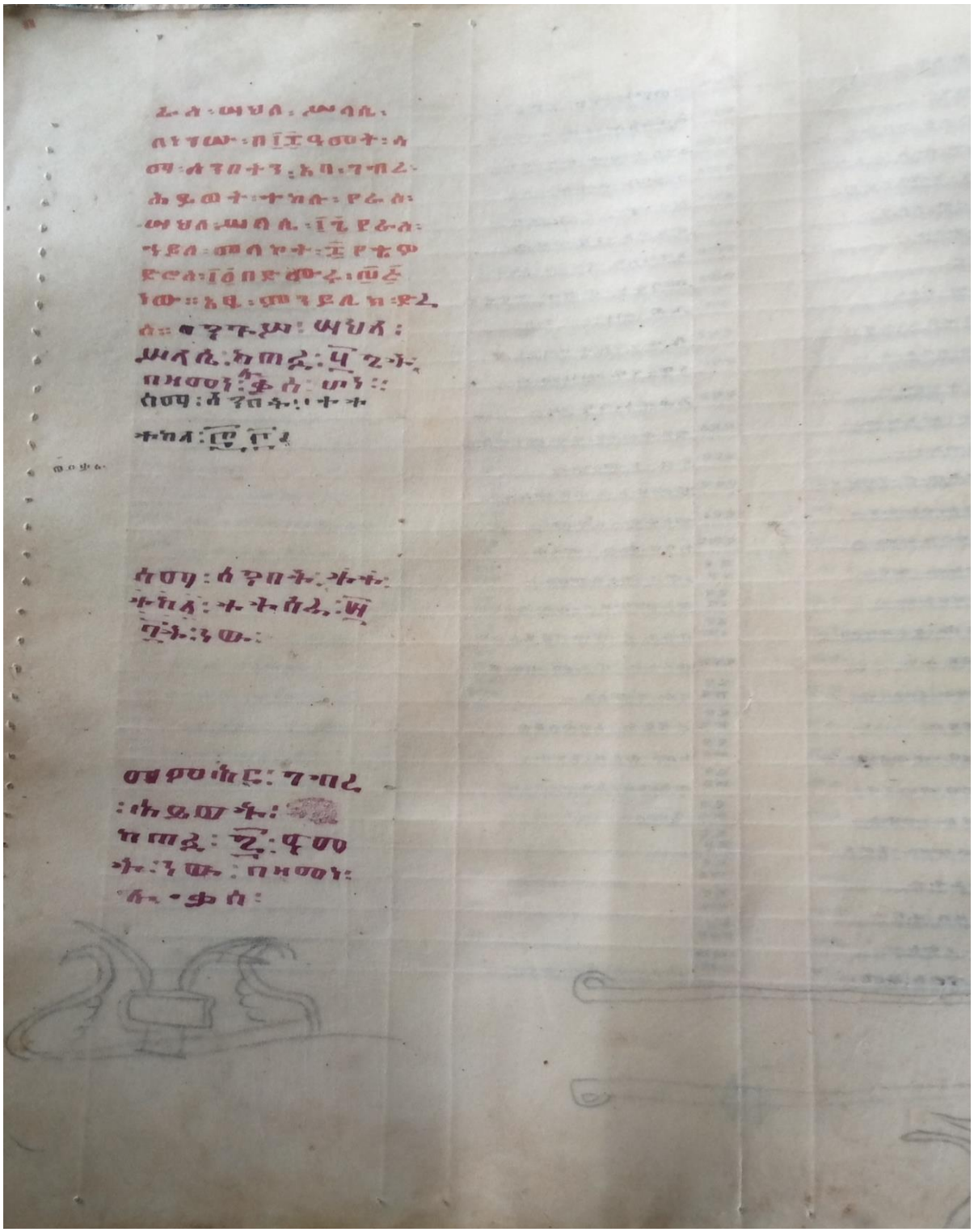
28	Ţersitä Maryam Aserat *(Emahoy)*	42	7, 16, 2022	Yäsétoç Gädam	events occurred in the church and the foundation of nunnery as well.
29	Yehayes Sebseba *(Abba)*	74	July 6,2022	Jara	The boss of the Guramba Maryam monastery for about seven years, well know the historical foundation of the monastery. He had the various contribution for the monastery in the life time in the past.
30	Wäleta Negus Zärgäw *(Ato)*	42	August 11, 12, 2022	Arerti Town	He was a head of Menjar-Šänkora District Culture and Tourism, currently employee in the office who delivered valuable information to me during the research was conducting.
31	Wändeyé Gäberé *(Mämré)*	44	August 8, 2022	Arerti Town	The Menjar Šänkora Church Office Secretary, who knows the churches found in the district and conducted surveyed the churches years of establishment, enlightened by church education
32	Wäldä Amanuel Aschanaki (Abba)	72	September, 27, 2022	Yohänes Church	The monk, he was the boss of the Šänkora Yohänes Church for about sixteen years, he informed about the historical foundation of the church and the nuns monastery foundation, and still serving the church curiously.
33	Wäldä Hawreyat (*Mämher*)	72	August 12, 2022	Bolo	He was the priest of Bolo Selassie Church, service for along times and knows historical developments of monasteries in the Menjar-Šänkora region.
34	Yoséf Tamänä *(Abba)*	72	July,17, 2022	Balçi Amanu'el	The boss of the Balçi Amanu'el and knows about the church history of the region basically about the Balchi Amauel historical development in the past eons.

