

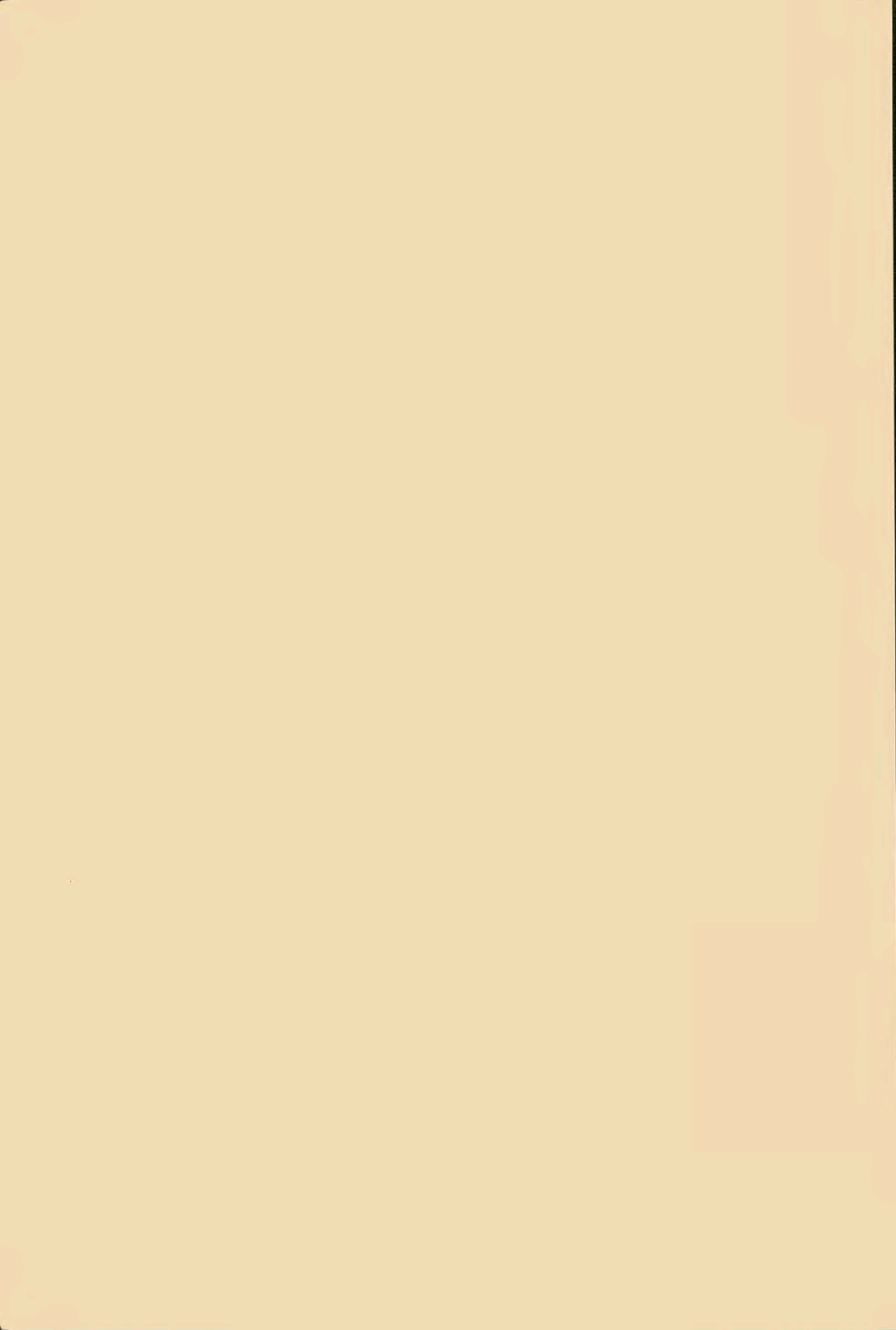
TEWODROS AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES 1855-1868

EDITED BY SVEN RUBENSON



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King of Kings Tēwodros to Bishop Samuel Gobat in Jerusalem April 1858



TEWODROS AND HIS
CONTEMPORARIES
1855-1868

ACTA ÆTHIOPICA VOLUME II

TEWODROS AND HIS
CONTEMPORARIES
1855–1868

EDITED BY SVEN RUBENSON

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Preface

The background and aim of the series ACTA AETHIOPICA was explained in the preface and introduction to volume I, *Correspondence and Treaties 1800–1854* (Addis Abeba and Evanston, 1987). The project to make known “the voice of the Ethiopians” has now resulted in a second volume, *Tewodros and His Contemporaries 1855–1868*.

Now that this volume is finally ready for publication, I want to express my gratitude to the sponsors of the project, to my co-editors, and to the many archivists, librarians, colleagues and friends who have made it possible for us to complete the work.

Two of the senior scholars of Addis Ababa University, Dr. Merid Wolde Aregay from the Department of History and Dr. Amsalu Aklilu from the School of Languages, kindly joined me as co-editors of the present volume. They have worked tirelessly on the translations of the Gi’iz and Amharic documents in particular, and have generously advised me on all issues that have arisen in connection with matters of Ethiopian society, culture and mentality, so necessary to know in order to grasp the intent of some of the authors. The documents in Arabic once more posed special problems, which led to the co-option of my son Samuel as editor for those. He has also taken much of the responsibility for the production of the index and the final technical editing of the volume.

Over the years we have naturally benefited from the advice of many other colleagues who have shared their knowledge and insight with us. Dr. Hussein Ahmed of the Department of History, AAU, made the first drafts of a number of the Arabic translations. The members of the graduate seminar at the Department of Middle Eastern Languages in Lund discussed some of these translations at length before they found their final form. Dr. Adhana Mengistab, Addis Abeba, and Dr. Tekeste Negash, Uppsala, helped to identify places and persons in Eritrea. The late Dr. Aster Akalu and Dr. Kjell Norlin, Lund, Dr. Taddese Beyene, Addis Abeba, and Professor Alessandro Sandro, Rome, provided important advice on difficult passages in other documents.

For the clarity and readability of the English translations I am deeply indebted to the late editor of the Addis Ababa University Press, Mrs Innes Marshall, who worked long hours with us over the early versions of the translations, and to my English language editor in Lund, Dr. Bengt Ellenberger. In some cases it has been necessary in the interest of readability to choose a less literal translation than my co-editors wanted. Where several translations were possible or at least seemed to be so, I have made the choice, largely on contextual grounds. It is only fair, therefore, that I accept the responsibility for all shortcomings of the volume, linguistic as well as historical.

We are grateful to the Controller of Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, London, to the *Conservateur en Chef* of the diplomatic archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the head of the National Archives of Egypt, as well as to the keepers of all other archives concerned for their kind permission to have documents in their possession published in ACTA AETHIOPICA. Our gratitude likewise goes to the many archivists and librarians who have so generously assisted us in our search. A special thanks is due to Monsignor Giuseppe Metzler for his invaluable help in locating one of the most important letters of this volume at the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano*, namely the letter of King Tewodros’s rival *Dejjazmach* Nigusē to the Pope in 1858.

The generous financial aid of the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries and of the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences is acknowledged with deep gratitude.

S. R.

Introduction

This second volume of ACTA ÆTHIOPICA follows the principles and format of volume I. It contains all the official documents we have been able to locate from the period covered, such as treaties and other agreements, whether actually signed or in the form of drafts, and all letters of a diplomatic and political nature. But also semi-official as well as private letters are included. The distinction between one category and the other is in any case quite arbitrary, and though the number of letters preserved starts to increase in the middle of the nineteenth century, it has seemed justifiable to include almost everything we have been able to find. Letters, more or less private, from courtiers and clergymen, scholars and servants, tell their own stories about personal relations, worldly aspirations and spiritual concerns. It is in these letters we meet the members of a growing foreign-educated elite in Ethiopia, and can begin to understand the impact of new ideas emanating from Europe, and the confrontations and conflicts to which they led. Some of the private letters obviously contain little information of general interest; but they do provide us with clues to the development and spread of the Amharic language as a means of written communication.

We have attempted to trace all letters dispatched or reportedly dispatched by Ethiopians during the period covered. Naturally we have had to give up in some cases. That we have not found the letters from "Ailou Sallasse" of Shewa to Napoleon III, which the French consular agent Henri Lambert expected to forward in August 1858, is not very strange; they were probably never written—or may actually have been the letters from Merid Azmach Hayle Mīka'ēl to the d'Abbadie brothers (documents nos 39 and 40). Others, such as those from Tēwodros to the Russian tsar, reported by the British and French consuls in Ethiopia on several occasions, may well have been dispatched, but we have not been able to establish if they reached their destination.

* * * * *

This volume reveals the same diversity in terms of languages as volume I. The major development is that Amharic has almost completely replaced Gi'iz in the official correspondence. This is the case not only in the correspondence of Tēwodros but of his rivals as well, Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl (known as Agew Nigusē) in the 1850s no less than Gobezē Gebre Medhin/Tekle Gīyorgīs, Kasa Mirçha/Yohannis and Minilik, who vied for power at the very end of his reign. In this respect there was no difference between Gonder, Tigray and Shewa. Arabic retained its position as the second written language at the court of Tēwodros. Among the Afar *shaykhs* and *sulṭāns* on the Red Sea coast Arabic was the obvious medium of communication, and the letters as well as the treaty of 1862 were written in that language. Though the number of foreign-educated Ethiopians was still small, a number of letters in English, French, Italian, and even one in, albeit rather poor, Latin have survived.

All evidence indicates that language at Tēwodros's court was a means of communication pure and simple; the European idea of using it as a banner and a symbol of nationalism or self-assertion had apparently not yet reached Ethiopia. Thus the choice of language was politely pragmatic. While Amharic was the obvious choice if the receiver of the letter was expected to know that language, or to have easy access to a translator, Tēwodros was quite prepared to use Arabic, and to place his seal on letters in English and French produced by his translators. The only consideration seems to have been to get the message across. Letters to Muḥammad Sa'id (no. 91), and to the governors Ḥasan Salāma and Mūsā Ḥamdī in the Sudan (nos 90 and 116), were written in Arabic, as were some of the early letters to the British, Arabic-speaking, envoy Hormuzd Rassam (nos 152, 157, 158, 161). The famous October 1862 letter to Queen Victoria (no. 117) was provided with an English translation and the king's seal was placed at the bottom of the translation. A letter to Napoleon III on the same

occasion (no. 118) was sealed and dispatched in French only. *Dejjazmach* Tewelde Medhin of Hamasēn also used both Arabic and Amharic for his contact with Cairo in 1867 (nos 223–224). Other princes were more limited in their choice of language. *Dejjazmach* Nigusē of Simēn/Tigray, for instance, used Amharic in all his preserved letters and other documents, with one exception: his letter to Pope Pius IX (no. 36) was written in Gi'iz. Apparently the church language was regarded as the appropriate medium to a supreme church leader.

