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THE OCCUPATION OF KEREN
BY THE EGYPTIANS

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Egyptians, 4 July 1872 - 10 April 1885

Introduction

In the nineteenth century Ethiopia engulfed by external enemies and weakened by internal dissention struggled for its very survival. When the Egyptians probed the resistance of the northern borderlands by repeated incursions and raids Dedjach Wubye, the lord of Semen, Tigrai and Marabmellash could not do anything to protect the area from the devastating forays. Ironically, he himself caused debilitating raids against the region weakening the resistance of the people when facing the Egyptian raids which immediately followed. In fact, the Egyptians used the raids of Wubye's army, against the Kunama, Nara and Algaden in 1850, and against the Kunama by the ruler of Adiabo in 1866, as a flimsy excuse to justify the occupation of Keren and the neighbouring districts later on. The Dejjazmach himself had to flee to the steadfastness of the mountains with an army of 20,000 soldiers during his 1849 raid against the unlucky province, from the enemy. In a joint operation from Kassala and Samhar 5,000 infantry men and 1,000 cavalry under the command of a certain 'Amer Bey, and a Turkish battalion followed the raiders in hot pursuit. Wubye adamantly claimed the land and sea for himself and his raid was, unfortunately, a way of assuring his lordship over them, in the fashion of those days. He had to flee only to avoid defeat at the hands of a better trained and equipped enemy. Emperor Thewodros II rose to restore the might and glory of an Ethiopia almost torn to pieces and humiliated by the greedy war-lords. He was too busy to rescue the borderlands from the advance of the Egyptians. Aside from his grand dreams of kicking out the Muslims from his realm and triumphally entering Jerusalem he couldn't do much except appoint the Marabmellash ruler in Tsa'azega from a long distance to rule the northern borderlands. In one occasion he ordered the capture of Kahsay Gulja, Abba Keyssi, who escaped to the Egyptian possessions of this area. Moreover, Massawa and Sawakin changed hands from the Turks to the Egyptians in 1865 during his reign. The loss of Sennar (Funj Kingdom) during the Gonderine period opened up the way of the colonization of Taka (Kassala) province by the Egyptians. From this springboard they

occupied the northern borderlands and invaded the rest of the country. These series of weaknesses attained their greatest ebb during the reign of Emperor Yohannes IV. Abandoned by his own, deserted by his army and harassed by his enemies Thewodros II died a tragic death struggling to realize the great dream of returning the country to its former glory. Yohannes IV attempted to continue the path struck by his predecessor. Due to the gaping internal contradictions he could but protest to the fair judgement of European powers the Egyptian occupation of his territories. Despite a double, resounding victory against the Egyptians he couldn't pursue it to the Sea for logistic and technical reasons. Emperor Menelik II later on failed to drive out the Italians after the battle of Adwa due to similar circumstances. The lack of artillery and navy rendered the Red Sea littoral very vulnerable for a long time, like the lack of muskets caused the havoc of Ahmed Gragn. But the worst enemy has been internal dissension leading to fatal weakness.

Pre-occupation Activities

The Blean known for their military prowess and fierce attachment to their own culture and traditions were left to the mercy of the chaos and destruction that ensued at the wake of the Era of the Princes. Hungry warlords unleashed their ravaging hordes against the peoples and lands they ruled at the slightest excuse, such as, levying taxes or collecting a tribute, pursuing a rival, establishing authority, etc. Against this background Mohammed Ali Pasha who was sent by the Ottoman sultan to quell a rebellion in Egypt instead of returning to the Middle East after vanquishing the rebels decided to stay in Africa to carve out an empire for himself and his descendants. In this process the Sudan fell victim to greed and cruelty. After invading and occupying it the Egyptians cast their eyes on the sources of the Nile in Ethiopia and its Red Sea littoral. The aggressive policies of Mohammed Ali fueled by his military, industrial, educational, and economic modernization efforts pushed Egyptian imperialism to the threshold of a weak Ethiopia. Although these ambitions were dampened by the financial burden they brought on Egypt and curtailed by the Treaty of London, 1841, limiting the size of Mohammed Ali's army in order to secure European trade, they were later continued by his grandson Khedive Ismail to lead Egypt to

bankruptcy and ignominious defeat at the hands of the valiant Yohannes IV. But before that the Egyptians caused much havoc and devastation to the Ethiopian northern lowlands. The Hadendowa of Taka province made a bitter stand at the battle of Kassala and were not completely subjugated later on, but their chief was outwitted into signing a peace treaty through religious trickery to be detained and exiled to his death. Thus Kassala fell and was fortified in 1840. This significant date left Ethiopia extremely vulnerable from the Barka and Gash.