Appendixes

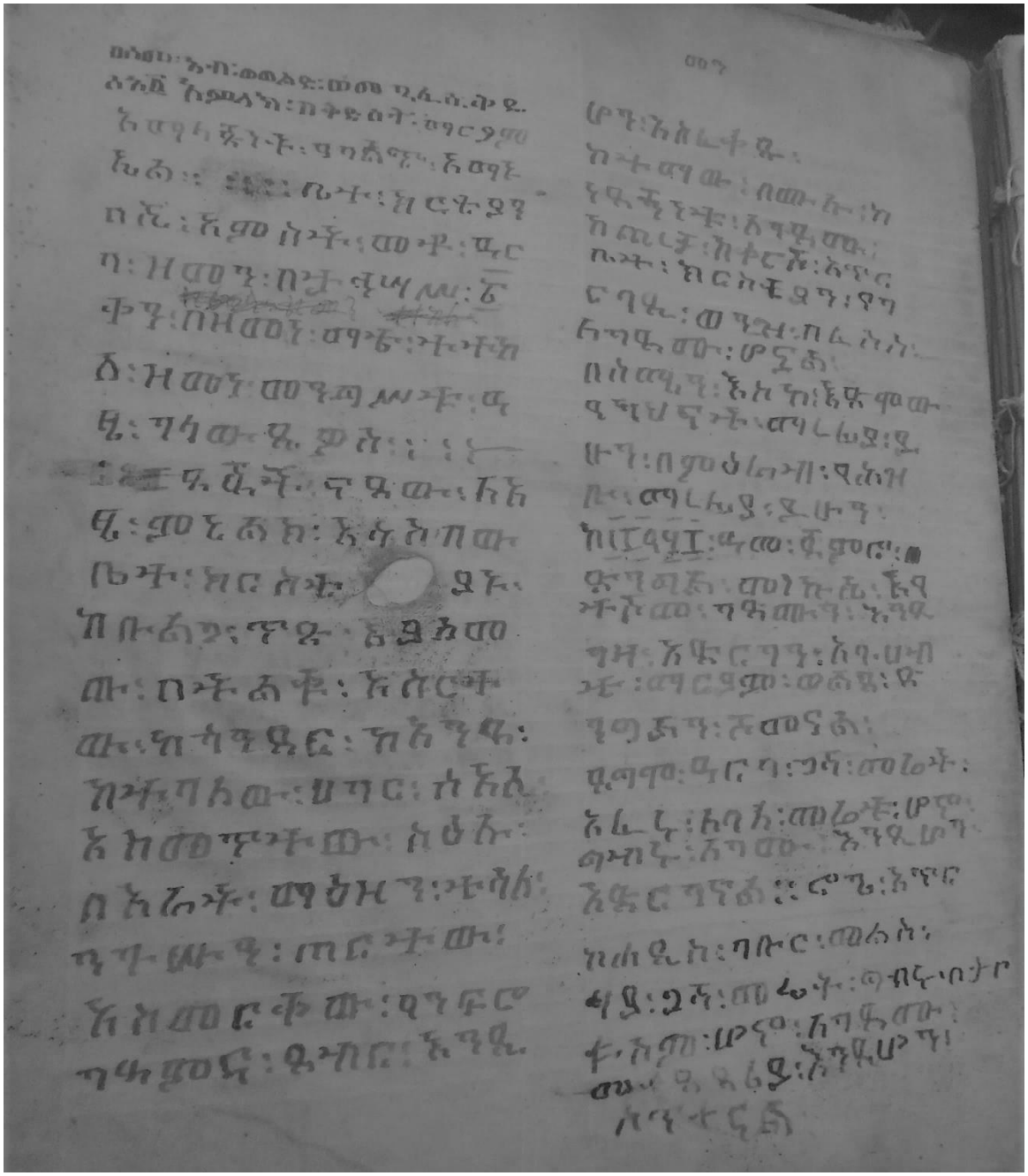
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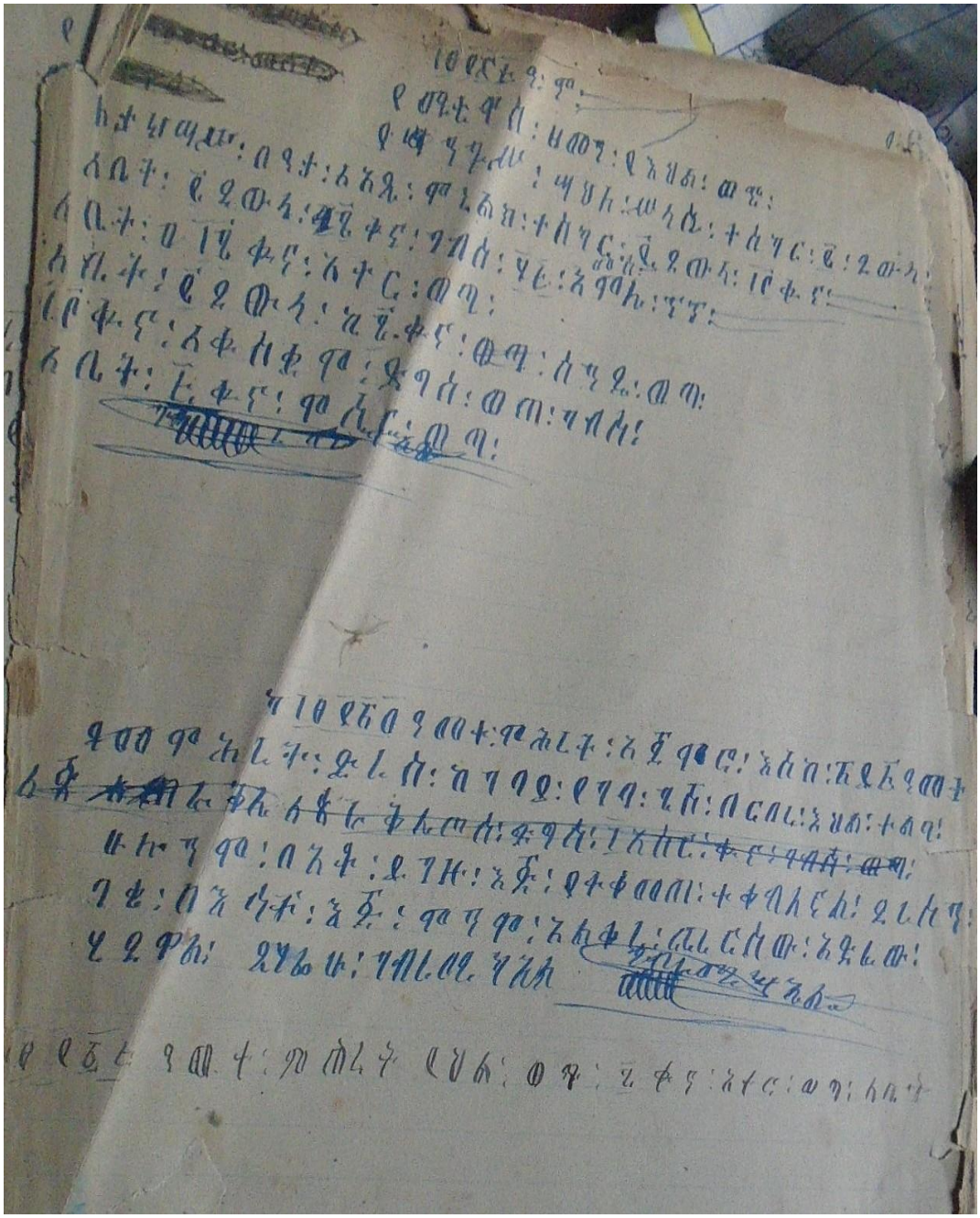
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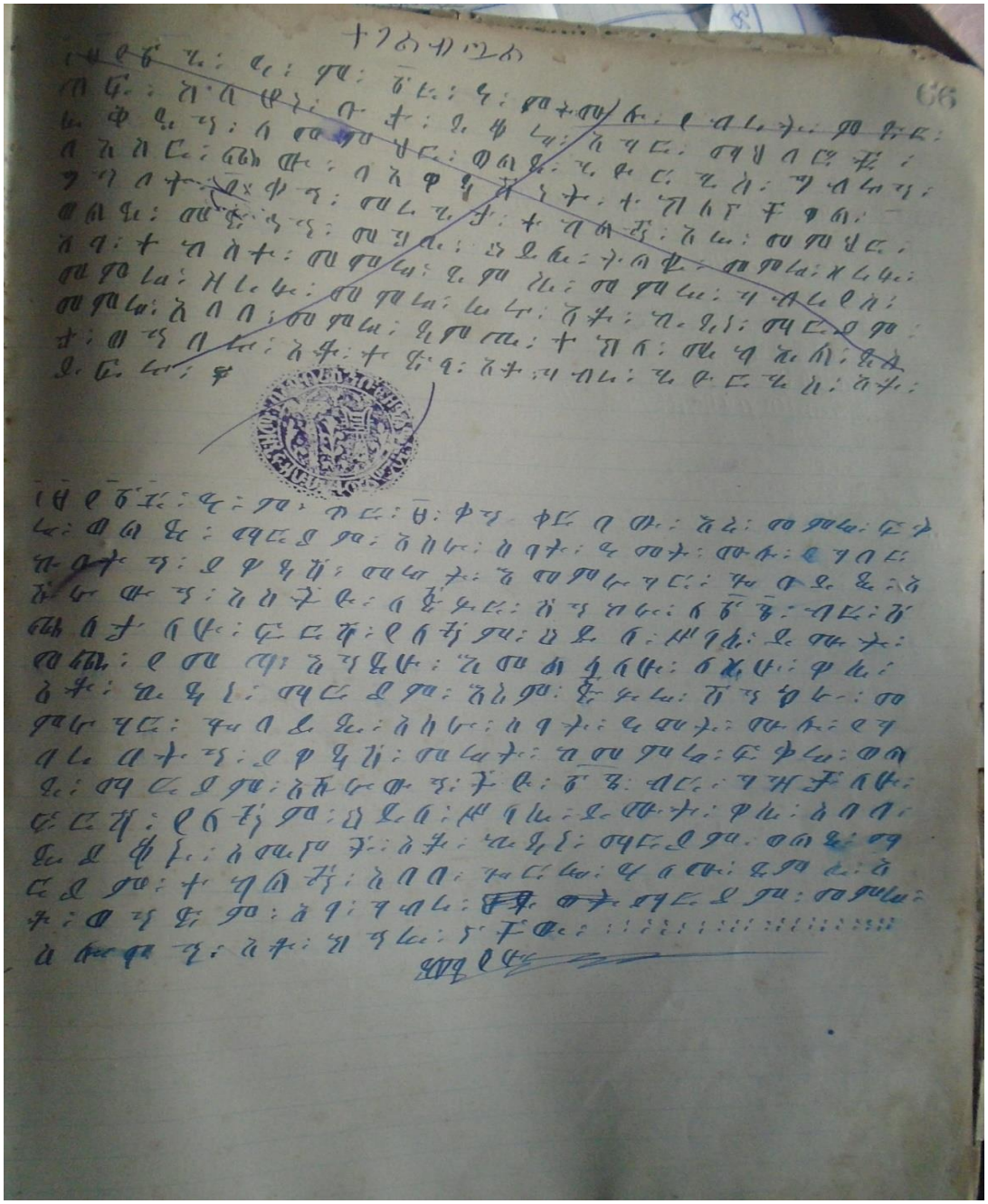
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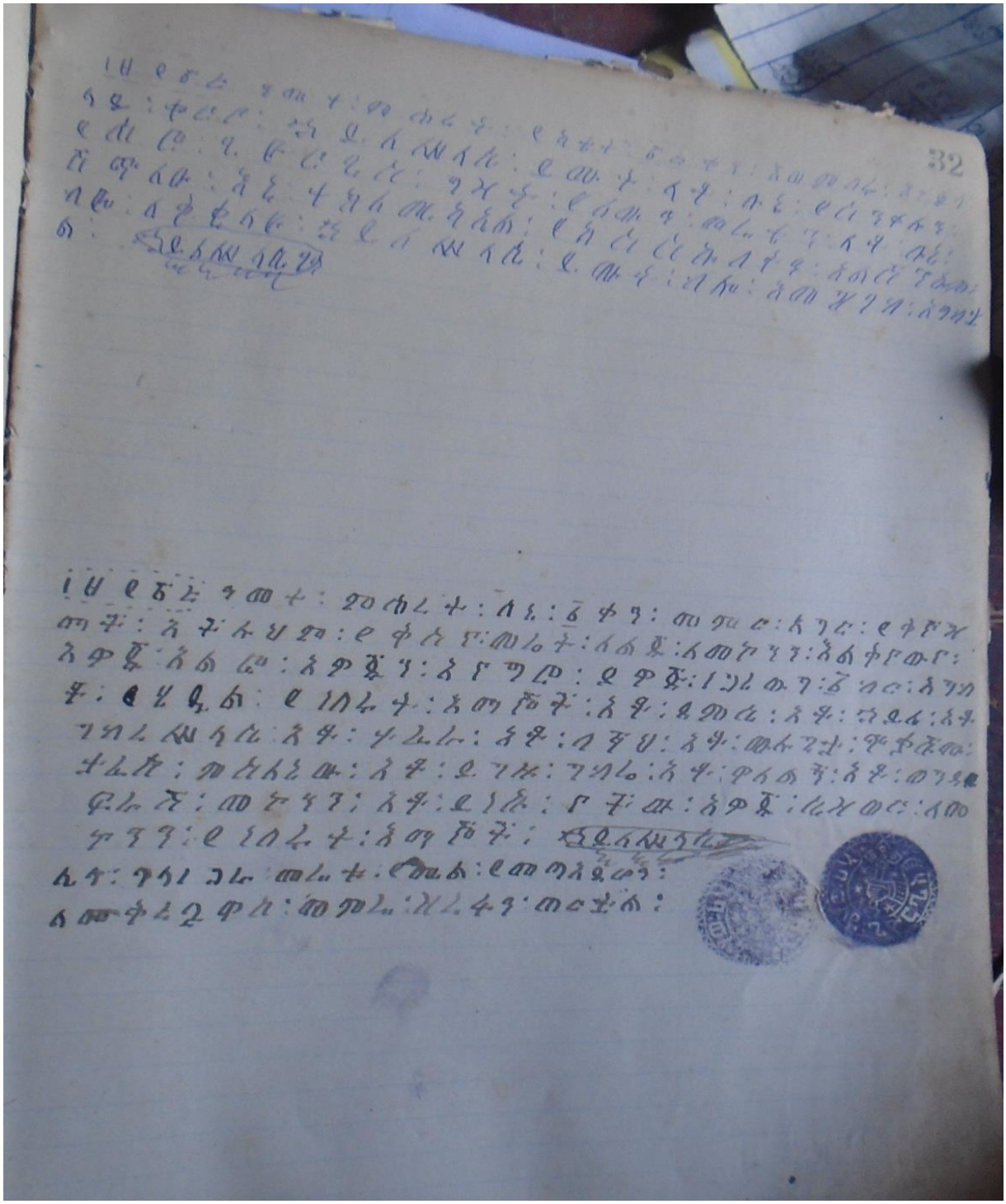