The same pattern prevails in semi-official and private letters. A letter from three Catholic priests to Pius IX was also written in Gi'iz (no. 134), and a particularly important letter to Cardinal Alessandro Barnabò of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide (no. 97) was penned in two columns—Gi'iz and Italian. *Debtera* Asseggaheñ wrote an occasional letter in Gi'iz (no. 96) to the well-known scholar of Ethiopian languages Antoine d'Abbadie, as did *Qeñ Gēta* Gebre İyyesus (no. 6). Almost all of the other preserved letters were written in Amharic, except for the opening phrase or phrases and sometimes a blessing of some kind or other. Although he had been abroad for almost a decade and certainly knew European languages as well, Birru Pētros always wrote to Antoine d'Abbadie in Amharic (nos 2, 8, 9, 12, 15, 19–21, 25, 38). On the other hand one of the other Malta students, Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin, wrote in English to the headquarters of the Church Missionary Society (no. 1) and to the British consular agent at Massawa, who most probably knew little or no Amharic (no. 57). With the exception of *Abba Zekkariyas* Tesfa Mīka'ēl, who had studied in Rome for many years and seems to have preferred to write in Italian (nos 35, 68, 69, 82, 95, 146, 149), the Catholic priests, too, mostly used Amharic. Some letters, probably considered to be particularly important, were written in columns in both Amharic and Italian (nos 44, 75, 87).

As for form and style, the letters in this volume show great variety. The standard opening phrase of the Gi'iz letters of the first half of the century “*zattī tomar zetefennwet imhabe . . . tibṣah habe*” (with some variations; see ACTA I, p. xi) remained a common way of beginning a letter, even one otherwise written in Amharic. At the end of the period the scribe of Kasa Mirçha, for instance, would still begin a letter (otherwise worded in Amharic), *melikt zetefennwet imhabe Dejjazmach Kasa . . . tidres Luyise Napuliyo* (no. 244). Minilik's scribe on the other hand Amharicized the phrase almost completely and wrote, *melikt yetelake keniguse negist Minilik yidres habe nigist* to Queen Victoria (no. 216). After using the old phrase in a few letters in 1855 and 1857 (nos 5, 22, 24), Tēwodros must have instructed his staff to drop it and begin all letters with the invocation of the Holy Trinity. This was followed by “King of Kings Tēwodros”, with “of Ethiopia” and other amplifications, particularly in letters to be sent overseas. The custom of inquiring about the health and well-being of the addressee—and his family and friends—prevailed, as did in many cases the flattery of the addressee. Letters in Arabic, whether from Tēwodros or from Muslim chiefs, were much more elaborate in this respect than letters in Amharic. The letter of *Shaykh* Abū Bakr introducing his emissary Dīnī Aḥmad to Napoleon III (no. 92) is nothing less than a beautiful sample of epistolary Arabic poetry.

The practice of dating the letters increased. Of more than eighty letters from Tēwodros half have dates, always at the bottom of the letter; his undated letters, particularly towards the end of the period, were letters that were apparently expected to reach the addressee within a matter of a few days. Agew Nigusē, on the other hand, always dated his letters at the top, a further indication that his court was more influenced by European epistolary style. Dated letters, both official and private, become more frequent towards the end of the period. Minilik, however, did not bother about dates (nos 216, 218). The practice of signing the letter at the bottom also caught on, particularly among the Catholics and other Ethiopians in personal contact with Europeans. Tēwodros and other princes did not sign their letters; instead they used their seals on the letters, usually at the bottom.

* * * * *

The documents in *Tewodros and His Contemporaries 1855–1868* deal with three major political developments of an international character with far-reaching consequences for the Horn of Africa: King Tēwodros' conflicts with Great Britain and Egypt, his rival *Dejjazmach* Nigusē's approaches to the Vatican and France, and *Shaykh* Abū Bakr's sale of a strip of the Afar coast to France. The first of these dominated Ethiopia's foreign politics under Tēwodros, and led to the British campaign of 1867–68 and the king's suicide at Meqdela. In the long run it contributed to the growing Egyptian and European threat to the western and northern borderlands of Ethiopia. The second was the first serious nineteenth-century attempt to create a separate political entity in northern Ethiopia. Though Nigusē was defeated by Tēwodros, and his acceptance of the status of a French protectorate thereby nullified, the goal of detaching northern Ethiopia and placing it under European rule had been established. Ultimately it led to the emergence of Eritrea. Abū Bakr's dealings with France, finally, were the result of British–French rivalry at the southern end of the Red Sea. The ultimate outcome was the emergence of the state of Djibouti.

Tēwodros's own letters amount to about one third of the 250 presented in this volume. Many have been published before, or are at least known to scholars. Most of the letters to Queen Victoria and the envoy Hormuzd Rassam were published in the Parliamentary Papers at the time, as well as by Rassam himself. These were republished a few years ago by Girma-Selassie Asfaw and David Appleyard in collaboration with Edward Ullendorff (*The Amharic Letters of Emperor Theodore of Ethiopia to Queen Victoria and Her Special Envoy*, Oxford, 1979). A few others have been printed in various publications by Richard Pankhurst. Equally if not more important for an understanding of Tēwodros's foreign policy are the king's letters to Muḥammad Sa'īd *Pasha* and to the governors of the Sudan (nos 22, 23, 90, 91).

Two letters written in the first months of his reign (no. 4 to the French consul at Massawa and no. 5 to Bishop Samuel Gobat in Jerusalem) provide primary evidence for Tēwodros's policy with regard to foreigners, especially missionaries. They show that he welcomed immigrants but made it absolutely clear from the outset that he would not tolerate spiritual and ecclesiastical interference detrimental to Ethiopian unity. He also made the point that he was determined not to compromise his sovereignty, which may be the reason why there is no evidence that Tēwodros seriously considered signing any treaties with either Great Britain or France.

The documents which throw light on Nigusē's dealings with France, Italy and the Vatican are numerous and not easy to trace. No comprehensive collection has been published. The *draft* of a treaty with Sardinia (no. 43), which was regarded as valid at the European end, was published in its French version. An Amharic version was reportedly given to Nigusē but must be regarded as lost. In December 1859 and January 1860 two agreements were accepted on Nigusē's behalf by the Catholic priest Imnete Maryam (nos. 53 and 54). They were suppressed by the French government following the defeat of their protégé. The level of honesty in European diplomacy is in this case revealed by the French envoy Stanislas Russel, who complained that the British could not bear the idea of any other power acquiring *even by an honest and regular treaty* any position in the Red Sea, and then went on to assure his own government, "If these acts do not receive the approval of the emperor's government, they are invalid (*non avenues*) and there does not remain any trace of them; I have not left copies of them in Abyssinia" (AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 96–103). The letters from Nigusē published in this volume—twelve in Amharic and Gi'iz—are of considerable interest for further studies of the activities of the Catholic missionaries and their converts in northern Ethiopia. A letter from Nigusē to Pius IX (no. 36), which has only now come to light, deserves special notice.

In contrast to the agreements with Nigusē, the signing of the treaty between the French government and a number of Afar *sultāns* and *shaykhs* (no. 98) was carried out with all due attention to protocol. The agent sent to Paris was provided with a letter of introduction (no. 92). The treaty, which is preserved in Arabic as well as French, was countersigned by most of the chiefs involved, and a

number of letters to Napoleon III and members of his government prove that there was general agreement between the parties. The letters also show, however, that Abū Bakr had expected something more in terms of protection than the French were prepared to give.

The letters of the new actors on the political scene—Minilik, Gobeze Gebre Medhin, Kasa Mircha, Aregawi Subagadis, and Haylu (Habal) Tewelde Medhin are mostly brief and of limited interest. The letter from Minilik to Queen Victoria (no. 216) is an important exception, recalling as it does the contacts between Shewa and Great Britain 25 years earlier and revealing Minilik's opinion about them. It is also significant as primary evidence that Minilik did not hesitate to make known his claim to succeed Tēwodros as the ruler of Ethiopia. Dejjazmach Haylu's mission to Khedive Ismā'il (nos 223–224) can be seen as a harbinger of further disintegration in the northern provinces.

In addition to the letters which *Abba* Imnete Maryam wrote in his own or Nigusē's name, there are quite a number of more or less official letters from Roman Catholic priests, Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el from Aksum in particular, dealing with issues ranging from severe criticism of European missionaries to conscientious scruples about celebrating mass without being rebaptized. Here the voices of the Ethiopians provide us with information which does not necessarily emerge in accounts based on the reports of Europeans. In general the letters of Roman Catholic priests and communities to their European superiors tell a somewhat different story than the official one, and provide insights into the problems of creating a Roman Catholic Church in the heartlands of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, while at the same time serving European colonial aspirations.

Debtera Asseggaheñ's letters, most of which have been published before by Carlo Conti Rossini (*Epistolario del Debterà Aseggachègn di Uadlā*, RRAL, 6, I) and translated into Italian by Luigi Fusella (*Le lettere del dabtarā Assaggākhañ*, RSE, XII), are largely narrative in character, but in some cases they provide information which is not otherwise available from a time as close to the events as his letters. A number of other correspondents are represented in this volume, thanks to the contacts and collections of the d'Abbadie brothers. The most interesting personality is certainly Birru Pētros, author of eleven letters in this volume in addition to the six published in *Correspondence and Treaties 1800–1868*. Birru's description of life as an Ethiopian student abroad almost 150 years ago tells us a great deal about a young Ethiopian of those days and, no less, about the problems in general of acquiring and making use of new ideas and skills. In a letter to his mentor in Paris (no. 25), he exclaims, as if in despair: "as the saying goes, *You went up to Gonder; what did you bring back?*"

Note on Orthography

There is no widely accepted simple system of transliteration from Ethiopian to Latin script, and many conventional spellings of the names of persons and places are by no means well-established. The system used for Amharic in *Acta Aethiopica* is fairly simple containing only three diacritical marks: a dash for two of the vowels, a dot for glottalized consonants, and an apostrophe to indicate a glottal stop between vowels, where it is pronounced by at least some Amharic speakers; thus Ya'iqob and Gi'iz, but Araya (not Ar'aya) and Alī (not 'Alī or 'Alī). On the other hand, the system is applied as consistently as possible for all names, as well as titles and other Ethiopian words written in Latin script, except for those geographical names where the English spelling is now uniform, and in most cases has resulted in a distinctly different pronunciation (Abyssinia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Massawa).

The consonants or combinations of consonants have their normal English pronunciation, *g* (as in *get*) standing for ገ, *j* (as in *jam*) for ጃ, *zh* (as *s* in *pleasure*) for ዠ, and *q* (glottalized *k*) for ቀ. The seven vowels are transliterated *e*, *u*, *ī*, *a*, *ē*, *i*, and *o*, and pronounced approximately as in *bet*, *rule*, *machine*, *father*, *touché*, *fit*, and *lord*. When the vowel is not pronounced in the sixth order, the *i* is omitted in the transliteration.