The enemy chose three tools to gradually weaken Blean resistance and eventually occupy their land. These were religious infiltration, commercial influence and the sword. At least, since the beginning of the sixth century Christianity was introduced to what is today's Sudan. The three famous Nubian Kingdoms of Nobatia, Muqurra and Alwa were Christian. The fall of Egypt to the Arab onslaught at the first half of the seventh century and the gradual infiltration of Arab tribes into the Sudan in search of gold, slaves, ivory and other resources completely replaced Christianity by Islam. Some traces of it could be detected up to the 18th century, but till precise dates are unearthed by the current archaeological investigation taking place in the Sudan we are not sure of the time of the demise of Christianity there. The Beja who are the neighbours of the Blean were partially or almost in their entirety converted to nominal Christianity. The Keren area is known to have been evangelized during the early phase of Axumite Christendom. The ruins of 'Aratukhuw, near Halhal, and Hagar, in Asghede Baqla attest to this fact. After using the founder of the Khatmia in the capitulation of Kassala the mudirs of that city began to agitate the subjugated peoples of Algheden, Nara (Baria), Beni Amer and others against the Kistan (Christian) peoples of the Ethiopian borderlands, which were much neglected by the national church and their nominal rulers. Muslim propaganda in the face of a weak Christianity gradually replaced the latter in most of the cases. Beginning in the 1820's to the 1850's the area was almost claimed by Islam. The Blean Tarqe and the Mensa' had some Christian minorities. Wandering Muslim holymen, fuqra, spread their newly invigorated and revived faith throughout the width and breadth of the land. The Khatmia of the Morghani from the Sudan and the 'Ad Sheikh faction in Samhar were the active propagators. The two Christian bulwarks of Debre Sellasie of Tsaidamba and Debre Sina in Keren district were inactive. The monks did not date to

conduct pastoral work among the faithful due to the general anarchy and insecurity. As the old priests among the Blean and their neighbours died off because of advanced age no younger priests replaced them. This situation perfectly fitted a rejuvenated and militant Islam pushing its way from the Middle East into eastern Africa. The second tool was commerce. Muslim traders plying the trade routes connecting the Nile Valley with the Red Sea coast brought with them prestige and economic impact in favour of their religion. Active proselytization and propaganda won many converts. The third tool was the sword. Before directly occupying the area the Egyptians tactfully weakened resistance by incursions, attacks, raids and invasions leaving in their wake devastation, destruction, death and poverty by the constant plundering, slaying and burning. Brigands, robbers, other assemblages of criminals and regular Egyptian troops ascended to their target from the Gash and Barka in hordes to attack their innocent victims. Their devastating blows left deep wounds and plummeted the morale. The material damage was also of untold proportions within the framework of the economic status of this people. Before recovering from the merciless and deeply devastating blow of Wubye in 1844, the Blean were raided by Mohammed Khusraw bey's troops and vassals on the morning of 22 January of the same year in a surprise attack. Deprived of their youthful warriors, the cream of the crop, resisting Wubye's raid and impoverished they could not effectively confront the enemy. Desolation and despair gripped the land rendering the situation critical and gravely precarious. Other devastations followed. As indicated in the appendix attached to this paper the raids that took place between 1850 to 1871 wrought great havoc on the people and the land. The raid of 22 January 1854 is famous and quite memorable in Blean history. Coming in the wake of Wubye's even more devastating raid during harvest time in 1844. His large army poured over the unarmed and unsuspecting Blean, since they faithfully paid the tribute to Dej. Hailu, the prince's Hamassien lieutenant. Sadly enough the governor forcibly guided this unpropitious hurricane down on them. The three pockets of Blean resistance were dealt with a stiff blow. Before recovering from this wound while the youth warrior population was depleted Khusraw bey administered a harsh blow through his regular army and bands of