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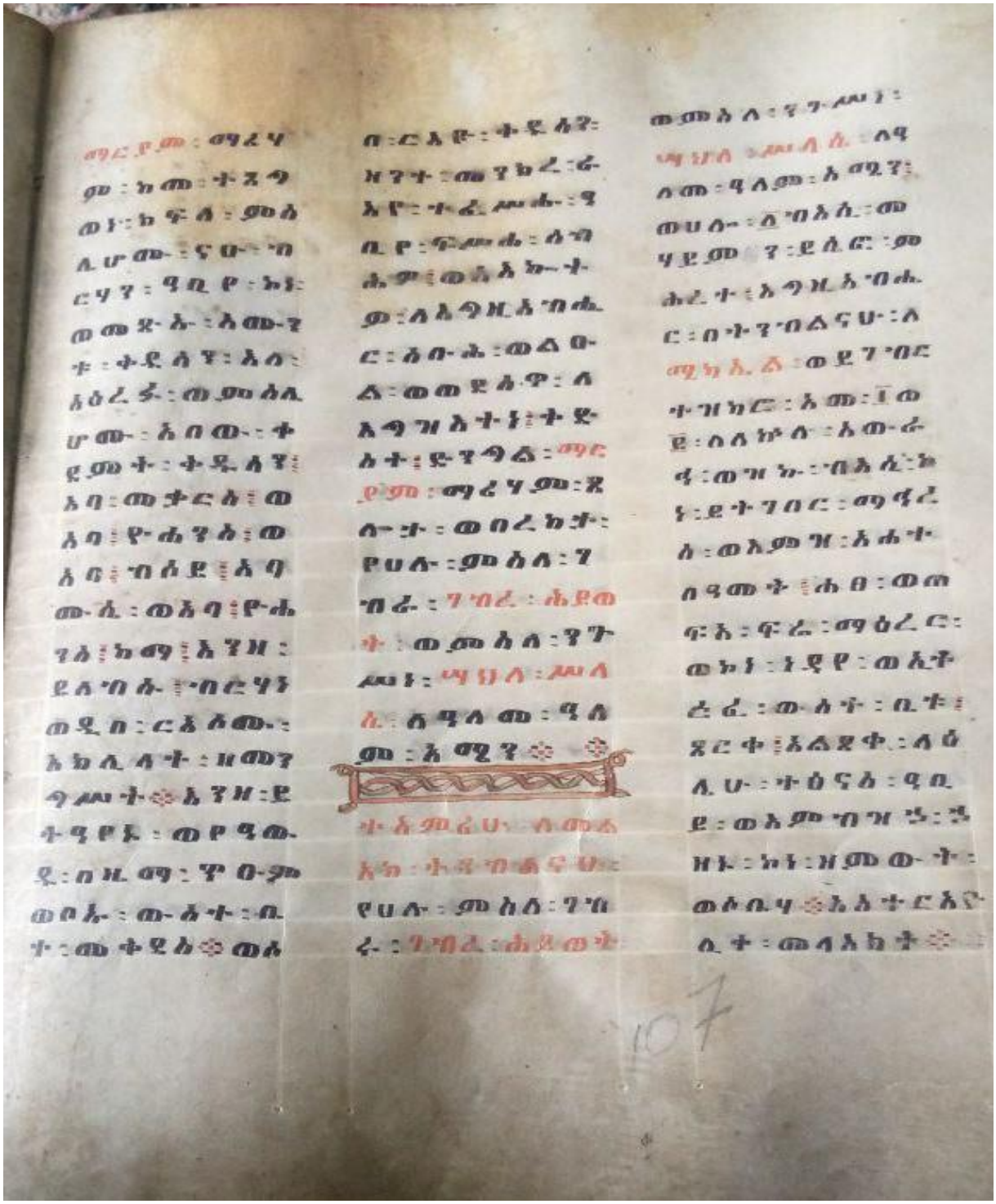
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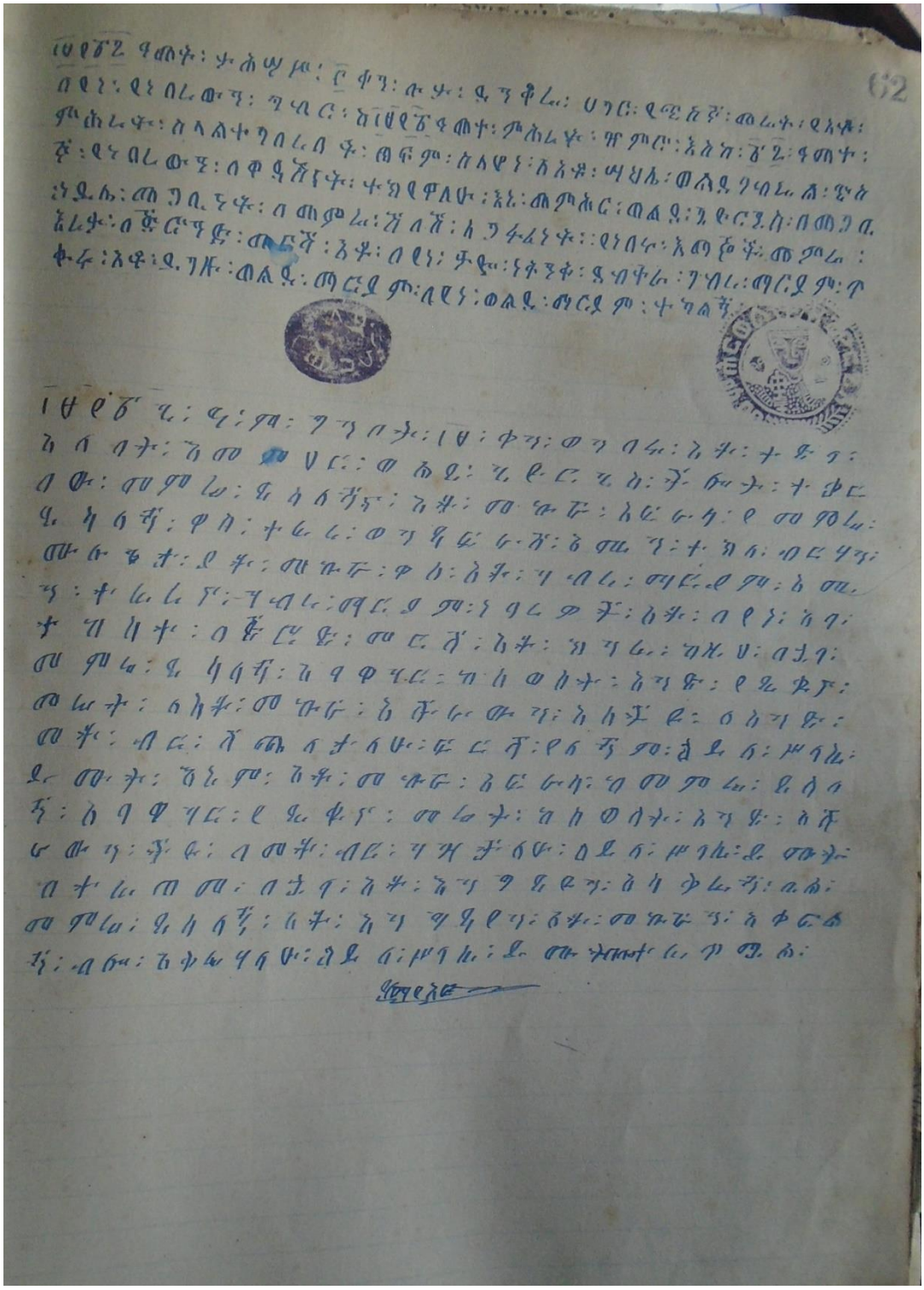
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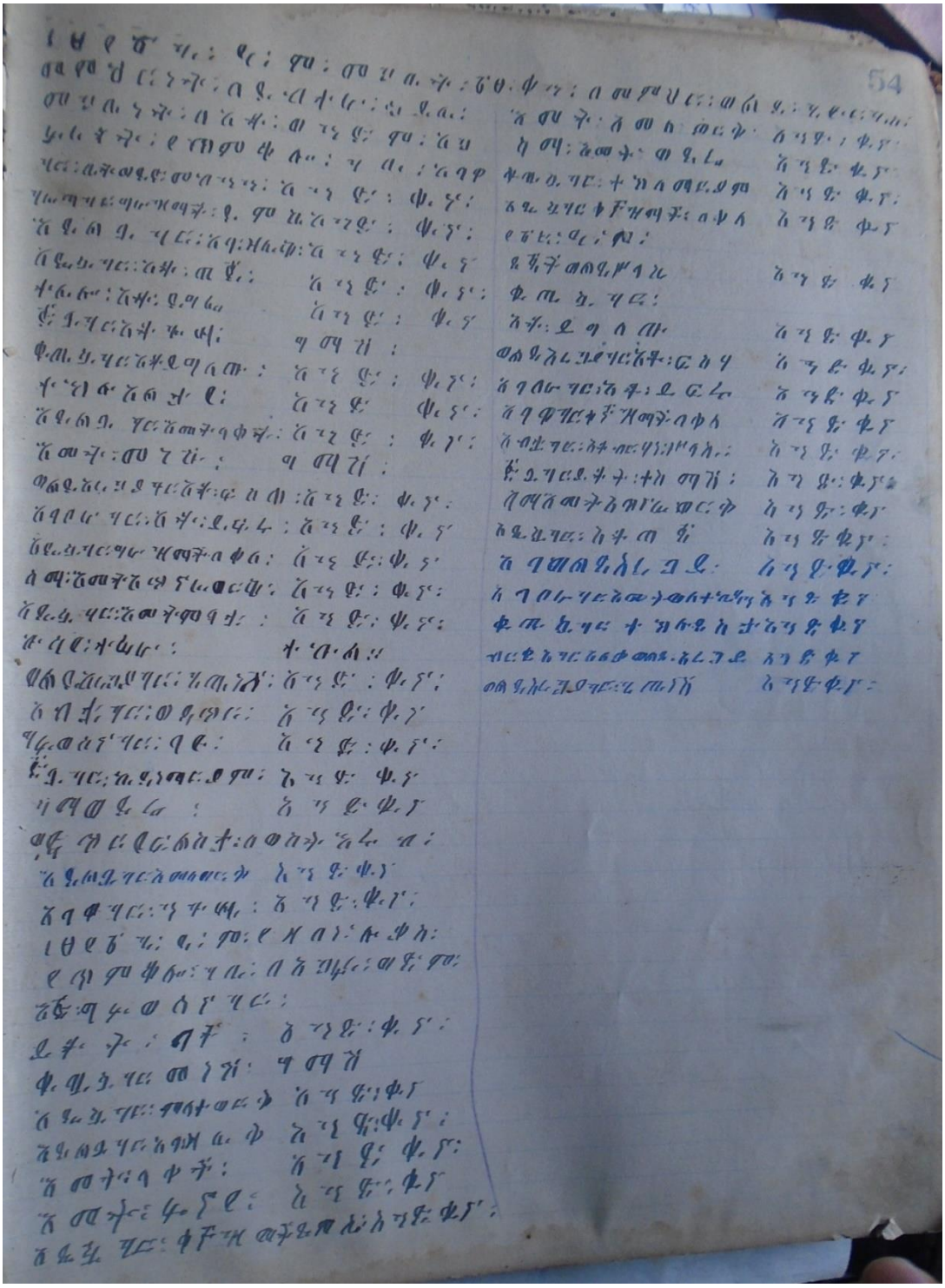
Appendix-VII