In view of the ambivalent use of the labialized consonants, e.g. ገጃም and ጎጃም, ገንደር and ጎንደር, we have decided in favour of the simpler forms Gojjam and Gonder, also for instance Goshu, and Mekonnin. In cases where some authors have consistently used the labialized consonant we have allowed both forms, e.g. Gwela and Gola for ገላ and ጎላ, Qwerata and Qorata for ቁራጣ and ቀራጣ.

For Arabic and Turkish names, the spelling used by the *Cambridge History of Islam* has been adopted, except for Ethiopians bearing such names. Unfortunately this leads to what some may regard as annoying inconsistencies: Egyptians are called Aḥmad and 'Alī, Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm, but Ethiopians Ahmed and Alī, Mehammed and Ībrahīm. In fact, this concession to Ethiopian orthography is no different from the practice of writing Muhammad for an Arab but Mehmed for a Turk, or Butrus for an Egyptian but Petros (Pētros) for an Ethiopian, not to mention Peter for an Englishman. This principle does not solve all cases, but it does help to establish some consistency as far as recognized Ethiopians are concerned.

Seals

With the reign of *Aṣē Tēwodros* the lion seals without legends used by the rulers at Gonder during the *Zemene Mesafint* were replaced by seals with legends encircling the royal lion. *Tēwodros* had two such seals with legends in both Ethiopic and Arabic characters. The seal used in his first two letters in 1855 features a detached cross above the head of the lion, but no crown. In this respect it resembles the seal of *Sahle Dingil* (ACTA I, p. xix). The well-known seal used later has a crowned lion with the cross as part of the crown. At the end of the period *Minilik*, *Wagshum Gobeze*/*Tekle Gīyorgīs* and *Dejjazmach Kasa*/*Yohannis* had similar seals, *Minilik* and *Kasa* with crowned lions, *Tekle Gīyorgīs* with a lion pure and simple, though he had actually been crowned by the *içhegē*. *Minilik* and *Tekle Gīyorgīs* claimed in their seals to be *niguse negest* of Ethiopia; *Kasa Mirçha* copied the crowned lion but was initially satisfied with calling himself *ri'ise mekwanint* of Ethiopia. The most prominent of the king's rivals during the first five years of his rule, *Dejjazmach Nigusē Tesfa Mīka'el*, known almost exclusively as *Agew Nigusē*, at first had a crude seal with only his name in it, but later he had a seal made which essentially copied the features of *Tēwodros*'s second seal. Unfortunately it has not been possible to decipher more than a few Ethiopic and Arabic characters, among them the name *Nigusē* and probably a *nigus* or *niguse*. Seals with Arabic text were used by the Afar chiefs *Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm* and *Dīnī Aḥmad* on the coast but also by *Dejjazmach Haylu Tewelde Medhin* of *Hamasēn*. *Abune Selama* continued to use the same seals as before 1855. *Gebre Mīka'el* was the head of the Ethiopian monastery in Jerusalem.



King of Kings Tēwodros;
Tēwodros king of Abyssinia.



King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia.
He who is victorious (lit. the supported in
victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia



Merid Azmach
Hayle Mīka'el



King of Kings Minilik
of Ethiopia



Tekle Gīyorgīs, king
of kings of Ethiopia



Dejjazmach Kasa, *ri'ise mekwanint*
of Ethiopia



Dejjazmach Nigusē



[*Dejjazmach Agew*] Nigusē
[King of Ethiopia]



Dejjazmach Haylu.
[12]82



His servant Abū Bakr
Ibrāhīm



Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm



Abū Bakr ibn Ibrāhīm
Shaḥīm



Trusting in the only God.
Dīnī Aḥmad. 1273



[Dīnī Aḥmad]



Gebre Mīka'el of Ethiopia



Selama, metropolitan of Abyssinia. 1557.
Glory to God in the highest and on earth
peace, good will toward men



[1]256. Selama, metropolitan of
Abyssinia (*muṭrān al-Ḥabash*).
1859 (*sic*)

Glossary

<i>Abba</i>	Father, monk (also used in <i>noms de guerre</i> or horsenames)
<i>Abbatē</i>	Father, priest, monk
<i>Abēto</i>	Prince, lord, master
<i>Abun, abune</i>	Our father, bishop, metropolitan of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church
<i>Afe nigus</i>	“Mouth of the king”, supreme court judge
<i>Aggafari</i>	Usher
<i>Aleqa</i>	Chief, head, vicar of a church
<i>Amba</i>	Flat-topped mountain, mountain fortress
<i>Amīr</i> (Arabic)	Commander, prince
<i>Amolē</i>	Bar of salt, used as currency
<i>Anbā</i> (Arabic)	Father, bishop
<i>Anjetē</i>	“My bowels”, my beloved
<i>Aṣē, aṭē</i>	Emperor
<i>Ato</i>	Master, Mr.
<i>Azzazh</i>	Chief, commander, supervisor
<i>Bahr negash</i>	“Ruler of the sea”, governor of province or district in Eritrea
<i>Balambaras</i>	“Commander of a fortress”, title for middle- or low-level official
<i>Baldereba</i>	Intermediary appointed for relations with persons of high rank
<i>Balgada</i>	Official in charge of the salt extraction of the Ṭīṭal area
<i>Basha</i>	Customs official, artillery officer (Arabic and Ethiopian version of <i>pasha</i>)
<i>Bey, bīk</i> (Turkish, Arabic)	Civil or military official, Mr.
<i>Birillē</i>	Small flask with a long neck used for drinking <i>tejj</i>
<i>Bītwedded</i>	Honorific title for senior court official
<i>Blatta</i>	Honorific title for achievement in learning and literature
<i>Blattengēta</i>	More prominent honorific title for achievement in learning and literature
<i>Debtera</i>	Chorister, scribe (unordained member of the clergy)
<i>Dejjazmach, dejjach</i>	“Commander of the entrance”, general, governor
<i>Diggwa</i>	Ethiopian book of hymns
<i>Effendi</i>	Sir, Mr
<i>Feddan</i> (Arabic <i>faddān</i>)	Egyptian unit of land measurement
<i>Ferenj</i>	Foreigner, European (by implication Catholic)
<i>Fītawrarī</i>	Commander of the vanguard

<i>Fitha Negest</i>	“The Legislation of the Kings”, old Ethiopian code
<i>Gebbar</i>	Tenant farmer
<i>Gēta, gētaw</i>	Lord, Master, Mr.
<i>Gibir</i>	Tax, tribute
<i>Hājj</i>	Honorific title for someone who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina
<i>Içhegē</i>	Head of the monastic order of Tekle Haymanot, highest administrative officer of the Ethiopian Church
<i>Igzī’i</i>	Lord, Master
<i>Imām</i>	Guide, leader (particularly in prayer)
<i>Indod</i>	The African soapberry plant (<i>Phytolacca dodecandrea</i>)
<i>Itēgē</i>	Queen, consort of the ruler of Ethiopia
<i>Kentība</i>	District governor, mayor
<i>Khalīfa</i> (Arabic)	Successor (of Muḥammad), vicar, deputy
<i>Khawāja</i> (Arabic)	Mr. (used in particular for Europeans; in Amharic letters <i>hawaja</i>)
<i>Kibre Negest</i>	“The Glory of the Kings”, Ethiopian literary work embodying <i>i.a.</i> the legend of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba
<i>Koso</i>	Leaves of Ethiopian tree used as an anthelmintic medicine
<i>Lij</i>	“Child, son”, honorific title, mostly used for young members of the higher aristocracy and the royalty
<i>Līq, līqē</i> (plur. <i>līqawint</i>)	Scholar, prominent churchman
<i>Līqe mekwās, līqemekwās</i>	Equerry, high-ranking official close to the king
<i>Līqe pappasāt</i>	Archbishop, patriarch
<i>Madigga</i>	Grain measurement
<i>Malik</i>	King
<i>Malik al-mulūk</i>	King of kings
<i>Mek</i>	Sudanese ruler or tribal chief
<i>Mekonnin</i> (plur. <i>mekwanint</i>)	Nobleman, dignitary, officer, governor
<i>Memhir, memmirē</i>	Master, teacher, abbot
<i>Merid azmach, meridazmach</i>	“Terrorizing” commander, traditional title of the ruler of Shewa
<i>Mesfin</i> (plur. <i>mesafint</i>)	Prince, nobleman, governor
<i>Milmil</i>	Conscript, sometimes “common law” husband or lover of a high-ranking lady who was not supposed to remarry
<i>Mu’allim</i>	Master, teacher
<i>Nā’ib</i> (Arabic)	Deputy, agent; title given by the Turks to the Ethiopian chief on the mainland opposite Massawa
<i>Neggadras</i>	“Head of traders”, prominent merchant
<i>Nibure’id</i>	Head of the church of St. Mary of Aksum and administrator of the territory belonging to the church

<i>Nigus</i>	King
<i>Niguse negest</i>	King of kings
<i>Ṗappas</i>	Bishop
<i>Pasha</i>	Honorific title for high civil or military official
<i>Qā'im maqām</i> (Arabic)	District or local governor, officer
<i>Qeñ gēta</i>	Choir leader of the Right (ecclesiastical title)
<i>Qēs</i>	Priest
<i>Qibat</i>	“Unction”, theological doctrine or school
<i>Ras</i>	“Head”, governor, commander
<i>Ri'ise liqane pappasat</i>	Patriarch, pope
<i>Ri'ise mekwanint</i>	Head of the nobility, governors or commanders
<i>Riyāl</i> (Arabic)	Silver coin (used for Maria Theresa thaler in Arabia)
<i>Sahib</i>	Companion, master, sir
<i>Shaleqa</i>	Officer, major
<i>Shaykh</i> (Amharic <i>shēh</i>)	Chief of an Arab clan or village; religious official
<i>Shemma</i>	Ethiopian toga-like garment of cotton
<i>Shifta</i>	Rebel, outlaw
<i>Shum</i>	District or village chief
<i>Sīnodos</i>	Collection of church law
<i>Sultān</i> (Amharic <i>silṭan</i>)	Ruler, prince
<i>Ṭef</i>	Important grain crop of highland Ethiopia, resembling millet
<i>Tezkar</i>	Commemoration of a dead person, memorial service
<i>Ṭejj</i>	Mead, honey wine
<i>Wagshum</i>	Governor of Wag
<i>Wakīl</i> (Amharic <i>wekīl</i>)	Agent, representative
<i>Wazīr</i> (Arabic)	High government official, minister of state in Muslim countries
<i>Wer</i>	Month
<i>Weyzero</i>	Madame, lady, Mrs.
<i>Yeshaleqa</i>	Same as <i>shaleqa</i>
<i>Zemed</i>	Relative, kinsman, close friend, helper
<i>Zemen</i>	Period, era, year
<i>Zemene Mesafint</i>	The Era of the Princes (or Regents)