brigands. The immediate excuse was an unfounded claim on the land and the Tilib (tribute). Through the help of the British v/consul Walter Plowden, and the active cooperation of the French and British consul generals in Cairo the Lazarist missionary Giovanni Stella was able to recover the great majority of the captives and secure a small indemnity for the loot. Some sort of guarantee also was granted to let alone this Christian enclave as subject to French protection. Before being destituted Khusray bey was obstinate in his thuggery and greed. He responded to Stella thus, ".... sachez seulement que, si vos Bogos ne m'ont pas bientôt payé tout leur tribut en entier, ils vont être chatiés une seconde fois d'une façon encore plus exemplaire...". It seems through the action of this brave Catholic missionary the Blean seem to have gained a brief respite for a period of about eight years. Since the people were converted to Catholicism a sort of French protectorate based on the concordat signed in 1801 between the Vatican and the French government to protect the Catholics found within the Ottoman empire was attempted to be applied, the Egyptians grudgingly and reluctantly gave a faint recognition for a short time only to deny it in 1864. Ismail Pasha angered at count Bisson's adventurous events in the Baria (Nara) area banished French pretensions and set on seizing the enclave. The French consular agent reported, "Après m' avoir écouté avec attention Ismail pasha me dit q'il voulait tout d'abord savoir a quel titre le gouvernement de l'Empereur entendait intervenir en faveur des Bogos. D'après lui, mesdeux predecesseurs auraient déclaré que les chrétiens et leur territoire étaient sous le protectorat officiel de France et qu'il en résultait un droit direct et complet d'intervention. Le vice-rois s'est élevé avec chaleur contre cette prétention en me citant des précédents historiques dont il résulterait que le territoire occupé par les Bogos appartient à l'Egypte."** The French wanted to get a foothold in the

* Stella to Poussou, Paris, writing from Keren, 29 November 1854, Annales de la Congregation de la Mission (Paris), v.20, 1855, p.570.

** Outrey to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9 May 1865, A.E. Egypte p35.

Red Sea littoral of Ethiopia. Therefore, their Christian sympathy lies on their real motive of colonial gains. The British agents too were sympathetic to the idea of protecting these innocent victims. Whatever motives the British might have had were obstructed in order to assure the safety of their prisoners; at Thewodros' court. Stella next approached the Italians, despite keen interest internal problems of the newly united kingdom prevented it from jumping on the prey. The several letters written by the Blean chiefs under Stella's instigation failed to attain the desired goal. Ironically enough it was the Egyptians who got the initiative and due to another set of completely different circumstances Italy was to replace them in its colonial enterprise.

Occupation

After continuous hammering at Blean resistance and villainously sapping their morale Ismail definitely set on occupying Bogos, between 1864 and 1865. The several trips, harangues and correspondences by Stella, v/consuls: W. Plowden, G. Lejean, Munzinger, Cameron, etc, and other officials, back and forth to Massawa, Kassala, Cairo, Paris and London became useless. The Khedive found an excellent instrument towards fulfilling this mission in the person of Werner Munzinger. Johan Albert Werner Munzinger Pasha (1832-1875) originally came to Africa to study oriental languages at Alexandria, he joined afterwards a commercial firm which sent him on a Red Sea mission and he spent many months at Massawa in 1853. He settled down among the Blean at Keren 1854-1861. This period afforded him the opportunity of following his career of adventure, exploration, intrigue, diplomacy and fortune hunting. He married a Blean and was able to insert himself into the main - stream of the people's life. He was not only acquainted with the contemporary political trends and urgent problems, but was deeply involved in the issues that shaped the future outcome of the area. His exploration of nature and cartographic achievements were quickly switched to political ends. On his return from Massawa from Europe in 1865 he was appointed a French v/consul and added to this the office of British v/consul the same year. This political chameleon played a great role