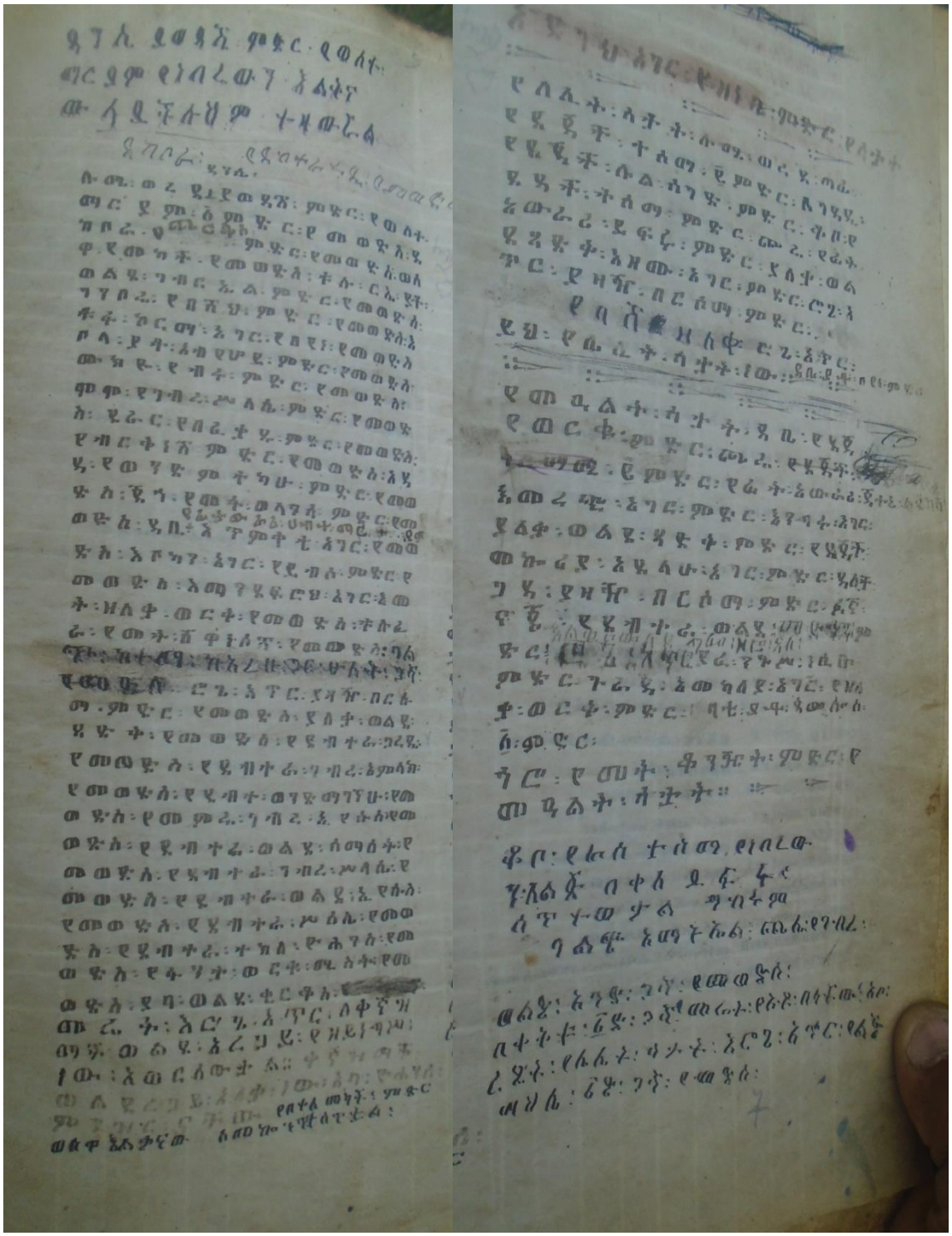
Appendix-VIII



Appendix-IX



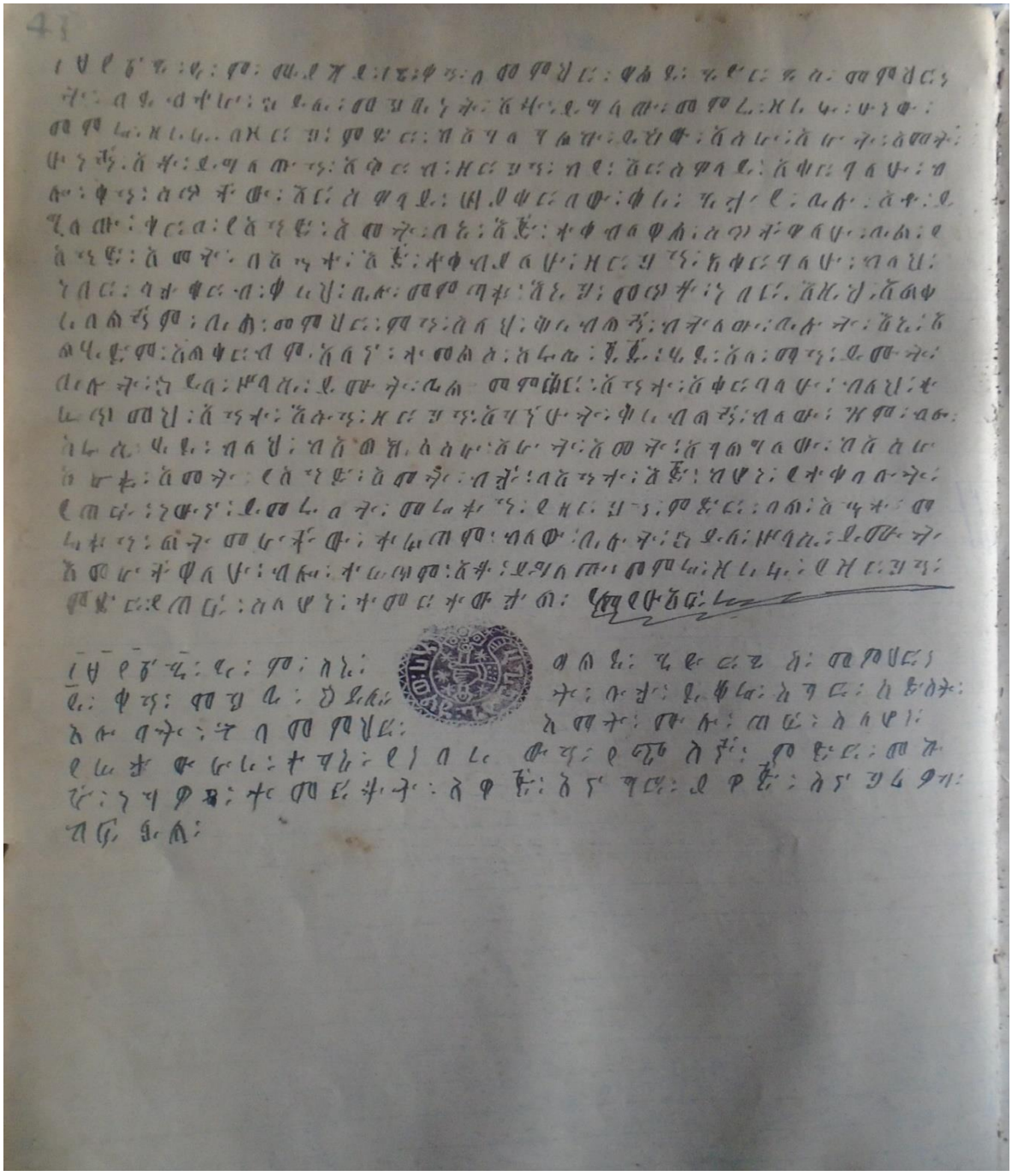
Appedix-X



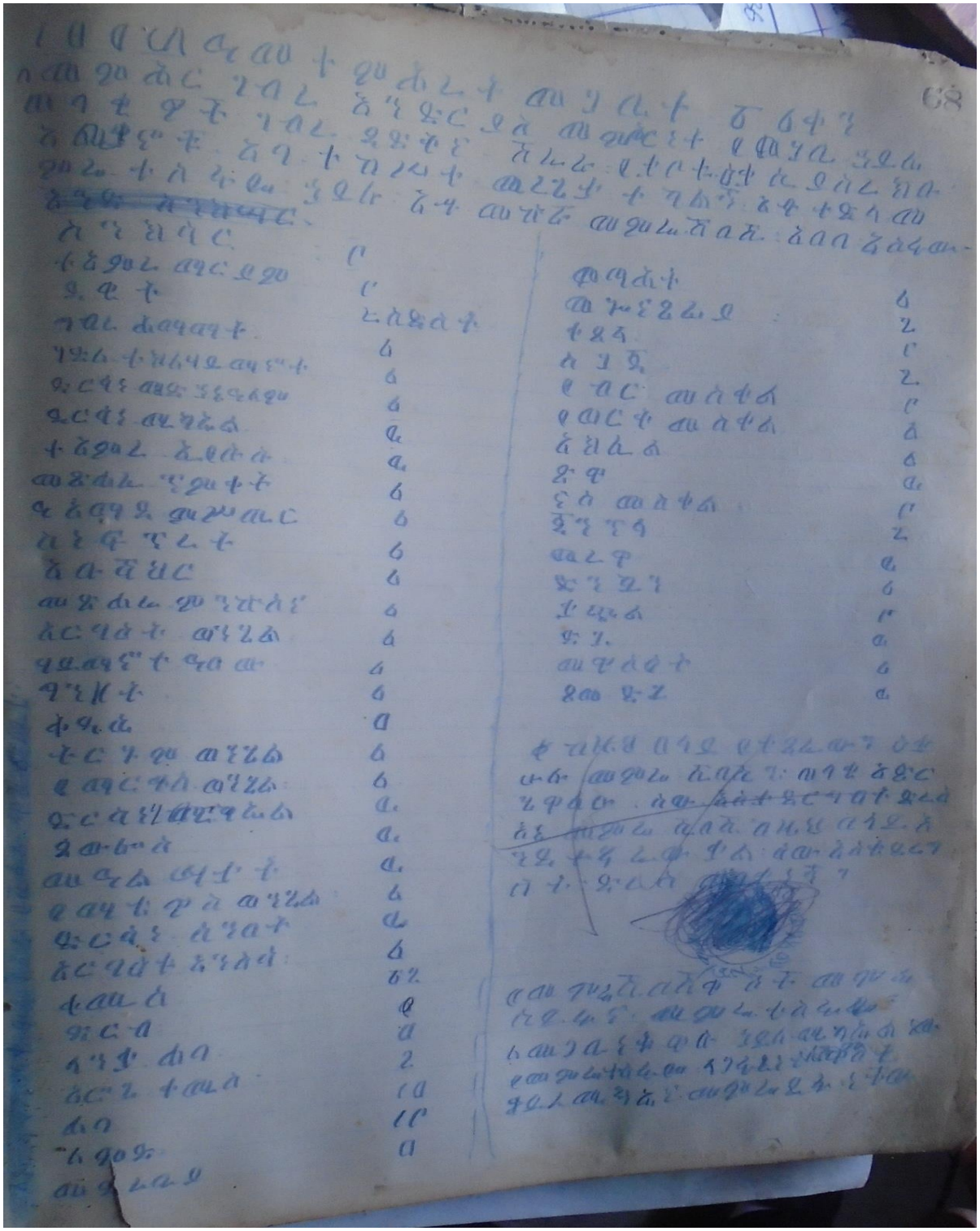
Appendix-XI



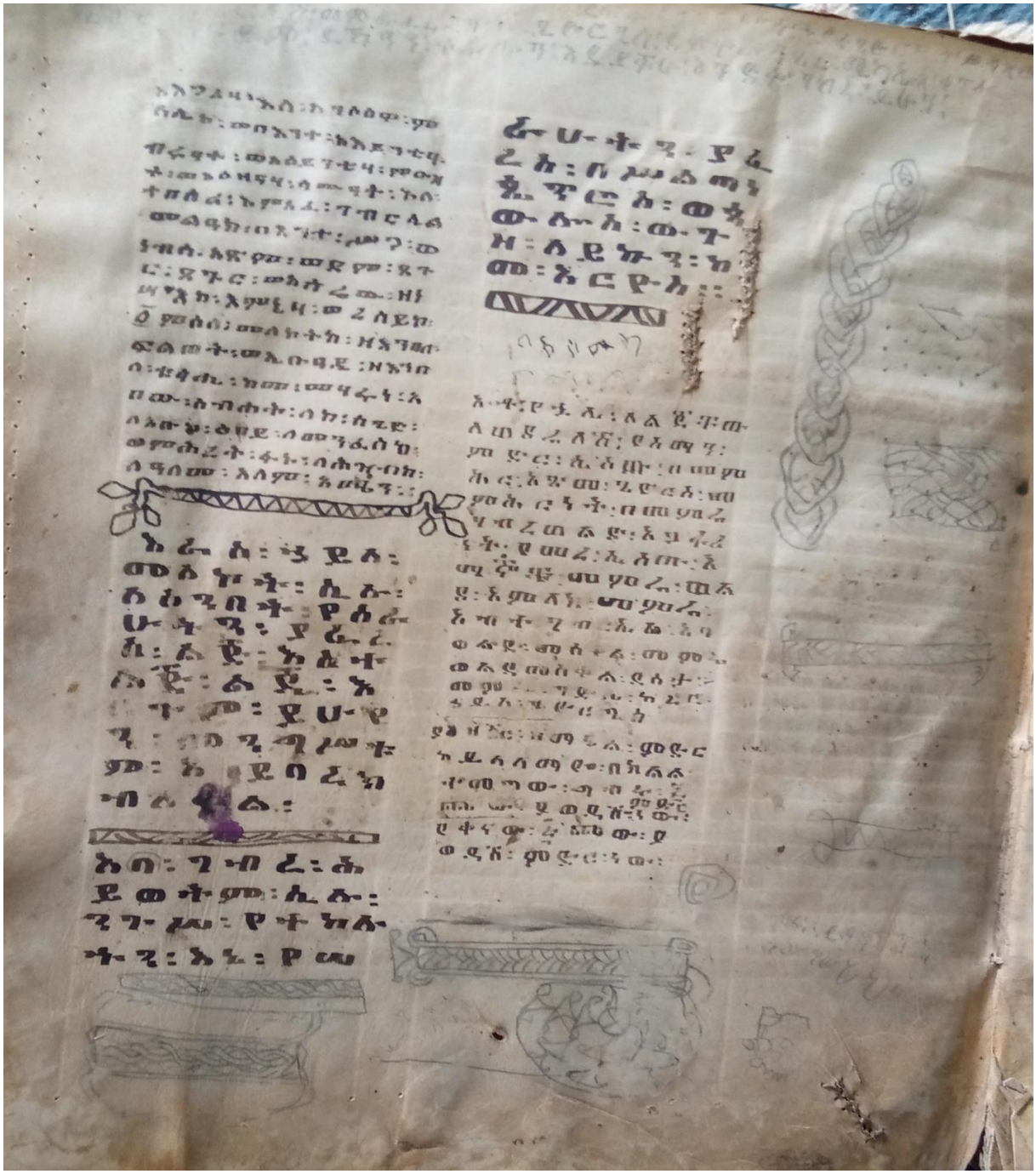
Appendix XII



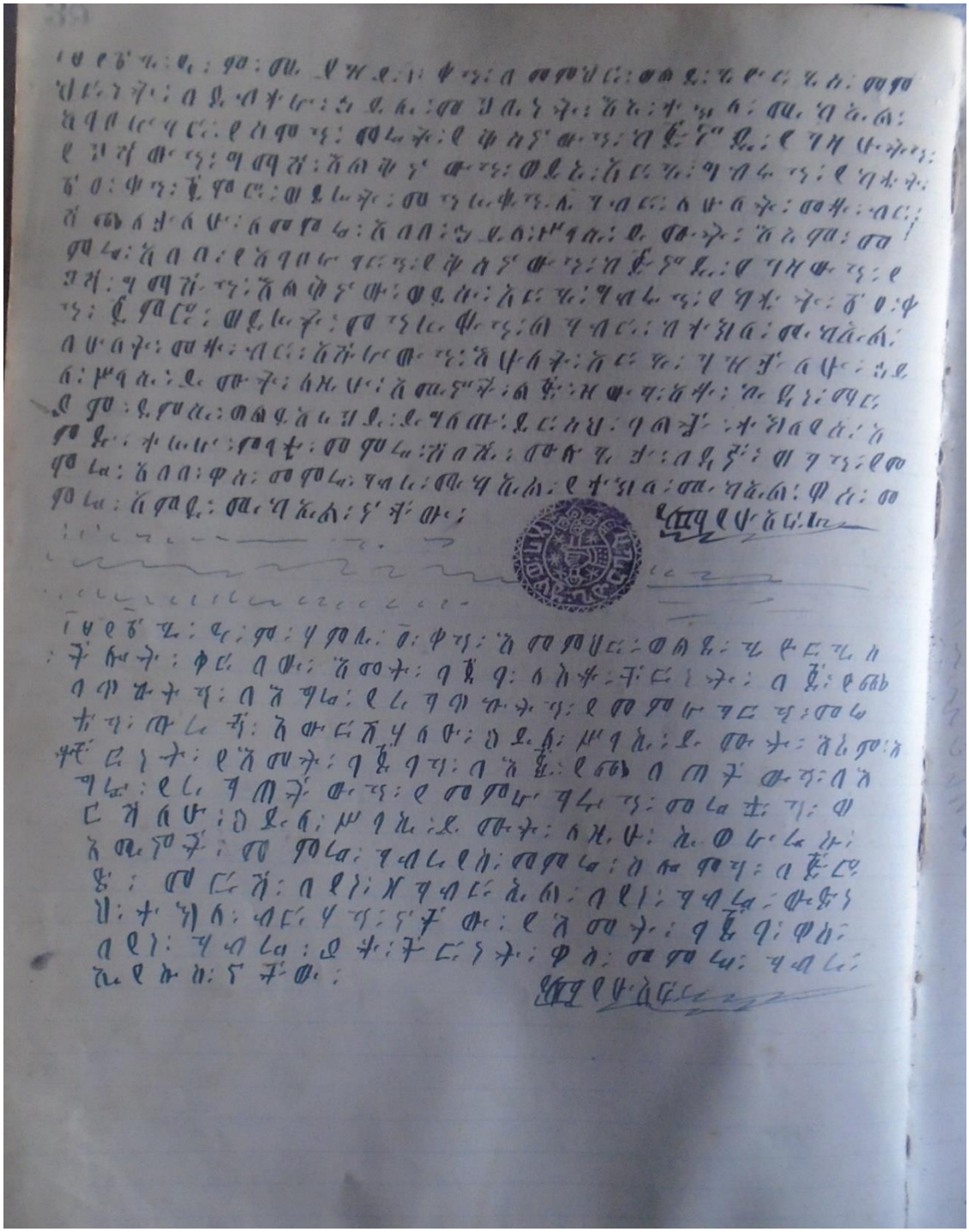
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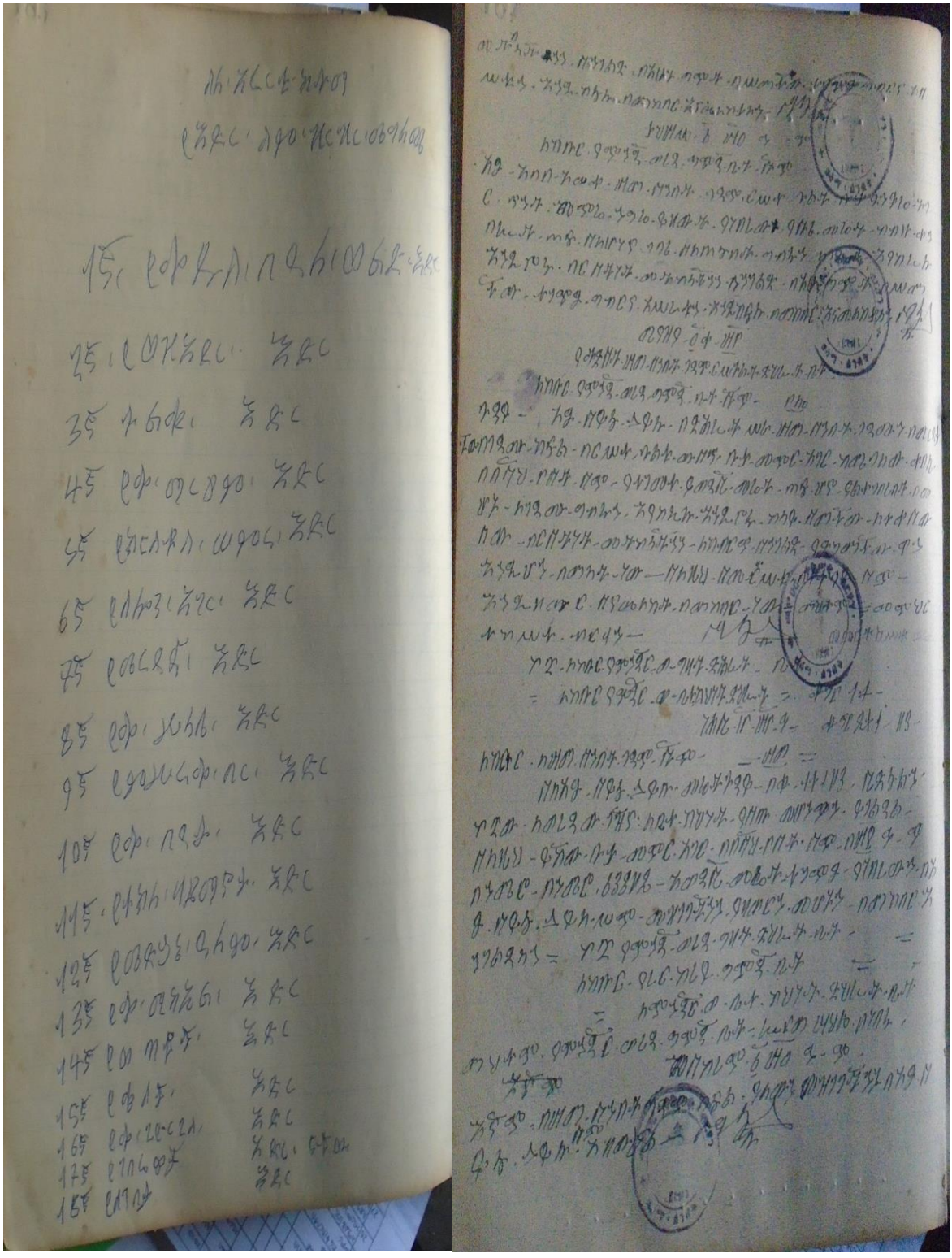