Abbreviations

ACTA	<i>Acta Aethiopica</i>
AECC	Correspondance commerciale des consuls, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris
AECP	Correspondance politique <i>and</i> Correspondance politique des consuls, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris
AED	Archives diplomatiques (<i>reserved</i>) du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris
AEMD	Mémoires et Documents, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris
<i>Amharic Letters</i>	Girma-Selassie Asfaw, David L. Appleyard, Edward Ullendorff, <i>The Amharic Letters of Emperor Theodore of Ethiopia to Queen Victoria and Her Special Envoy</i> , Oxford, 1979
AN.AP	Archives Nationales, Archives privées, Paris
<i>Annales</i>	<i>Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission</i>
AOC	Abyssinia Original Correspondence, India Office Library and Records, London
AOM.OI	Archives d'Outre-mer, Océan Indien, Aix en Provence
<i>AP.DD</i>	<i>Atti Parlamentari, Documenti Diplomatici</i>
ASCPF.SRC	Scritture Riferite nei Congressi, Archivio Storico della Sacra Congregazione per l'Evangelizzazione dei Popoli "de Propaganda Fide", Rome
ASMAI	Archivio Storico dell'ex Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, Ministero degli Affari Esteri
BL	British Library, London
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
CML	Congrégation de la Mission, Maison Lazariste, Paris
CM/O	Original incoming letters, journals and papers, Church Missionary Society Archives, Birmingham
CMS	Church Missionary Society; Church Missionary Society Archives, Birmingham
<i>Correspondence 1846–68</i>	Parliamentary Papers, <i>Correspondence respecting Abyssinia, 1846–1868</i> , London, 1868
<i>Cronaca reale</i>	Carlo Conti Rossini, ed., "La cronaca reale abissina dall'anno 1800 all'anno 1840", <i>RRAL</i> , 5, XXV (1916)
<i>EJAS</i>	<i>Ethiopian Journal of African Studies</i>
ENA	National Archives, Cairo
<i>Epistolario</i>	"Epistolario del Debterà Aseggachègn di Uadlà", <i>RRAL</i> , 6, I (1925)
FO	Foreign Office Records, Public Record Office, London

IOL	India Office Library and Records, London
JES	<i>Journal of Ethiopian Studies</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JRGSL	<i>Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London</i>
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library, London
NAF	Nouvelles acquisitions françaises, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
NAS	<i>Northeast African Studies</i>
<i>Nuovi documenti</i>	Carlo Conti Rossini, ed., "Nuovi documenti per la storia d'Abissinia nel secolo XIX", <i>RANL</i> , 8, II (1947)
<i>RANL</i>	Rendiconti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei
<i>RRAL</i>	Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei
<i>Vicende</i>	Carlo Conti Rossini, ed., "Vicende dell'Etiopia e delle Missioni Cattoliche ai tempi di ras Ali, deggiàc Ubié e re Teodoro secondo un documento abissino", <i>RRAL</i> , 5, XXV (1916).

List of Documents

1	Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin to H. Venn	13 Jan. 1855
2	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	24 Jan. 1855
3	Samu'el Giyorgis to Raffaele Baroni	[Feb. 1855]
4	Tēwodros to L. Delaye	[April? 1855]
5	Tēwodros to Samuel Gobat	[April 1855]
6	Gebre İyyesus to Antoine d'Abbadie	14 May [1855?]
7	Gebre İyyesus to Michel d'Abbadie	[1855?]
8	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	18 Aug. 1855
9	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	6 Oct. 1855
10	Tēwodros to Ioanni Kotsika	[5 Feb. 1856]
11	Selama to Ioanni Kotsika	5 Feb. 1856
12	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	12 Feb. 1856
13	Tēwodros to Walter Plowden	[Feb. 1856]
14	Nigusē Welde Mīka'el to Napoleon III	9 June 1856
15	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	11 June 1856
16	Kasa Subagadis to Raffaele Baroni	[c. 1 Nov. 1856]
17	Welde Gebri'el to Alessandro Barnabò	[Nov. 1856]
18	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el to Alessandro Barnabò	18 Nov. 1856
19	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	14 March 1857
20	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	9 April 1857
21	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	23 Sept. 1857
22	Tēwodros to Muḥammad Sa'īd	13 Nov. 1857
23	Tēwodros to Muḥammad Sa'īd	24 Nov. 1857
24	Tēwodros to Victoria	[Nov. 1857]
25	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	25 Nov. 1857
26	Selama to Muḥammad Sa'īd	11 Dec. 1857
27	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	12 March 1858
28	Tedla Welette Fiqir to Michel d'Abbadie	[March? 1858]
29	Gebri to Michel d'Abbadie	[1858]
30	Ingida to Michel d'Abbadie	6 April [1858?]
31	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Ferdinand Alphonse Hamelin	4 July 1858
32	Tekle Maryam Abdella to Antoine d'Abbadie	[6? July 1858]
33	Gebri to Michel d'Abbadie	7 July [1858?]
34	Tedla Welette Fiqir to Michel d'Abbadie	6 Aug. [1858]
35	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el to Alessandro Barnabò	25 Aug. 1858

36	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Pius IX	19 Oct. 1858
37	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Napoleon III	[Oct.? 1858]
38	Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie	26 Nov. 1858
39	Hayle Mīka'ēl Sahle Sillasē to Michel d'Abbadie	[1858]
40	Hayle Mīka'ēl Sahle Sillasē to Antoine d'Abbadie	[1858]
41	Selama to Michel d'Abbadie	3 Feb. 1859
42	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Victor Emmanuel I	10 Feb. 1859
43	Draft treaty between Simēn–Tigray and Sardinia	10 Feb. 1859
44	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	11 Feb. 1859
45	Catholic clergy to Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl	[April 1859]
46	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Napoleon III	22 April 1859
47	Zekkariyas to Antoine d'Abbadie	21 June 1859
48	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl: power of attorney for Imnete Maryam	30 Sept. 1859
49	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Napoleon III	1 Nov. 1859
50	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Théodore Gilbert	2 Nov. 1859
51	Zekkariyas to Antoine d'Abbadie	4 Nov. 1859
52	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Ferdinand de Lesseps	23 Dec. 1859
53	Treaty between Simēn–Tigray and France	29 Dec. 1859
54	Convention between Simēn–Tigray and France	9 Jan. 1860
55	Ingida to Michel d'Abbadie	[Jan. 1860]
56	Zekkariyas to Antoine d'Abbadie	5 Feb. 1860
57	Mirçha Werqē, Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin and Mehammed to Raffaele Baroni	[4 March 1860]
58	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Théodore Gilbert	8 March 1860
59	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Giustino De Jacobis	8 March 1860
60	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to E.A. Thouvenel	8 March 1860
61	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to E.A. Thouvenel	12 March 1860
62	Dimētros Ishetu to Michel d'Abbadie	13 June 1860
63	Tēwodros/John Bell to Théodore Gilbert	13 June 1860
64	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Napoleon III	13 July 1860
65	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	7 Aug. 1860
66	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Napoleon III	22 Aug. 1860
67	Catholic clergy to Vincenzo Spaccapietra	25 Aug. 1860
68	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'ēl to Alessandro Barnabò	28 Aug. 1860
69	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'ēl to Alessandro Barnabò	28 Aug. 1860
70	Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to the Catholic community and C. Delmonte	28 Sept. 1860
71	Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò	29 Sept. 1860

72	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie	7 Oct. 1860
73	Chief of Alitēna Boa to Théodore Gilbert	8 Oct. 1860
74	Aregawī Subagadis to Théodore Gilbert	12 Oct. 1860
75	Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò	15 Oct. 1860
76	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'ēl to Alessandro Barnabò	24 Oct. 1860
77	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	[Oct. 1860]
78	Gebre Maryam to Théodore Gilbert	12 Dec. 1860
79	Aregawī Subagadis to Théodore Gilbert	30 Dec. 1860
80	Welette Rufa'ēl to Wibītu d'Abbadie	[1860]
81	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Théodore Gilbert	13 Jan. [1861]
82	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'ēl to Alessandro Barnabò	15 Jan. 1861
83	Tēwodros to Raffaele Baroni	[Jan. 1861]
84	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	14 Feb. 1861
85	Hayle Mīka'ēl to Guglielmo Massaja	[1861]
86	Hayle Mīka'ēl to Guglielmo Massaja	23 Feb. 1861
87	Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò	26 Feb. 1861
88	Catholic priests of Akkele Guzay to Théodore Gilbert	13 March 1861
89	Tēwodros to Théodore Gilbert	[April? 1861]
90	Tēwodros to Ḥasan Salāma	17 May 1861
91	Tēwodros to Muḥammad Sa'id	21 May 1861
92	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III	10 June 1861
93	Ingida to Michel d'Abbadie	14 June [1861]
94	Gebre Hiywet Welde Ab to Michel d'Abbadie	[1861]
95	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'ēl to Alessandro Barnabò	12 Dec. 1861
96	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	13 Dec. 1861
97	Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò	19 Dec. 1861
98	Treaty between Afar chiefs and France	11 Feb.–11 March 1862
99	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Michel d'Abbadie	12 March 1862
100	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie	12 March 1862
101	Gebre Mīka'ēl and Gebre Hiywet Welde Ab to Michel d'Abbadie	15 April 1862
102	Tēwodros to Jima	[May 1862]
103	Felasha community of Jenda to the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews	[1862]
104	Dīnī Muḥammad Burhān to Napoleon III	[9 May ? 1862]
105	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III	[9 May ? 1862]
106	Muḥammad Ḥumad to Napōleon III	14 May 1862
107	Ḥumād Muḥammad Ḥumad to Napoleon III	15 May 1862

108	Tēwodros to the European community at Gefat	[1862]
109	Mekonnin to Michel and Antoine d'Abbadie	[1862?]
110	Gebre Mīka'ēl to Michel d'Abbadie	3 June 1862
111	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Juvénal	2 July 1862
112	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel	4 July 1862
113	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III	13 Aug. 1862
114	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel	[13 Aug. 1862]
115	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to J.N.S.P. Chasseloup-Laubat	[13 Aug. 1862]
116	Tēwodros to Mūsā Ḥamdī	[Oct.? 1862]
117	Tēwodros to Victoria	29 Oct. 1862
118	Tēwodros to Napoleon III	29 Oct. 1862
119	Chiefs of Bogos to Guillaume Lejean	1 Jan. 1863
120	Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean	[Jan. 1863]
121	Tēwodros to his governors on the western frontiers	[1863]
122	Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean	[March? 1863]
123	Gebre Īyyesus to Antoine d'Abbadie	27 April 1863
124	Gebre Hiywet Gētahun to Antoine d'Abbadie	27 April 1863
125	Gebre Īyyesus to Antoine d'Abbadie	28 April 1863
126	Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean	[June? 1863]
127	Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean	[1863]
128	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III	[July? 1863]
129	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel	29 July 1863
130	Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel	1 Sept. 1863
131	Dīnī Aḥmad Dīnī to E.A. Thouvenel	12 Sept. 1863
132	Gebre Hiywet Gētahun to Antoine d'Abbadie	29 Sept. 1863
133	Mīrṣīt Schimper to Guillaume Lejean	Oct. [1863?]
134	Tekle Haymanot, Gebre Maryam and Gebre Medhin to Pius IX	[1863]
135	The clergy of Agamē to the S. Congregazione de Propaganda. Fide	[1863]
136	The clergy of Agamē to Guglielmo Massaja	[1863]
137	Gelawdēwos <i>et al.</i> to Guglielmo Massaja	[1863]
138	Gebre Igzi' abihēr <i>et al.</i> to Guglielmo Massaja	[1863]
139	Gebre Maryam to Guglielmo Massaja	[1863]
140	Welde Rufa'ēl and Welde Isṭīfanos to Gebre Maryam	[1863]
141	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	14 Dec. 1863
142	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie	17 Jan. 1864
143	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò	1 Feb. 1864
144	Chiefs of Bogos to Napoleon III	[April? 1864]