in the planned colonization of Ethiopia and the actual occupation of Bleanland. The Emperor Yohannes mused as to how this character can contain two hearts in one bosson, i.e., he suspected his loyalty to France and Britain simultaneously. He met him for the first time at his court in 'Adwa when he was still Bezbez Kassa. Munzinger joined Maj. Grant in their mission to Kassa to prepare the path of the British expedition against Thewodros. The former's role in the reconnoitering and logistics field is well attested by his being awarded the order of Bath in 1870. Disappointed at the slow pace of his promotion in French and British service he joined the Egyptians in 1871 and became the governor of Massawa with the rank of Bey. The following year he was promoted to governor of Eastern Sudan with the rank of Pasha. While still French consul Munzinger requested Bezbez Kassa to grant him Bogos as his personal fief which the latter rejected. He resented him as the most powerful contender of Thewodros' throne. He manipulated his Hamassien governor Woldemichael (1869) to be independent of him and directly correspond with Napoleon III. He extracted a promise of Bogos governorship from Woldu. Gomida, but as the latter was granted the favour of imprisonment by Kassa in return of his independent ways the dream fizzled out. Munzinger was a secret agent of the Khedive before openly joining his service. He dabbled his intriguing hands in all sorts of chances in order to promote his fortune. After the battle of Sedan he caused Kassa to congratulate the Kaiser and promote diplomatic initiatives. Franz Hassen, his Hungarian secretary, was ordered by him to secretly act as a German consular agent in Massawa during Bismark's chancellorship. Munzinger's meddling into internal affairs increased with the occupation of the borderlands adjacent to the eastern Sudan. The driving motive of the occupation of this area was the goal of colonizing of the whole of Ethiopia in order to control the headwaters of the Nile, the Red Sea and the African littoral of the Indian Ocean. This long aimed dream of Mohammed Ali Pasha was to be executed into reality by the harum - scarum attempts of the Egyptians under Khedive Ismail. Munzinger Pasha was called to Cairo on 25 March 1872 from Massawa to confer with the former on matters of confidence. He was chosen to execute the occupation of the Christian borderlands. On his return to his governorate, at the head of 1,200 troops he entered Keren from the Habab on 4 July 1872.

His troops of the first battalion of the second regiment pitched their tents at 'Ona which, previous to the establishment of Keren as a modern town, served as a sort of commercial centre for traders from Kassala to Massawa. Munzinger so familiar with the topography immediately proceeded to the summit of the site of the present fort of Keren, also known by its previous name of fort of Sanhit. The position commanded the vast Magareh plain from the west, the northern approach of the 'Ansaba valley, the Joufa plain to the south and the valley leading to the highland in the east. Ismail unable to attack directly the impregnable natural fortress, decided to occupy Bogos, Mensa', Maria Bejuk and Habab at will without any danger of Abyssinian retaliation. Due to the geological configuration the area would serve as a base and gateway to future victory and conquest. Alas, to the contrary, the mountains, valleys and plains were to witness a rag-tag army fleeing a devouring lion at the edge of the bastion, in panic and shame. Munzinger, now added more territories to his pashalic, the entire Eastern Sudan including Massawa, Sawakin and the district of Samhar were his domain. The entire Red Sea littoral gradually fell into Egyptian hands. The encirclement of Ethiopia was complete with the occupation of Harar not so long afterwards. What remained was the invasion of Ethiopia from the coastal base. Munzinger strengthened his troops by sending in more men from Massawa. In the process of building the fortress the Magareh forest was destroyed, probably for military strategy more than anything else, and the ancient sacred grounds of Blean tombs on the hill site were violated. The stones of the graves were used in building the walls of the fort. The Pasha drew and executed the very first city plan of Keren. This new city was called 'Irdira after the Turkish word for fort. The word has been adopted in the local languages. A small sleepy market place was transformed into a small modern town. Wells were dug, telegraphic lines introduced to the area earlier now connected Keren with the sea and via the Middle East with Europe. Road construction was also a novelty. Some semblances of justice and modern administration were also attempted at. But the republican system of the Blean did not adopt the centralized administrative innovation.