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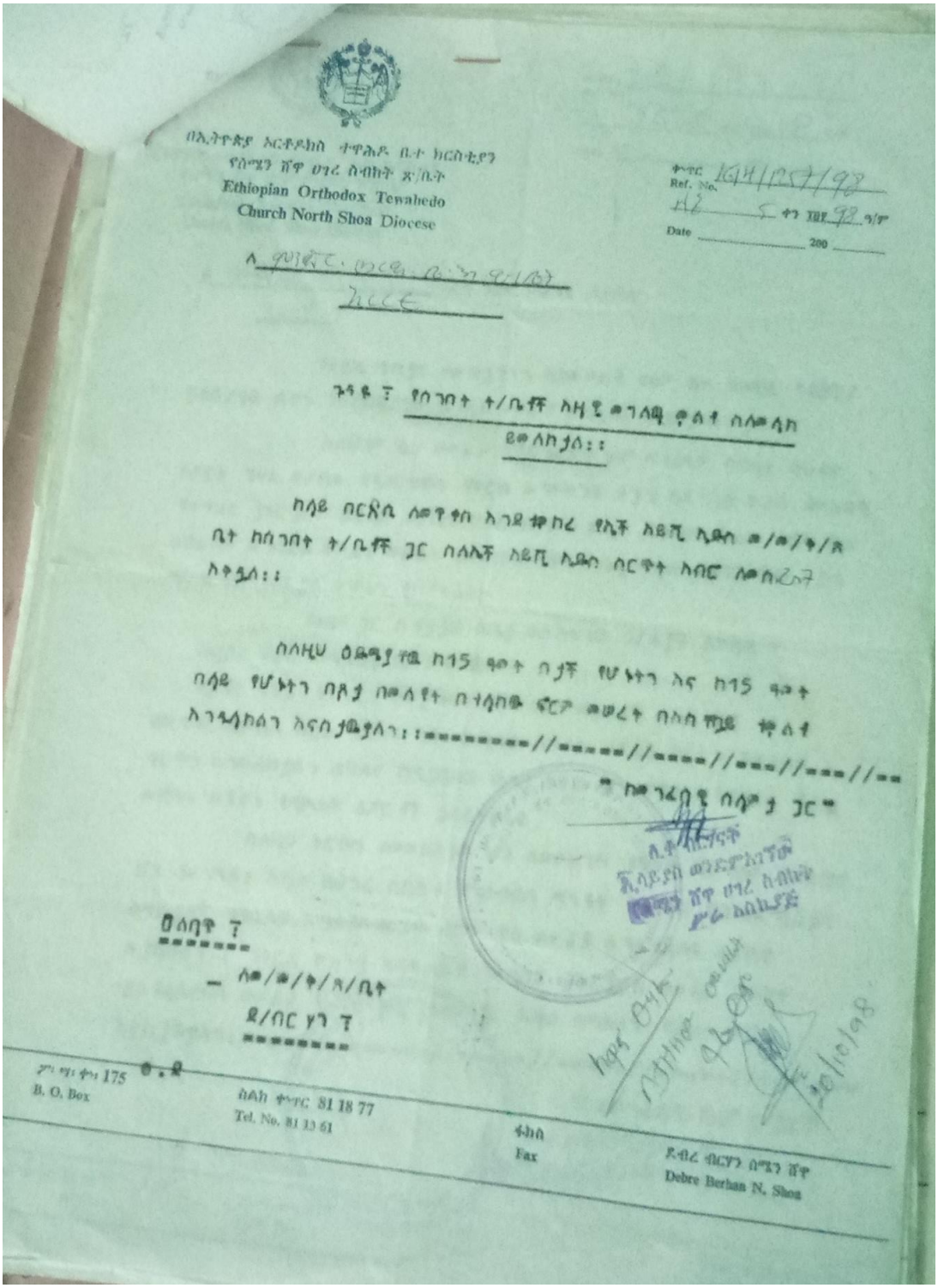
Appendix- XV



Appendix-XVI



Appendix-XVII



በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ጽ/ቤት
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo
Church North Shoa Diocese

ቁጥር Ref. No. KGH/1257/98
ቀን Date 200

ለ

ጉዳዩ ፤ የሰገበት ተ/ቤቶች አዛዊ መገለጫ ሞልቶ ስለመላክ
ይመለከታል፡፡

ከሳይ በርጅቪ ለመጥቀስ አገደ ቁከረ የሊች አይሺ ሊጨስ መ/መ/ቅ/ጽ
ቤተ ክሰገበት ተ/ቤቶች ጋር ስለሊች አይሺ ሊጨስ ስርጭት አብሮ ለመስራት
አቀዷለ፡፡

ስለዚህ ዕጨማያ የጨ ከ15 ቁጥ ቦታች የሆኑትን እና ከ15 ቁጥ
በሳይ የሆኑትን በጽታ በመለየት በተሳከቤ ፍርም መሠረት በለስ ማይ ቅልቶ
እንዲላክልን እናስታውቃለን፡፡----------//-----//----//---//---//--

" ከመገረሰ ፣ ሰላም ታ ጋር "

ሊ.ቀ ካህናት
ኪ.ሳይ.ያስ ወንድምነገኘው
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት
ሥራ አስኪያጅ