145	Chiefs of Bogos to Napoleon III	21 April 1864
146	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Guillaume Lejean	5 July 1864
147	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	10 Oct. 1864
148	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	10 Oct. 1864
149	Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Guillaume Lejean	12 Oct. 1864
150	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie	8 Jan. [1865]
151	Bezzabih to Gebre Hiywet Welde Ab	[c. 1 July 1865]
152	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	5 July 1865
153	Tēwodros to Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥīm	5 July 1865
154	Samu'el Giyorgīs to Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥīm	5 July 1865
155	Mattā to Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥīm	5 July 1865
156	Samu'el Giyorgīs to Abdella Alī	5 July 1865
157	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	10 Dec. 1865
158	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	11 Dec. 1865
159	Tēwodros to Jima	[Dec. 1865]
160	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	14 Jan. 1866
161	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[28 Jan. 1866]
162	Tēwodros to Victoria	29 Jan. 1866
163	Tēwodros to Kidane Maryam <i>et al.</i>	[1866]
164	Tēwodros to Kidane Maryam <i>et al.</i>	[1866]
165	Tēwodros to Kidane Maryam <i>et al.</i>	[1866]
166	Tēwodros to Kidane Maryam <i>et al.</i>	[1866]
167	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[4? Feb. 1866]
168	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Feb. 1866]
169	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Feb. 1866]
170	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Feb. 1866]
171	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	25 Feb. [1866]
172	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	28 Feb. [1866]
173	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	2 March [1866]
174	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	6 March [1866]
175	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	9 March [1866]
176	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	12 March [1866]
177	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	14 March 1866
178	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[14 March 1866]
179	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	18 March 1866
180	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	20 March 1866
181	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	21 March 1866

182	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	23 March 1866
183	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	28 March [1866]
184	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	30 March [1866]
185	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	2 April [1866]
186	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	4 April [1866]
187	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	7 April [1866]
188	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	9 April [1866]
189	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	10 April [1866]
190	Tēwodros to Tedla	[13 April 1866]
191	Tēwodros to Victoria	17 April 1866
192	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[17 April 1866]
193	Tēwodros to whom it may concern	17 April 1866
194	Tēwodros to relatives of the prisoners	[17 April 1866]
195	Tēwodros to Charles Beke	[17 April?] 1866
196	Tēwodros to Charles Beke	27 May 1866
197	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	[July–Aug.?]1866
198	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Aug. 1866]
199	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Sept. 1866]
200	Rufa'ēl Amarē to Antoine d'Abbadie	[Sept.? 1866]
201	Rufa'ēl Amarē to Antoine d'Abbadie	[Sept. 1866]
202	Rufa'ēl Amarē to Antoine d'Abbadie	23 Sept. 1866
203	Chiefs of Bogos to Edward Stanton	[Oct.? 1866]
204	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	23 Nov. 1866
205	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Dec. 1866]
206	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[Jan. 1867]
207	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	5 Jan. 1867
208	Tēwodros to Martin Flad	[9 Jan.] 1867
209	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	9 Jan. 1867
210	Tēwodros to Ja'far Maḡhar	13 March 1867
211	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	14 March 1867
212	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[April 1867]
213	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	15 April 1867
214	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	15 April 1867
215	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	[15 April 1867]
216	Minīlik to Victoria	[July? 1867]
217	Minīlik to William Merewether	[July? 1867]
218	Minīlik to Guglielmo Massaja	[July? 1867]

219	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	9 Sept. [1867]
220	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	21 Sept. 1867
221	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	26 Sept. 1867
222	Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie	3 Oct. 1867
223	Haylu Tewelde Medhin to Ismā'il Ibrāhīm	[14 Nov. 1867]
224	Haylu Tewelde Medhin to Ismā'il Ibrāhīm	14 Nov. 1867
225	Elders of Halay to Robert Napier	16 Nov. 1867
226	Kasa Mirçha to Robert Napier	26 Nov. 1867
227	Tēwodros to Bīsewir	[1867]
228	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	[1868?]
229	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	[1868?]
230	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	[1868?]
231	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	[1868?]
232	Tēwodros to Yetemeññu	[1868?]
233	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	[1868?]
234	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	13 Jan. [1868]
235	Kasa Mirçha to Robert Napier	[4 Feb. 1868]
236	Kasa Mirçha to William Merewether	[5 Feb. 1868]
237	Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò	[Feb. 1868]
238	Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam	[March 1868]
239	Tēwodros to Bīsewir	[March 1868]
240	Mīnīlik to Robert Napier	[March? 1868]
241	Tēwodros to Robert Napier	[11 April 1868]
242	Tēwodros to Robert Napier	[12 April 1868]
243	Kasa Mirçha to Ismā'il Ibrāhīm	[21 June? 1868]
244	Kasa Mirçha to Napoleon III	8 Aug. 1868
245	The Catholics of Agamē to Napoleon III	[Sept. 1868]
246	Aregawī Subagadis to Napoleon III	[Sept. 1868]
247	Tekle Gīyorgīs to Victoria	[1868]
248	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	26 Nov. [1868]
249	Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie	[6 Dec.?] 1868
250	Zeneb to J. L. Krapf	16 Dec. 1868

THE TEXTS

Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin to H. Venn, 13 Jan. 1855

Cairo 13th of January 1855

Dear sir

Dr. Krapf and two of his fellow-labourers are arrived at Cairo on the 3rd of January. Then Dr. Krapf read to me what you gave him by writings concerning our Missionary labour in Abyssinia. I was very glad of his safe arrival, his courageously and undefatigable labour for the spread of the Gospel, of his patience and determined zeal for Christ, and in one word, as an example of zeal to the service of Him who was most zealous and determined to the service and business for which His Father has sent Him. But after having heard what you said concerning me, that is to say, of having not any payment or salary made, except the expenses for traveling and living with them in the Missionary works, I was discouraged or disappointed of having not the due payment to a lay-Missionary agent; and the more pain which I had was, that it shall be a joy of blame to our opponents and a quite disappointment to them who will follow our examples of embracing the Protestant Doctrine. I say this as a faithful friend and brother with francness, and not for the sake of money, for I cannot serve Christ for money, nor become Protestant but for the truth of their preaching the Gospel, and their great love to Jesus Christ who is Himself love and truth.

Now therefore, I will continue my labour with the same zeal and desire of serving Christ as before or perhaps more by His help and Spirit and I leave every judgment and thinking to you and to the christian members of the same society. And now I am going to Abyssinia with your friends the missionary, may God help us in this holy work and protect us with His mighty and infinite power!

Read well and examine my letter to you from Malta, on the 10th October 1854, which was kept until now by some hinderance. And Mr. Bryan told me, that the expences which were made for me from Malta to Alexandria and Cairo "are from my salaries". But your writings and the sayings of Dr. Krapf are quite different.

And those who are here are Mr. Feineler, and Mr. J.M. Flad, of whom the one is going to Bombay and the other to Abyssinia with us. 5 are at Jerusalem. All are good christian men, may Christ give us His Holy Spirit and love, which love He has commanded us to keep, "If ye are my friends love one another." And may He give us His grace in order to be always strong in his service, to preach His Gospel of peace, may man find that eternal life which is by faith in His sufficient righteousness and precious blood shed for many. May He guide and bless us and give us the Spirit of prayer! Begging thus yours also for us dear and true christian sir,

Yours

Most humble and Faithful, and dutiful Servt. in Christ our Lord!

T. Madéarakal.

CMS, CM/O 8/57 I, English original. Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin, or as he signed himself in English "T. Madéarakal" (or Tewelde M. Maderakal) was one of the first Ethiopians in modern times to acquire a European education, primarily in France and Malta. At the Malta college, which he attended from the age of 21 to 26, he was also known as "Abd al-Messih Maderakal" (FO 401/1, pp. 313, 315-316). He wrote this letter on his way back to Ethiopia after twelve years abroad. See note of ACTA I, no. 187, which is the letter of 10 October 1854 referred to here. Mahdere Qal returned to Ethiopia with the Protestant missionaries J.L. Krapf and J.M. Flad in February 1855. By mid-1856 he had become one of Tēwodros's interpreters, and remained in contact with the court for most of his reign. Later he served as interpreter and secretary to Yohannis IV. See Sven Rubenson, *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence*, London, 1976, pp. 176, 284, 320-324.

This letter is reproduced with the orthography, including misspellings, and punctuation of the original.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie 24 Jan. 1855



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fol. 91r

fol. 91v

May this letter sent by Birru reach Antoine d'Abbadie (Intōniyos Ze'abediye), who is honoured in the land of France.

How have you been, my master? May nothing [like this] happen to you! Your letter reached me on the 14th day of January. May God reward (lit. thank) you for sending me, your servant, a letter that comforts. I did not write the reply right away as I wanted to wait until I got news. After a few days, however, [a letter] arrived for me from Jerusalem (on the 22nd day of January). A letter reached me stating this about the death of my uncle: "[The place] where your uncle, *Debtera* Tewelde Medhin, died is in Egypt, at the convent called the Monastery of Muḥarraq (Meharek), and the time is the month of Yekkatīt, on Wednesday the second, in the year of Mark." I am very disappointed with them for remaining without writing to me until now.

When your letters reach me, I become very happy. Above everything else [I appreciate] your advice; you advise me, worthless throw-away, the way a father advises his son. I do not deserve to correspond even with your slave, let alone with you.

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fol. 92r

As for what you asked me when you said, “Do they give you money and do you travel around on the island, in the countryside?” it is now more than a year since I have had (lit. that I have not known) any travel on the island. I go to the countryside every second or third week. As for money, they give me two shillings every month. I want to buy good books; it is my poverty only that prevents (lit. troubles) me.

I miss my country very, very much. I pray to God (lit. the Lord of all) that He may let me return safely. From Jerusalem someone wrote news to me about my country, saying like this, “Earlier, the news of our country was about war after war. But now all Ethiopians are ruled in unity by one king. The name of the king is Hizqiyas. Everywhere in our country there is plenty. All the people of our country are hopeful; they say that King Tēwodros will rise. However, the whole of Ethiopia has trembled. And when the earth trembled, water gushed forth in the place where *Dejjach* Wibē camped and everywhere where people were living. We heard this news. People who came from our country told us.”

My master, you are not a messenger. [Nevertheless, please] tell [your] brothers, Master Michel (Mika’ēl) and Master Charles (Qērilos) on my behalf, “Birru sends greetings,” and tell my friends, Adula and his companions, on my behalf, “He says, ‘How are you?’” May the peace of God be with you.