Blood feuds and brigandage were minimized, but slavery despite formal proclamations did not disappear completely. Like in Massawa Munzinger had designs for public works here. But Egyptian avarice for property and extortion frowned upon such undertakings. Excessive taxes inhibited tobacco and cotton plantation growth. The pasha is credited for introducing the date palm in this area. The Egyptians are well remembered for their misgovernment and avarice here. Although they might have looked upon it as a burden rather than as an asset, infact, one official claimed that the area only provided £700 tribute annually. the territory provided an excellent caravan route, was fertile, commanded the Barca-Massawa route and served as key to the plateau. Realizing this the Egyptians planned a railroad from Kassala to Massawa. But their ambitions led them to the abyss of destruction and defeat before the project saw the light of day. Ismail carried away by his grandiose scheme of an African empire continued on his plans of attacking Ethiopia. Munzinger whom previously Yohannes called the messenger of the devil continued his machinations. He planted his agents smack in the middle of the Emperor's court, played the provincial governors against each other and against Yohannes, maintained strong contact with the Muslim population for purpose of sabotage against him, and so forth. In Keren itself the first step he took was to issue a proclamation waiving the obligation of one year's tribute. Through a Khedivial firman religious freedom was proclaimed, "Chretiens et muslmans son mes sujets. Je vieux le bien de tous. Comme a' Alexandrie et au Caire, je proclame la liberte' religieuse." To boot, Munzinger ordered the construction of the famous St. Michael's church on government funds. He manipulated missionaries like Mgr. Marcel Touvier to meddle in politics, and worse, to support the occupation. A bearer of the cross siding with the crescent! The controversey in regard to this bishop and Munzinger's duping such figures for his own ends was earlier cleared between Yohannes and de Courzec, the French v/consul. The regrettable treachery committed against Kassa by his French military technicians

* Gimalac Paul. " Le Vicariat apostobique d'Abyssinie, 1839-1931." Revue d'Histoire des Missions, June 1932, p.20.

during the battle of 'Assam (Adwa) was discovered at Teklegiorgis' camp at his capture. Letters implicating the technicians and the bishop fell into the victor's hands.

Unfortunately for Yohannes Keren was seized by the Egyptians a few months after his coronation as Emperor. He received the bad news while he was away in Wollo quelling an 'Azebo rebellion. Internal rebellions were the order of the day as he was a new Emperor, himself being an ex-rebel who seized the throne by sheer force like his predecessor Thewodros and his successor Menelik, the later claiming immediate legitimacy from an unbroken lineage of the kingdom of Shoa. At first he sent a strongly worded letter on 31 July 1872 to Ismail in response to the Khedive's letter using a flimsy excuse of the occupation on the Baria-Bazen area raids by the Adiabo ruler. He insisted that the affair was an internal one and did not concern Egypt. By opening an extensive diplomatic campaign he vehemently protested the occupation two weeks later. Kirkham was sent to Europe bearing letters dated 13 August 1872 to Queen Victoria, the French President, the emperors of Austria, Germany, and Russia. The occupation was either hushed or intentionally distorted by the European mass media under Egyptian sinister whispering. The European powers did not want to be involved in the incident to safeguard their own commercial or other interests. Poor Yohannes' misguided confidence in mutual Christian brotherhood against a common enemy caused his appeals to fall on deaf ears. Bogos and the surrounding areas were ruled undisputedly. However, like his initial rage at the developments, he didn't give up on the matter. Immediately after his return from the 'Azebo to 'Adwa he is supposed to have summoned his war council to attack the invading enemy, but was dissuaded from doing so due to the internal situation and military unpreparedness. His second attempt to get British support was frustrated. The Egyptians refused to regard the conflict as a boundary dispute. International arbitration never came forth. Nevertheless the Emperor bought precious time by these diplomatic manoeuvres. He was firm and constant in his claim of Bogos against all the odds. His flanking movements by sending the Saraye and Hamassien army in the beginning of the conflict was done to size up the enemy's intentions. Despite Hamassien's request for submission Munzinger didn't move any