ግልባጭ ፤

- ለመ/መ/ቅ/ጽ/ቤት
ደ/በር ሃገ ፤

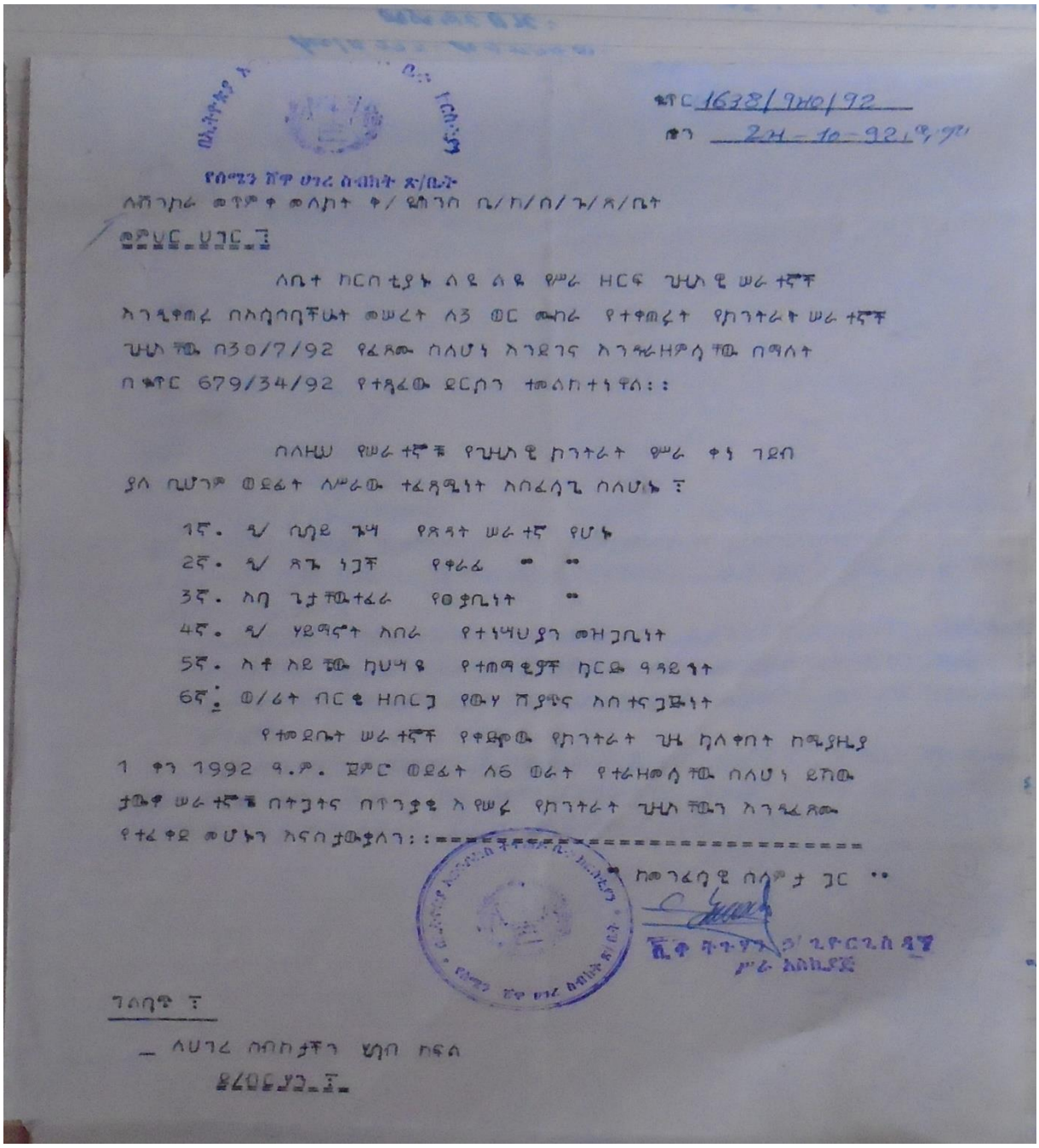
ምስ ሳጥን 175
B. O. Box

ስልክ ቁጥር 81 18 77
Tel. No. 81 13 61

ፋክስ
Fax

ደብረ ብርሃን ሰሜን ሸዋ
Debre Berhan N. Shoa

Appendix- XVIII



የሰሜን ሸዋ ዞን ስብከተ ጽ/ቤት

ለሽንኮራ መጥምቀ መለኮት ቀ/ ዩሰንሰ ቤ/ክ/በ/ጉ/ጽ/ቤት

ቁጥር 1638/ገዞ/92

ቀን 24-10-92 ዓ.ም

መድህኔ ሀገር ጌ

ለቤተ ክርስቲያኑ ለዩ ለዩ የሥራ ዘርፍ ጊዜ ሰጪ ሠራተኞች አገልግለው በአሰባሰባቸሁት መሠረት ለ3 ወር ሙሀራ የተቀጠሩት የአገልግሎት ሠራተኞች ጊዜ ቸዉ በ30/7/92 የፈጸሙ ስለሆነ አገደገና አገጭራዘምሳ ቸዉ በማለት በቁጥር 679/34/92 የተጻፈው ደርሰን ተመልክተነዋል::

ስለዚህ የሠራተኞቹ የጊዜ ሰጪ አገልግሎት ሥራ ቀነ ገደብ ያለ ቢሆንም ወደፊት ለሥራው ተፈጻሚነት አስፈላጊ ስለሆኑ ፣

1ኛ. ሲ/ ሲሳይ ጉሣ የጽፃት ሠራተኛ የሆኑ

2ኛ. ሲ/ ጸጌ ነጋች የቀራፊ " "

3ኛ. አባ ጌታ ቸዉተፈራ የፀ ቃቢነት "

4ኛ. ሲ/ ሃይማኖት አበራ የተነሣሀያን መዝጋቢነት

5ኛ. አቶ አደ ቸዉ ካህሣዬ የተጠሚያች ካርዉ ዓ ዓይ ነት

6ኛ. ወ/ሪት ብርቄ ዘበርጋ የውሃ ሽያጭና አስ ተናጋጁነት

የተመደቡት ሠራተኞች የቀጠሮዉ የአገልግሎት ጊዜ ካለቀበት ከሚያዚያ 1 ቀን 1992 ዓ.ም. ጀምሮ ወደፊት ለዕ ወራት የተራዘመሰ ቸዉ ስለሆነ ይሽዉ ታዉቀዉ ሠራተኞቹ በተጋተና በጥንቃቄ እየሠሩ የአገልግሎት ጊዜ ቸዉን አገጭረጸዉ የተረቀደ መሆኑን አናስታዉቃለን::

ከመገለሰ ሰላምታ ጋር

ቪቀ ጥ/ዮሃንስ ጊ/ጊዮርጊስ ጸሃፊ

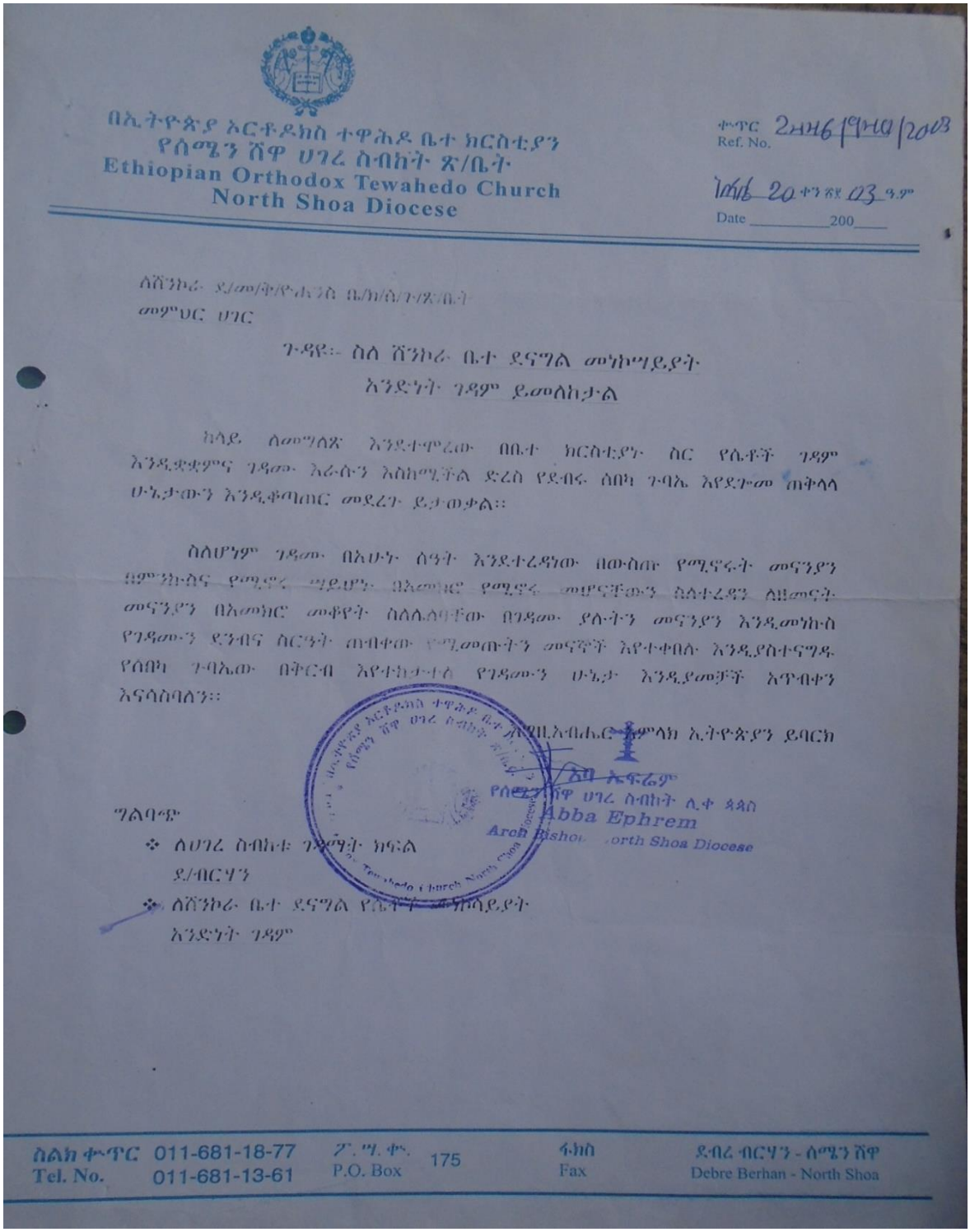
ሥራ አስኪያጅ

ግልባጭ ፣

_ ለሀገረ ስብከታችን ሂሳብ ክፍል

ደረሰኝ ፣

Appendix IX



በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ጽ/ቤት
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
North Shoa Diocese