Written in Malta on the 24th of the month of January, in the year of grace 1855. May it reach the town (lit. land) of Irún.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 91–92, Amharic original. Birru Pētros, better known as Birru Welqaytē, had corresponded with Antoine d’Abbadie for over five years (ACTA I, nos 134 and *passim*). He had recently received news that his uncle Tewelde Medhin (ACTA I, nos 126, 127 and 190) had died in Egypt. In spite of his many years abroad, Birru apparently tried to keep informed about events at home. The new king, referred to as Hizqiyas, was none other than Tēwodros, whose coronation took place less than three weeks after the date of this letter. In his reply (fol. 98), d’Abbadie comments that Kasa is not called Hizqiyas and that Tēwodros is not “*aṣē*”, but “*nigus*”. This is the first of a number of letters to Antoine d’Abbadie (see nos. 8, 9, 12, 15, 19–21, 25, 27, 38).

Samu'el Gīyorgīs to Raffaele Baroni [Feb. 1855]

ዘቲ፡ ጦማ ር፡ ዘቀ ፈ ነወቅ፡ ስምህ ሃ ገ፡
 ሳ ሙኤጌ ለ፡ ጊ ሞሩ ጊ ስ፡ ቅብ ጸ ህ ፡
 ሃ ገ፡ ወኅ ለ ለ፡ ሞሩ ኒ፡ ስ ጊ ደቅ፡ ስ ነ ገ
 ቱ፡ ኅብ ብ ለ ሆ ሆ ህ፡ ስ ስ ኅ፡ ዘ ር፡ ድ ር ስ፡
 ስ ጊ ደ ሙ፡ ደ ህ ል፡ ገ ገ ገ ገ፡ ጊ ገ ስ ም፡ ደ
 ር ስ ጊ፡ ገ ገ ገ፡ ሆ ም ስ ር ስ ገ፡ ደ ጌ ስ ሙ ገ ገ፡
 ኅ ወ ኅ ጊ ለ፡ ሞሩ ኒ፡ ሳ ኅ ገ ገ ገ ፡ ገ ገ ለ ሙ፡
 ሳ ኅ ገ ገ ገ ፡ ሆ ሞ ር ሙ ሆ ም፡ ወ ር፡ ጊ ር፡ ደ
 ጊ ገ ር፡ ፡



ስቅ፡ ደ ሙ ር፡ ስ ጊ ደ ቃ ለ፡ ስ ጌ ገ ጊ ፡
 ሆ ስ ሙ ገ ገ ፡ ሆ ም ሆ ር ር ጊ ፡ ሆ ህ ለ፡ ሳ ለ
 ህ፡ ስ ጊ ደ ገ ገ ገ ለ ህ፡ ጊ ቃ ሙ፡ ደ ጊ ገ ር ለ ጊ ፡
 ስ ጊ ር ሙ ጊ ፡

May this letter sent by Samu'el Gīyorgīs reach *Wakīl Baroni* (*Wekīl Boreni*). How have you been since we parted until now? I arrived safely. Rejoice! The king entered Deresgē. The *dejjazmach* sent and asked me to write (lit. send) to *Wakīl Baroni*. Nur (Niru) will tell you the rest of the news.

Please, [my] master, say on my behalf to *Ato Yimer*, "How are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth?" and to *Salih*, "How are you?"

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 36, Amharic original. Though the letter carries no date, it can with fair certainty be dated February 1855, when the great news in Ethiopia was Kasa Haylu's defeat of *Dejjazmach* Wībē at Deresgē. Kasa had asked his people to address him as "king" in 1854 (Sven Rubenson, *King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia*, Addis Abeba, 1966, p. 44), but it was only after the battle of Deresgē that he was crowned as Tēwodros.

The author of the letter was for several decades a well-known middleman between Ethiopian rulers and foreigners. He was the son of Subagadis's envoy Alī Umar, and was also known as Husayn (ACTA I, no. 34). During the reign of Tēwodros he was one of the king's interpreters and secretaries (nos 154 and 156). Tēwodros chose him to accompany the British consul, Captain C.D. Cameron, to the coast with the famous 1862 letter to Queen Victoria (no. 117), and he was involved in the translation of the papers of the missionaries Stern and Rosenthal which caused their arrest and imprisonment (Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 233–234). When the British mission headed by Hormuzd Rassam came to Ethiopia to free the prisoners, Tēwodros appointed him *baldereba* to Rassam. He remained close to the mission to the end and was reported to have behaved exceedingly well towards the British captives at Meqdela, helping them with their communications with the coast and the rebels, at the same time as he kept the confidence of Tēwodros (Hormuzd Rassam, *Narrative of the British Mission to Theodore*, London, 1869, I, pp. 254, 258–264 and *passim*; II, pp. 146–147 and *passim*). Henry Blanc, the medical doctor of the mission, describes him in *A Narrative of Captivity in Abyssinia*, London, 1868, pp. 217–219, as "a shrewd, cunning man, and one of the first who perceived that Theodore was losing ground".

The *dejjazmach* referred to was most probably Kasa Subagadis, who had suffered the loss of his father's province and imprisonment at the hands of Wībē. He was reinstated by Tēwodros in 1855, replacing Araya Sillasē Dimṣu (Welde Maryam, *Chronique de Théodoros II, roi des rois d'Éthiopie*, ed. C. Mondon-Vidailhet, Paris, n.d., p. 7 of the Amharic text; Guillaume Lejean, *Théodore II. Le nouvel empire d'Abyssinie et les intérêts français dans le sud de la Mer Rouge*, Paris, 1865, pp. 52–53). Baroni was the agent of the British representative in Ethiopia, Consul Walter Plowden. "Niru" is almost certainly an Ethiopian form of the Arabic "Nur".

Tēwodros to L. Delaye [April? 1855]



تاودروس ملك الحبشة

جئنا حضرتنا عينا الذي اكرمنا بالخروج عليه فنصل نراشه بمصوع طاك نقاه
 بعد هزبل الثوب الزايد اليكم والسؤال عن عرب خاظم فلما تم من هرب النفس له يقوب
 المازي الذي هو مشمل من طرف بابيه روميه باجل تعليم الديانة الرومانية بالحشبه
 فالمدكر حضرتنا على مدنا وجرمنا اوبيه وعلم يصير ناس بامانته وبنالكينه سرقه
 بغير امر وجرمنا اوبيه وماكناه ذلك الحضره لخبلة قسوس واخيرا اضر مطرات
 بربما ما سيكي والقسوس الذين عندنا المومنين من مطراتنا اعلمهم قسوس تافيس
 وبعده ذلك حضر عندنا بئندر وارسل لنا لاجل الما قامه من حيث سمعنا باعماله بارضا
 تقر به ارسلنا له ليجامو كاس ليوحس سبل وامرنا انه يتوجه له لاده سبله فلم يف
 وقال لي اقلني لمرامشي من الحبشه فارسلناه من غير ربط ولا كلام بطل الى طرفين
 ستارنا شرق ورجع من غير امرنا الى التقريه من الان وصاعد اذا وجدناه في
 بلادنا نحن بحركه عليه المراء والمقاسر كحسب قوايف مملكتنا ونحن عندنا حضرة
 قدس ابونا المطران وعندنا كفتنا او كوا لانا وزايده ونحن نصلك من قديس
 الامرات ولم محتاجين لاحقا بيلنا النفسانية ومن لان وصاعد لم تحضر قسوسكم
 لبلادنا ولما التجار وارباب الضايح ~~البايع~~ المرفعت الذين يحضرون لنظر البلاد من كل
 الطوايف ونحن نضع معهم كل الحية ونحضرهم ايضا مهمل يجب في ملكه واحدهم
 مدينت او بطركين فاذا وجد هكذي لحدث لغراب في كل الممالك فلا ترسلوا
 كفتهم وها قسوس يردوا المرفجه كافيه هلي يعلين من ذلك وقد تم بالجمع

١٥٧١

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros; Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

To His Excellency, our dearly beloved, the honoured and respected Mr. Delaye (*al-khawāja Dalaya*), French consul at Massawa. May he live long.

After abundant wishes and inquiries about your noble mind, we inform you about the Frankish priest De Jacobis (*Ya'qūb al-ifranjī*) who was sent by the pope of Rome (*Bāba Rūmiyya*) in order to teach the Roman religion in the land of Abyssinia. The said person came to the town of *Dejjazmach Wibē* (*Dajazmāt Awbiyya*); he taught some people his faith and built a church in secret without the authority of *Dejjazmach Wibē*. That was not enough for him; he brought some priests. Finally he brought a metropolitan who was called Massaja (*Māsiyās*), and reordained the priests we have with us, who were ordained by our metropolitan.

Then he came to us in Gonder and sent us [a message] about his [wish to] stay. As we had heard of his activities in the land of Tigray (*Tiqriya*), we sent to him *Līqe Mekwas* John Bell (*Likā Mawkās Yūhannis Bīl*). We ordered him to go to his country in peace. He refused and said to me, "Kill me, I will not leave Abyssinia." We sent him off by the Sinnar road without much ado or idle discussion. He slipped away, and returned without our authority to Tigray. And from now on, if we find him in our country, we will inflict upon him the penalty and the punishment according to the laws of our kingdom. We have with us His Grace, the revered *abun*, the metropolitan, and we have our clergy, and they are enough for us and more than enough. We, too, are Christians from the beginning of time. We do not need anybody to teach us Christianity. From now on, your priests should not come to our country. But as to your merchants and craftsmen and other people who come to see the country, whatever sect they belong to, we will treat them with complete friendship and even protect them. Is there any kingdom which has two kings or patriarchs? If one could be found, that whole kingdom would be ruined. Do not send clergy or priests to us. Enough said [about this]. No fooling! No fooling!

May you remain in good health!

1571.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 85, Arabic original. This letter was written in late March or early April 1855, *i.e.* after the news of Bishop De Jacobis' return to Tigray had reached Tēwodros, but before the bishop's withdrawal to Massawa in mid-April (see Kevin O'Mahoney, *The Ebullient Phoenix*, Asmera, 1982–87, I, p. 172). Consul Delaye reported it to his government only in July 1855 (AECF, Égypte, Massouah 2, fols 63–66). On the back of the letter there is a note stating that it was *signed* by Tēwodros, but that the consul did not believe that it came from him. The use of the Era of the Martyrs (1571, corresponding to 1855 Gregorian calendar) clearly indicates that *Abune Selama* was involved in writing the letter. On the other hand the uncompromising forcefulness of the language, especially in the last paragraph where the phrase *jumla kāfiyya* (enough said), which we also find in the king's letter to Hasan Bīk (see no. 90), and the vulgar phrase "*halbata, halbata*" (no joke, no fooling), point to Tēwodros himself. Tēwodros knew sufficient Arabic to dictate; he had used it in correspondence as Kasa Haylu of Qwara (ACTA I, nos 93, 94, 96, 100), and continued to use it in letters to Egyptian officials, as well as in some letters to the Arabic-speaking British envoy Hormuzd Rassam (nos 90, 91, 116, 157, 158, 161 below). The lion seal used in this letter and the following was replaced from 1857 onwards by the well-known seal with the crowned lion.