farther waiting Khedivial orders and lying in wait for any move from the part of the Ethiopians, so that he justify his actions ~~with~~ retaliatory measures. The submission of Bogos chiefs was prearranged by Munzinger, the Maria used to pay a nominal tribute till they rebelled by seizing some guns and horses from the Kassala oppressors, Habab and Bejuk chiefs followed suit. Mensa' chiefs were told to apply another time and were only accepted after the completion of the fort. The earlier requests to European powers for deliverance from an oppressive neighbours were tragically rebuffed. Although more tragic consequences might have ensued if some kind of a protectorate was attained to instead of a friendly assistance. Yohannes while still Abba Bezbez Kassa in the process of consolidating his power over Tigray and Marebmellas appointed governors, such as, René and Woldemichael. But neglected the area when he was fighting for the imperial throne. Ineffectual rulers such as Dej. Hailu were of no consequence in the Egypto- Ethiopian conflict. Munzinger's feat of political somersault contributed greatly towards the occupation of the territories. Before being appointed governor of Massawa this person argued that the land of Christians should not be occupied by Egypt since this would threaten the security of Ethiopia itself and the existence of the people of the outlying districts. Barely a month after his appointment on 23 April 1871 the bey proposed to Cairo the annexation of Halhal-Bogos, Maria, etc. Indeed a political chameleon! He had already condemned two years earlier Ismail's plan to do the same thing. Not only this, his web was spun complete by not only having the Egyptian takeover enhanced by France but also by having the fact endorsed by it. A man of many loyalties he was later to meet a tragic end of his career and life on the same logic - treachery. At one time on the pretext of protesting as a French v/consul the persecution of French Catholic missionaries he rudely rebuked and threatened Abba Bezbez pointing out to him that he would meet the same fate as Thewodros at Maqdala, if he did not behave well. Actually the fellow imagined that it would take only one thousand French troops to bring Kassa in line. We see later the Egyptians sending their troops up the plateau to Guedaguedi and Gura' under the misguided interpretation of the Maqdala events. They were most misinformed folks on Ethiopian military and political affairs of the day. The Egyptian garrison at the fort of Keren was not

so significant nor was their rule of the area effectual. Yet military technology made the difference. Generalissimo Alula, perhaps the best general nineteenth century Ethiopia produced, raided the districts at will but could neither dislodge the Egyptians from the fort nor could he establish a permanent representative in the area. Remote control from the heights of Adtekhlai or Asmara was only remote. Mountain guns were not in style with the Ethiopian army. For instance, the Sanhit garrison consisted in 1883, according Wyld's observations, only of:

infantry	794 blacks (White Nile)
artillery	115 nearly all Egyptians.
Bashi Bazooks	300

All this were officered by Egyptians. In sheer numbers Alula's army could have swallowed them alive several times but technically there were problems. The sea gate of Ethiopia was gradually locked out to Ethiopia since Selim's fleet seized Sawakin and Massawa in 1557. Even if the Egyptians were dislodged from the land it was very difficult to safeguard the territorial integrity without a single ship to guard the maritime approaches. That is how the British justified their decision of allowing Massawa to be snatched by their weak, European kin and kith, the Italians. Thanks to our Mahdist brothers the 'Adwa Treaty (Hewett Treaty) of 1884 was signed by Egypt and Ethiopia under British guarantorship. As stipulated in ~~the~~ ^{by} Bogos was to be restored to Ethiopia on 12 September 1884 (1 Meskerem 1877). But the clause dealing with the safe evacuation of the Egyptian garrisons from Kassala, Amedib, and Sanhit, and the addition of Qalabat by Victoria's letter outside the provision's of the treaty, ended up in wrangles. Col. Herbert C. Chermside, the newly arrived Red Sea governor, and Captain Speedy were not happy at all in Alula's raids against the peoples soon to be liberated from the Egyptians. Despite the latter's formal apology they were not confident in the relief of Kassala by the Ethiopians. Contrary to their earlier request they asked the Emperor and Ras Alula to withdraw the army from the Kassala relief campaign. They were afraid the very people whom they wanted to attack the Mahdists would fall into their very hands by backlash to the

negative activities of the Ethiopian army. Therefore foot dragging and completely an unthought of solution to the detriment of Ethiopia was hatched. A Muslim anti-Mahdist buffer zone led by a religious authority and a Beni 'Amer leader was to be centered in Keren. In the meantime the Kassala siege resulted in Mahdist take over. A slap in the face to the British crooks emanated from these developments. While only the small fortress of Tsebab about km. north of the main fort was handed over to Gabrekidan, Alula's representative, in order to comply with the provisions of the treaty, that is what the bureaucratic swindles claimed!, the fort itself was restored on 10 April 1884. Good grief! Alas, the Egyptians were replaced while still within the walls of the fort by the Italians at Massawa with British complicity on 15 October 1884, even before the ink of the 'Adwa Treaty dried up. Admiral Caimi with Col. Saletta occupied Massawa on 5 February 1885.