ቁጥር Ref. No. 2ሐዘ6/ዓዘዓ/2013

ነሐሴ 20 ቀን ጸሀ 03 ዓ.ም
Date _____200____

ለሸንኮራ ደ/መ/ቅ/ዮሐንስ ቤ/ክ/ሰ/ት/ጽ/ቤት
መምህር ሀገር

ጉዳዩ፡- ስለ ሸንኮራ ቤተ ደናግል መነኮሳይያት
አንድነት ገዳም ይመለከታል

ከላይ ለመግለጽ እንደተሞረው በቤተ ክርስቲያኑ ስር የሴቶች ገዳም እንዲቋቋምና ገዳሙ እራሱን እስከሚችል ድረስ የደብሩ ሰበካ ጉባኤ እየደጎመ ጠቅላላ ሁኔታውን እንዲቆጣጠር መደረጉ ይታወቃል።

ስለሆነም ገዳሙ በአሁኑ ሰዓት እንደተረዳነው ዘውስጡ የሚኖሩት መናንያን ብምንኩስና የሚኖሩ ሳይሆኑ በአመነኮሮ የሚኖሩ መሆናቸውን ስለተረዳን ለዘመናት መናንያን በአመነኮሮ መቆየት ስለሌለባቸው በገዳሙ ያሉትን መናንያን እንዲመነኩስ የገዳሙን ደንብና ስርዓት ጠብቀው የሚመጡትን መናኞች እየተቀበሉ እንዲያስተናግዱ የሰበካ ጉባኤው በቅርብ እየተከታተለ የገዳሙን ሁኔታ እንዲያመቻች አጥብቀን እናሳስባለን።

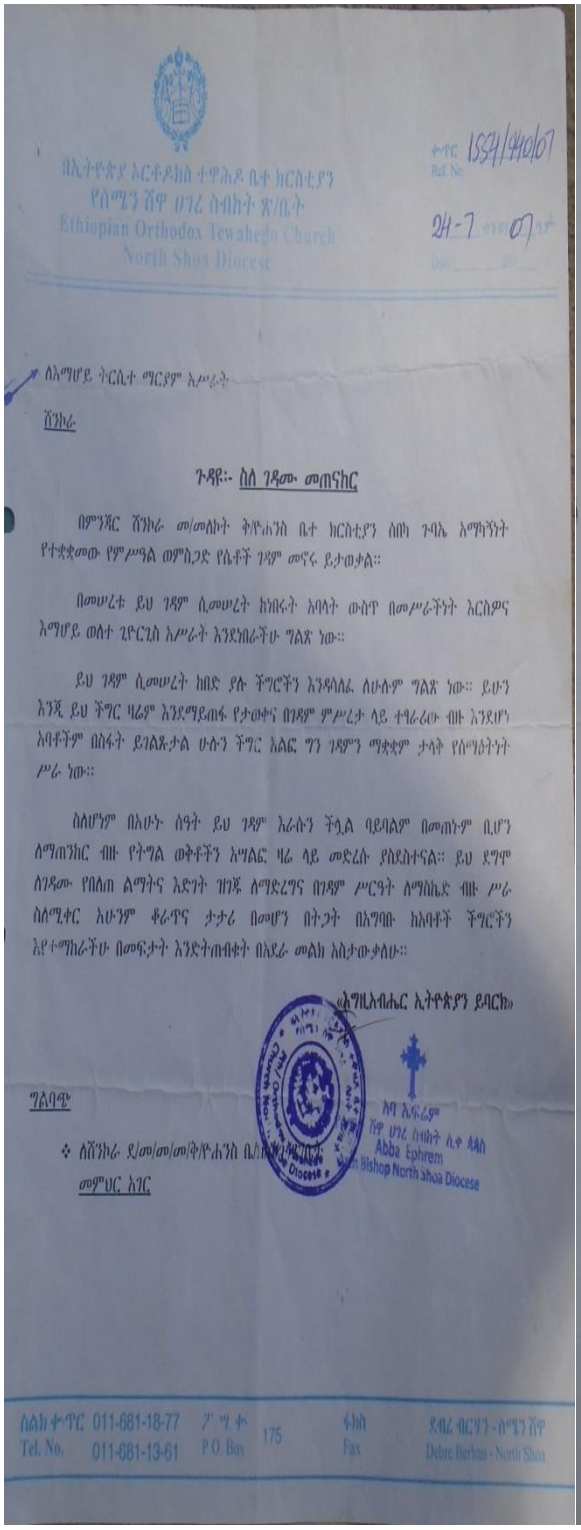
አህዘ.አብሐ.ሥላሴ ኢትዮጵያን ይባርክ

አባ አፍሬም
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ሊቀ ጳጳስ
Abba Ephrem
Arch Bisho... North Shoa Diocese

ግልባጭ
- ለሀገረ ስብከቱ ገዳማት ክፍል ደ/ብርሃን
- ለሸንኮራ ቤተ ደናግል የሴቶች መነኮሳይያት አንድነት ገዳም

ስልክ ቁጥር Tel. No. 011-681-18-77 / 011-681-13-61
ፖ.ሣ.ቁ. P.O. Box 175
ፋክስ Fax
ደብረ ብርሃን - ሰሜን ሸዋ Debre Berhan - North Shoa

Appendix-XX



የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ጽ/ቤት
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
North Shoa Diocese

ቁጥር 1534/940/07
Ref. No.
ቀን 24-7-07
Date

ለአማሀይ ትርሲተ ማርያም አሥራት

ሸንኮራ

ጉዳዩ፡- ስለ ገዳሙ መጠናከር

በምንጫር ሸንኮራ መ/መስኮት ቅ/ሐንስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ስበካ ጉባኤ አማካኝነት የተቋቋመው የምሥዓል ወምስጋድ የሴቶች ገዳም መኖሩ ይታወቃል።

በመሠረቱ ይህ ገዳም ሲመሠረት ከነበሩት አባላት ውስጥ በመሥራችነት እርስዎና አማሀይ ወለተ ጊዮርጊስ አሥራት እንደነበራችሁ ግልጽ ነው።

ይህ ገዳም ሲመሠረት ከበድ ያሉ ችግሮችን እንዳለለፈ ለሁሉም ግልጽ ነው። ይሁን እንጂ ይህ ችግር ዛሬም እንደማይጠፋ የታወቀና በገዳም ምሥረታ ላይ ተሳታፊው ብዙ እንደሆነ አባቶችም በስፋት ይገልጹታል ሁሉን ችግር አልፎ ግን ገዳምን ማቋቋም ታሳቅ የሰማያትነት ሥራ ነው።

ስለሆነም በአሁኑ ሰዓት ይህ ገዳም እራሱን ችሏል ባይባልም በመጠኑም ቢሆን ለማጠንከር ብዙ የትግል ወቅቶችን አሣልፎ ዛሬ ላይ መድረሱ ያስደስተናል። ይህ ደግሞ ለገዳሙ የበለጠ ልማትና እድገት ዝንጁ ለማድረግና በገዳም ሥርዓት ለማስኬድ ብዙ ሥራ ስለሚቀር አሁንም ቆራጥና ታታሪ በመሆን በትጋት በአማባቡ ከአባቶች ችሚሮችን እየተማከራችሁ በመፍታት እንድትጠብቁት በአደራ መልክ አስታውቃለሁ።

«እግዚአብሔር ኢትዮጵያን ይባርክ»

ግልባጭ

- ለሸንኮራ ደ/መ/መ/ቅ/ሐንስ ቤ/ክ/ስ/ጽ/ቤት

መምህር አገር

አባ ኤፍሬም
ሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ሊቀ ጳጳስ
Abba Ephrem
Arch Bishop North Shoa Diocese

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የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን
የሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ጽ/ቤት
Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
North Shoa Diocese

ቁጥር 787/940/08
ቀን 20-5-08

ለሸንኮራ ደ/መንክራት ቅ/ሐንስ ቤ/ክ/ስ/ጽ/ቤት

መምህር ሀገር

በቤተ ክርስቲያኑ ሥር የምስዓል ወምስጋድ የሴቶች ገዳም በሀገረ ስብከቱ ሲቀ ጳጳስ መልካም ፈቃድ ተመስርቶ ዘርፈ ብዙ አገለግሎት እየሰጠ ይገኛል።

ስለሆነም ስበካ ጉባኤው ስገዳሙ እድገት እያደረገ ያለው አስተዋጽኦ መልካም እንደሆነ ገዳማውያኑን እየተናገሩ ይገኛል።

ነገር ግን ስበካ ጉባኤው ቦፈቀደልን ቦታ ላይ የኩሽና ቤት ስንሰራ የቀበሌው ተወካዮች አፍርሱ የሚል ትእዛዝ አስተላለፉብን ስሰበኩው ብናሳስብ እና ስጥተናል እንዲፈርስ አላዘዝንም የሚል ምላሽ ሰጡን ብለው ያላቸውን ቅሬታ በአድራሻ ለሰበኩው ሊጽፉ ለመ/ቤታችን በግልባጭ አሳውቀዋል።

ስስዚህ የቤተ ክርስቲያኑ ቦታና ይዞታ ላይ መሥራት የሚችሉ ስለሆነ የገዳሙ ሀብት የስበኩው ሀብት መሆኑን በመገንዘብ ከሚመለከተው ጋር በመነጋገር ምላሽ እንዲያኙ እንድታደርጉ ስንል እናሳስባለን።

"ከመንፈሳዊ ሰላምታ ጋር"

ግልባጭ

- ለሸንኮራ ምስዓል ወምስጋድ የሴቶች ገዳም ጽ/ቤት

መምህር

አባ ኤፍሬም
ሰሜን ሸዋ ሀገረ ስብከት ሊቀ ጳጳስ
Abba Ephrem
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