The idea that the rejection of foreign priests was mainly due to the influence of the *abun* is common in Catholic documents, but probably more due to wishful thinking and an underestimation of the new king's commitment to establish unity than to actual insight. See the letter to Samuel Gobat (no. 5) written at about the same time as the above. L. Delaye arrived at Massawa as French vice-consul in May 1853 after the consulate had been vacant for three years (AECF, Massouah 1, fols 145–146). He had written to Tēwodros on behalf of the Catholic mission in November 1854 (BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 90), and the above letter is the king's reply.

For further information on the issues raised in the letter, see Donald Crummey, *Priests and Politicians*, Oxford, 1972, pp. 95–99; Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 174–177.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros; Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia

May this letter sent by the Elect of God, King of Kings Tēwodros, reach the English bishop (pappas) of Jerusalem, Samuel Gobat (Gweba).

How are you, really? The letter you sent me through Krapf (Kraf) and Martin Flad (Merṭīn Flat) has reached me. I am glad you inquired about me. But when these people of whom you said to me, "If they stay, protect them for me; if they come [back], send them to me under protection," told me that they would leave, [as] I had received them with love, I sent them away with love. I am pleased, however, by your saying you would send me craftsmen, so send [them] to me.

Nevertheless you know the situation of our country; it is where you lived. It has been divided, one [part] against another, even into three [factions]. Now, by the power of God, I have unified it, so now let not priests who disrupt the faith come to me, in order that our friendship may not diminish. Earlier he who is called Father De Jacobis (*Abba Ya'iqob*) disrupted many districts by rebaptizing and reordaining deacons and priests. By the power of God, I made him give up and sent him off. But if anyone else comes, I shall receive him with love and send him away with love. Whoever stays, I shall make happy and provide for.

Of workers, however, let one who ploughs with an engine (lit. fire wheel) come, bringing the engine with him to me. I have heard people say that it exists. Keep in touch with me (lit. inquire about me) and I shall keep in touch with you.

In order to please God, I issued a proclamation two years ago saying, "Let no slave be sold." I have prohibited it.

LPL, Ms 1747, fols 3–4, Amharic original; fol. 5, English translation. The Amharic text has no date, but a note provides the information that the letter was written "about 23 of (sic) April, 1855".

The letter is published with a new translation by David L. Appleyard and annotation by Richard Pankhurst in *Letters from Ethiopian Rulers*, Oxford, 1985, pp. 135–142. Our translation does not differ in substance from Appleyard's, but Pankhurst's statement (p. 137) that "the unusual phrase 'elect of God' . . ." is not found in any of Tēwodros's other communications in British collections is only a half-truth. It is well-known that Tēwodros preferred Amharic to Gi'iz, and so we find the phrase *Igzī'abihēr merto* filling the function of *Siyume Igzī'abihēr* in the most famous of all the king's letters (no. 117 below).

The letter further (cf. no. 4) illustrates how unequivocally Tēwodros rejected European interference in the spiritual and ecclesiastical affairs of his country. Although his grievances were directed against the Catholic mission, Bishop De Jacobis in particular, there is no indication that he intended to discriminate in favour of Protestant missionaries. J.L. Krapf and J.M. Flad visited Tēwodros in April 1855 to explore the possibilities of mission work in Ethiopia, apparently carrying the letter to which the above is a reply. They were well received, and Flad returned later in the year with the lay missionaries C. Bender, G. Kienzlen and J. Mayer. See Crummey, pp. 116–120.

The above letter is primary evidence that Tēwodros made it abundantly clear from the outset that the missionaries would be welcome as useful craftsmen but not as missionaries. It is indicative of the way sources of Ethiopian history have been falsified that both contemporary and later authors omit the whole paragraph about the category of Europeans for which Tēwodros promised to grant permission to enter and live in his country. See J.B. Coulbeaux, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l'Abyssinie depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à l'avènement de Ménélick II*, Paris, 1929, p. 446, and sources quoted there.

Gebre İyyesus to Antoine d'Abbadie, 14 May [1855?]

ዘ ቴ፡ ጦማር፡ ሳም ናዊት፡ ዘ ተፈነወት፡ እም
 ሳብ፡ ቀኝ፡ ጌታ፡ ገብረ፡ ኢሃሱስ፡ ሳዙን፡ ወትኩዝ፡
 ትብዳሕ፡ ሳብ፡ መርከቢ፡ ኃዘን፡ አቶ፡ እንጦገዮስ፡
 ወይን፡ ሰላመ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ሸመን፡ የሃሱም
 ከሌክ፡ አመን፡
 እብል፡ አነ፡ ተከዘት፡ ነፍሳዊ፡ ለሞት፡ ለእመ፡ ርሕቀ፡
 እም፡ አዲስ፡ ሕይወት፡ ገሰቱ፡ እግዚአብሔር
 ሊ፡ ዘቀዳሚ፡ ፍቅርነ፡ እከመ፡ ፍቅርነ፡ ከመ፡ ሞት፡
 ጽጌት፡ ዘገብአት፡ መንገሱ፡ ድኅር፡ እዲክ፡ ትትመ
 የጥ፡ ሊት፡ እከመ፡ ሰነቱ፡ ከፍሕት፡ እምሳሌ፡ ከፍሕት፡
 መገመሳት፡ ኢታርመመ፡ ወኢት፡ ጸመመ፡ እግዚአ
 ኦእግዚአብሔር፡ እመ፡ ኃላላክ፡ ወገበርክ፡ ከመ፡ ቀዳሚ፡
 አቡኑ፡ የከመክ፡ በዘአእመረ፡ ይኩን፡
 ት፡ ጽሕፈት፡ አመ፡ ጌሰገንታት፡

May this eighth letter sent by the sad and distressed *Qeñ Gēta* Gebre İyyesus reach the comforter in grief, Mr. Antoine (Intōniyos), the amiable (lit. the grape). May the peace of God be with you. Amen.

I say: my soul is distressed unto death,
 since your life-giving hand has been withdrawn from me.
 Recall, however, our past friendship, O my master,
 because our friendship is as strong as death,
 and let your hand which was withdrawn
 reach out once more to me
 since it is extended to everyone [else] like a [wide] curtain.
 Do not keep silent and remain mute, O my master.

O my master, if you wish to behave (lit. do) as in the past, leave Father Giusto (*Abune Yostos*) to his designs (lit. thinking).

Written on the 7th of Ginbot.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 256, fol. 610, Gi'iz original. For *Qeñ Gēta* Gebre İyyesus's earlier collaboration and correspondence with Antoine d'Abbadie, see ACTA I, no. 117 and *passim*. The writer started to number his letters to Antoine when the latter left Ethiopia in 1848 (*ibid.*, no. 128), and the fifth (no. 168) was dated 19 June 1853. It has not been possible to locate nos six and seven.

For the identification of *Abune Yostos* with Giusto da Urbino, see ACTA I, no. 107.

Gebre İyyesus to Michel d'Abbadie [1855?]

ሰዩኝ፡

ዛ፡ቲ፡ጠዓግር፡ ዘተፈነወት፡ እመንበ፡
 ቀኝ፡ጊታ፡ገብረ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ትብጻሕ፡ግ
 በ፡ራስ፡ ማኅኤል፡ ፍራንሳዊ፡ ሰላሙክ
 ግዚኤብሔር፡ የሃሱ፡ መስሊክ፡ አሚን፡
 ጊታዩ፡ ሆይ፡ ስሁሱ፡ እጀመን፡ ሲዘረጉ፡
 ከኒ፡ ደርሶ፡ መነው፡ ተጠራ፡ መን፡ አ
 ስከፍቻለሁ፡ መን፡ በድድፍ፡ አስሁ፡ ሁሉ
 ን፡ ደከ፡ ሲለው፡ እኒን፡ ከፋኝ፡ ዳግመኛመ፡
 እኒ፡ እልካሁ፡ አሳሱኝመ፡ አትመጣ፡
 ወዲህም፡ ለጊታው፡ ለወንድምዎ፡ የፈ
 ስጉት፡ ነበረኛ፡ ጸከጽ፡ ነበር፡ እነዚህ፡
 ቀረ፡ መነው፡ ከወደዎ፡ ሳመነው፡ ከሕክክ
 ሮቸው፡ አሳሳሱኝ፡ እኒ፡ አስከረም፡ አልነበ
 ረሁም፡ አሁንም፡ ስለ፡ እግዚኤብሔር፡
 ጥሰው፡ ዘመድ፡ ይሁኑኝ፡ እንጂን፡ መከር፡
 ሁነው፡ ካገረዎ፡ ቢሆን፡ እጀመራም፡

May this letter sent by *Qeñ Gēta* Gebre İyyesus reach *Ras Michel* (Mīka'ēl), the Frenchman. May the peace of God be with you. Amen.

O my master, when you reach out your hand to everyone else, why is it withdrawn when it is my turn (lit. when approaching me)? In what way have I displeased [you]? What offence have I committed? When everyone else is happy, my feelings are hurt.

Moreover, did you not tell me, "I will send [help]. Do not come." And there was also [something] your brother, the master, wanted. I was writing; now it has stopped. Why do you regard me as less than your servants, when I love and trust you? Was not I your servant? Now, for God's sake, be a friend to me. Let alone [in] Egypt, even if you are in your country, you would not find any difficulty [in helping me]; you have left me out.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 93, Amharic original. This letter cannot be dated with certainty. The wording seems to indicate that it was most probably written at the same time as no. 6. Though at the top of the document, *Ieyyuñ* should be read as the last word of the document.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie, 18 Aug. 1855

ዛተ፡ ጠጠር፡ ዘተረ፡ ገወሳ፡ እምሰጠ፡ ገረ፡ ትጋዝ
 አስ፡ ገባ፡ እንደገና፡ ስ፡ ዘለገደሃ፡ እንደገና፡ አሁ፡ የፊት፡ እን
 ጸፊ፡ የሰህነድ፡ የምድር፡ ያህል፡ እስከ፡ አሁን፡ ሄረድ፡
 ባልፎረዎ፡ ዘላቀቁኝ፡ አሁን፡ ዘሁ፡ ስፍራት
 ወር፡ ሰው፡ ገጽ፡ እኛ፡ አጭብቆ፡ ተወገንኻል፡ አዛን፡
 ጦን፡ ጠባቤንገጣቶ፡ ሃበላኛል፡፡
 በፍሃ፡ አሁ፡ ለረስ፡ ወረቀት፡ ለጽፍ፡ የተሰገደ፡
 ቤት፡ ነገር፡ አልፎ ከዎም፡ አምና፡ በዚህ፡ ወራት፡
 ሶስት፡ አስተማሪቶ፡ ተሰገደህት፡ ለቀው፡ ወይ፡
 እንገራቸው፡ ወይ፡ እንገልግሮ፡ ሄደን፡ እኔም፡ ገሠ፡
 በንግ፡ አይተኝውም፡ ሹህተ፡ ለቶ፡ ዘወር፡ ወራት፡ ሄደ፡
 እርሱ፡ ጠለቀ፡ በንግ፡ ተሰገደህት፡ እኛ፡ ገና ነገር ነገር፡
 ብሎ፡ ነበረ፡ እስከሁን፡ እንገራ፡ የሀገራቶ፡ አስተማሪቶ፡