Conclusion

Internal weakness resulting from dissention emanating from greed, haughty arrogance and ignorance forced Ethiopia watch helplessly the Egyptians grab the northern borderlands. Neglected and misgoverned for too long the Blean and their neighbours remained rejected by the centrifugal forces of politics into oblivion. Peoples and land cannot be worn or stuck away into some antique closet like some kind of an ornament. Rejuvenation and open-mindedness can foster and nurture a healthy nationalism. The sufferings, oppression and neglect which are in the forgotten sections of our national map could shape the national existence of our country. After all, exposing our extremities to damage could have electrifying effects.

Appendix I

Egyptian Raids Against the Bogos, 1850-1871

<u>Date</u>	<u>Raids</u>	<u>Raiders</u>	<u>Captives</u>	<u>Victim Casualty</u>	<u>Cattle, Goats, etc.</u>	<u>Captives Rescued</u>	<u>Indemnity</u>
1850	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
22 Jan 1854	1	-	340	150	18,000	235 plus	17,000 Thallers
1862	1	2,000	200 plus	49	1,300	-	--
1863	-	-	-	9	300	-	--
Jan, July, Oct. 1864	3	2,700	197	99 plus	4,860	90	480 Thallers promised
June, Aug. 1865	3 plus	300 plus	100	260	4,200	-	-
1866	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1867	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1868-1871	minor	-	-	-	-	-	-

The above data pieced together from various published and unpublished sources is preliminary. There are various lacunae and some information could be duplicate while others could be not precise.

APPENDIX II

2/ Letter of Blean Chiefs to Guillaume Lejean

መልዕክተ ዘበገባ ተብላ፡ ነባ ኣቤተ ኮንሱል ፍርንሳይ ዘሞላዎ፡፡
እንፋተ ኣሉ ለድጉን ደነና ኣሉን፡፡

እርስዎ ከጤኑ ባርያና በኒመር ፪፻፲፱ ሁኖ በሌሊት ምንጭ
ባንባዓ ወደብነ፡፡ ህ/፪ ሰው ከኛ ገደሉ፡ ለገበርና ሴት የተረከ ከ፪
ይበልጣል፡ የጤድ ከብተ ገህ ተሰባተ መተ ነው፡፡

ባርያና በኒመር ለተርክ ገበር እንዲሰጡ እርስዎ ይገባሉ፡፡
ሁሁን እኛ ከፍርንሱን ንግሥ በቀር የሚረዳን አናውቅም በሌሊት
እርስዎን ለገለጽናለን ወደርስዎን ለገጠለን ለፍርንሳይ ንግሥ እንዲነገሩልን፤
ሰውና ከብተ እንዲያስመልሱልን፤ ዳግቆም በጣም እንዲጠበቁን፤
እንደሀገራቸው እንዲቀበሉን፤ እንደ ሕውቀታቸው እንዲረዳን፡፡

ይህን መልእክት ለአባታችን አቡነ ዩስገብ ሸርስዎ እንዲሰጥ
ሰጠናል፡ ንዳያችን ሁሉ የሚያውቅ ነው፡፡

አድገ ወድ ፊደል፡፡ — ገላውድዬን ወድ ገባይ፡፡ — /Verso/
እዘዘ ወድምንደር፡፡ በፊህ ወድ ረዲዕ፡፡ — ገበረ ሥላሤ ወድአኮም፡፡
ገንዳር ወድ አረዶም፡፡

ከረን በጥር በፋ ቀን፡፡ — ፡፡ / 1 January 1863 /

This Letter was addressed to the French Consul in Massawa, then G. Lejean, asking for protection from the French government against the Egyptians. It was preserved by Lejean and was published by J. Perruchon; "Notes pour l'histoire d'Éthiopie contemporaine" Revue semitique d'Épigraphie et d'Histoire Ancienne, 7 année, Octobre 1899, PP. 364-369. The orthographic mistakes have been reproduced as they appear in the article.

APPENDIX II

1/ Letter of Blean Chiefs to Napoleon III

— ያንሰባ የክርስቲያን ጥላምንት የበገሰ የመንሳዕ የቤጌክ ያደጋይም ለፈረንሲስ ንጉሠ ነገሥት ለጎይለኛ ላቸናሬ ለሥራቀ ክርስቲያን ደጋፊ ለናጸሊዩን የሚያበቡት ነገር ያመለክታል፡፡

እኛ ብዙ ዘመን ለሐበባ ንጉሠ ተገዛነ ነገር ገን ከ፪፻፶፯ ዘመን ውዲህ ከሚከቡን አባላዎቻችን አንዱ ያደጋይ ነገር ለጥቅም በመሆኑ ቀረ ነ በሠናር መንግሥት ጊዜ የሚያስጨንቅን አልነበረም፡፡ ተርክ ገን ሰሥሃርና ባርካ ከገዛ ውዲህ ብዙ ጊዜ ዘረፈን በጎይለኛ አንድናሰላም መገታቸን ለፆቻቸን ከባታቸን ወሰዳብን፡፡ ጎረቤታችን ማሪያ ሲሰጠን ሲባል ይህን ፈርተው አሰለሙ፡፡ እኛ አንደ ነዚያ መሀን ጠላት በሃይማኖታችንና በነጣ መኖር ወደድነ፡፡

በመሠረቱ ጊዜ ተርክ ሲዘርፋን የፈረንሲስ ንጉሠ ነገሥቱን ይዞ አንደረዳነ አወቀነ፡፡ ደገዎ የፈረንሳይ መንግሥት ጎይለኛ ታላቅ ነገር የምታደርግ በሐጋም የሚኖረ በዕረፍት እንዳሉ በንሰማ ለሰበ ሰፊ ንጉሠ ነገሥቱን ራሳችንና ለገራችን በሐገ በውነተኛው ጠበቃ እንደ ፈረንሲስ መንግሥት ክፍል እንዲቀበሉን ደገዎም ጎረቤታችን አባላም በመኖሩ ነገር እንዳያስጨንቁን እንለምናለን፡፡ የእግዚአብሔር በረከት ለንጉሥና ለቤተ ለመንግሥት ይብዛ፡፡

ከረን በሚያዝያ ፲፱ ቀን ፲፱፻፲፬

እዘዘና በሪህ የከረን የጌፋ ጥላምንት
አድግና ገብረሥላሴ ያደዘግት
ገላውዳዎስና ተዘረሬይ ያደሻበት
አድሪስ ያደጋይም
ከንቲባ ዳኦር የላይ መንሳዕ
ከንቲባ ተደርብ የታች መንሳዕ
አምሐራይ የቤጌክ
አስፈጻሚ ማክሰ የገብይ አለቡ ጥላምንት /1/
/1/ ዳጎራይት ጸሐፍት በካላስ አድ

This letter was copied by ^{by} and was found in a notebook of Abba Teklemariam Samharay Known as. ጠግረ ሉጊደን, in the Library of Keren Catholic Seminary.

Appendix II

Letter of Blean Chiefs to Col. Stanton

"It is two years now since the people of Barka and Barias, the Egyptian subjects, have begun to disturb us, they steal our children and our cattle.

Furthermore, we want whole-heartedly that our country belong to England and we recognize no other master than yourself....."

Signed by Blean chiefs.

The translation of the original Amharic addressed to Col. Stanton sometime in December 1866 has been reproduced on Correspondence Respecting Abyssinia, 1846-1868; 540,686, authored by the Foreign Office of Great Britain. London: IUP, 1868.

Letter of Blean Chiefs to Walter Plowden

The governor of Taka, with the view of forcing us to adopt Mahomedanism has burnt our villages and carried away 340 of our wives and children; he has plundered our cattle and destroyed our church.

Rather than adopt the Musulman creed we will abandon our country. Dejazmatch Oobey is not now in a position to assist us.

We now apply to you; if possible entreating you to remain amongst us ^{as} our father and our protector. You are the representative of the Christian English king; if you have power save us from the Turks; give us back our wives and children, and enable us to keep the faith of our fathers. You are our last resource; and above all we would desire that you should here build a house and display your flag.

The letter was signed by eleven of the principal inhabitants of Bogos, and approved by a multitude in the presence of Walter Plowden, the British v/consul at Massawa, the original was most probably written in Amharic by Giovanni Stella before 29 March 1854, the translation was signed by Plowden (inclosure n. 161, to the Earl of Clarendon, Kassala, 18 April 1854,; Correspondences respecting Abyssinia, 1868, p.86.)

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