እንመጡም፡ ሄመጠ፡ አሁ፡ ተሰፋ፡ ያለደረጉሃ፡
 እንኛ፡ ስለዚህም፡ ባቀደ፡ በጭንቀት፡ ጠገህህረህ፡
 ቢሆረ፡ ነበረ፡ አሁን፡ ገን፡ አረፍት፡ ሰው፡ ገጽ፡ ም፡
 ጦን፡ ገባ፡ ለሁለት፡ ወር፡ ተጠፊ፡ እኛንገረዱም፡
 እያገራ፡ ትው፡ አሁን፡ ለሁሉም፡ ሄደዎል፡፡
 አሁ፡ አዛን፡ አጭብቆ፡ ጠባቤንገጣቶ፡ ሃበላኛል፡ ያልነፃ
 አሁ፡ አሁ፡ ጠገህህረህ፡ ባለገረ፡ ለሁለት ነገት፡ ጠ፡ ስለሀገሩ
 ፍራት፡ ነው፡ እኛ፡ ጭንቀት፡ ተሰፋ፡ አይቆይ፡ ነበረ፡
 ጠ፡ ተሰገደህት፡ ተምራ፡ ነገሩ፡ ገራ፡ ሳረ፡ እንገለግራ፡
 ጠ፡ አሁን፡ ገን፡ ጭንቀት፡ አልሰጠም፡ እንገለግራ፡
 ፈቃድ፡ ነገሩም፡ እንገለግራ፡ ጠ፡ ተሰገደህት፡
 የሀገራገው፡ የምድር፡ ገር፡ አላውቅም፡፡
 ለእንገለግራ፡ አሁን፡ ለሁሉም፡ አሁ፡ አሁ፡ ገር፡ ሄረ፡
 ጠ፡ ሄረ፡ በሆነ፡ ጠ፡ ጠ፡ አሁ፡ ገር፡ ሰው፡ ገጽ፡

fol. 89r

fol. 89v

May this letter sent by Birru reach the honoured Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥoniyo፡ Ze'abediye). How are you, my master, my beloved (*anjete*), to the extent of heaven and earth? Please do not be angry (lit. sad) with me because I have remained without writing to you until now. I (lit. my body) have been seriously troubled these six months. Sorrow and idleness have entered my heart and are tormenting me.

I have done wrong. When I wrote you a letter, I did not write about school matters. Last year about this time three teachers left the school and went back to their country, England (Ingiltar). After this had happened, the principal resigned his position and left during the Christmas season. After his resignation the school was in a state of much confusion. Even up to this moment they have not brought enough teachers, though they are giving us hope by saying that they are coming. Therefore there have been few students lodging here.

ጌታየ፡ ላዲ፡ ሃገራ፡ ሰጠ፡ ረገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡

ተጽዕኖ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡
 ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡ ለገደ፡

fol. 95r

Water: The people of Gonder say *weha*; others say *wiha*. But I say *weha*, like the people of Gonder. I do not know the name of the mountain that is above the home of the *abun*. I have forgotten it. I believe I have forgotten much of the Gi'iz and Amharic languages. There is no one with whom I can speak Amharic. I have no other books in the Abyssinian languages that I can read except the Bible. If you have [any] published Abyssinian books, I beg books from you as alms.

It is now about three months that we have not gone to church early in the mornings because of the heat (lit. strength of the sun) and because the place is far off. Every Sunday, however, after the principal has read the Gospel, he gives a sermon. Before, I used to go to a Protestant church. This week we have begun classes.

My master, my beloved (*anjetē*), you are not my messenger. [Nevertheless, please] tell your brothers on my behalf that Birru sends greetings, saying, "God has delivered you."

The book I want you to buy is this: Brande's *Dictionary of Sciences and Arts*.

Written on the 27th of Meskerem or the 7th of the month of October, in the year of 1855.

My master, tell Adula from me, "May God make you serve your master in good health, with love and fear. You will not find in this world a master like the good Antoine, who after buying your freedom would provide for you by giving you a salary. If you serve with sincerity, God will then allow you to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Amen."

Written in Malta. May it reach the land of France.

Bad handwriting; I did not have good light when I wrote.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 94–95, Gi'iz/Amharic original. This letter shows, as do several others, that Birru was very concerned about the progress of his foreign education. At the same time, he was brooding over the fact that he was losing his knowledge of Gi'iz and Amharic, and the possibility that he might be left to die alone in a foreign land. It was written in reply to the letter from Antoine d'Abbadie, dated 21 September (see no. 7), in which d'Abbadie asked about the pronunciation of the word "water". The request for the dictionary, W.T. Brande (ed.) *Dictionary of Science, Literature, and Art*, was in response to a question what books Birru would like to have.

The sentence about the handwriting is found in the margin of fol. 94v.

Tēwodros to Ioanni Kotsika [5 Feb. 1856]

We, the emperor of Abyssinia etc. [greet] our very dear son, Mr. Ioanni Kotsika.

We acknowledge the receipt of your two letters, which have been handed over to His Eminence the archbishop, our father *Abune Selama*, who interested us in their content, which we will take note of, and we thank you.

With regard to the your advice, which you give us in your first letter, we would like to make it known that all the chronicles of the kingdom are kept with us, and that in them all agreements are noted from ancient time, that everything is noted down chronologically in these, and that we shall use them according to the law when the time is convenient.

With regard to the goods we wanted, which you brought with you for us from Egypt, bring them to us if you can, and you will be satisfied with everything. Otherwise send them by express messenger to the governor of Qallabat, who will send them to us with your messenger, who will bring us all the accounts that exist between us. We will give instructions about their payment and about new orders for our churches and for our army.

When we appoint a governor to rule the districts in which Kasakatouris lives, we shall send payment for your goods, which your messenger 'Abbūd brought with him, and which the above-mentioned Kasakatouris had received from the latter, Mr. 'Abbūd, who again has given us a report about this business.

Our greatest desire is that complete and strict justice shall be dispensed, but our patience makes it our duty to wait for Kasakatouris's spontaneous repentance. Since this will soon come about, we will send a messenger (from our side) and you will receive full compensation (lit. justice).

We reward you with our everlasting friendship and boundless confidence. Continue to write to us. We also express our deep desire that you visit us in Abyssinia. Stay well.

Pandora, 1 Oct. 1861 (vol. 12, p. 309), Greek translation. It has not been possible to locate the original of this letter and the following from *Abune Selama*. The above text is therefore a translation of the Greek version of what was in all probability an Arabic original, as indicated by the use of "Abyssinia" instead of "Ethiopia" in the king's title. The "etc." after "Abyssinia" obviously stands for the remainder of the title. The date is based on the assumption that this letter was written on the same day as the letter to *Selama* (no. 11 below).

Ioanni Kotsika (mostly referred to as Ioannis Kotzikas) was a Greek merchant who operated from Kassala. It was obviously not only for commercial reasons that he had contacted Tēwodros, since the king refers to the contents of the "chronicles of the kingdom" in reply to a "first" letter from Kotsika. We have not been able to identify "Kasakatouris". For information on Kotsika see, in addition to the article in *Pandora* where the above letter is published, Methodios Fouyas, "An unpublished document edited and translated into English by Metropolitan Methodios of Aksum", *Abba Salama*, vol. I (1970), pp. 15–66; Richard Pankhurst, "Yohannes Kotzika, the Greeks and British Intervention against Tewodros", *Abba Salama*, vol. III (1972), pp. 87–117; T. Natsoulas, "The Hellenic Presence in Ethiopia", *Abba Salama*, vol. VIII (1977), and "Prologue to modern ties between Greece and Ethiopia: the efforts of Ioannis Kotzikas during the era of Tewodoros, 1845–1868", *Northeast African Studies*, vol. 6 (1984), 1–2, pp. 147–170.

Selama to Ioanni Kotsika, 5 Feb. 1856

5 February 1856

To my very dear son, Mr. Ioanni Kotsika.

May the Lord protect him against all evil and destroy his enemies and save him from all guile, with the help of prophets and saints.

You should know that I have received the letters, which I read to His Imperial Majesty, who was very happy when he was informed of their content.

The chronicles are in the historical archives of the emperors, and also in the many churches in the countryside. Everything is noted chronologically. I thank you very much, my son, for your exhortation and your advice which is of benefit to the development of the Abyssinian kingdom. I ask you to send us news about yourself as well as news about your country and everything else which you believe to be of benefit to us.

I enclose a letter from His Imperial Majesty and, if you can, come here to acquaint yourself personally with His Imperial Majesty, something which will be of great benefit to all, because great interest in you has taken root in his heart after I had told him about your honourable character and informed him that you can obtain everything that is necessary and profitable to the kingdom.

I asked His Imperial Majesty for instructions with regard to the goods which you brought with you for him from Egypt, and His Imperial Majesty ordered that they should be sent to the governor of Qalabat with one of your messengers, and also that all accounts that exist between you shall be sent at the same time to His Imperial Majesty for instructions about their payment and for new orders.

I give you the blessing of His Holiness, our Father Patriarch Qērilos.

He who prays fervently for Your Honour,
Abune Selama, Archbishop of Abyssinia.

ኔቸው፡ ፓቸው፡ መቼሐ፡ ቀድሶ፡ በሙወይ፡

እንዲሁም፡ ደግሞ፡ ሌሎች፡ ነገር ስቲያኖት፡ እገደ

ሰቲ፡ ሀበሹቶ፡ ሆኑ፡ ገብረካውያንም፡ በውኅት፡ የነገ

ሮስቶስ፡ ትእዛዛት፡ ገደረጉ፡ እስተገባህ፡ እይቅራች

ው፡ ዘኋይ፡ ይገባኛል፡ ምንው፡ ነገር ስቶስ፡ ገባዎልኛ፡

ተቆቀረ፡ በገይናቲ ግሙ፡ ፍቅር፡ ለደኅሰ፡ ነው፡ ገብ

ርስቲ ኖች፡ ምንት፡ የሚበዛ፡ ፍቅር፡ ለበዛ፡ ግን፡ ገደረ

እስሙ፡ ነገር ሰቲ፡ በተሰደደ፡ — እይም፡ ዘገደር፡ ይገ

ሁርና፡ በገባቸው፡ ወይትምርት፡ ገም፡ እስገራሁንም፡

በገይም፡ እግረክግሐር፡ ይሙከገን፡ ደገና ነች፡ ይገራ፡ ናፍ

ቆች፡ ግን፡ እያይረ፡ ይበዛቸው፡ ሁኔታ፡ እግራ፡ ለደደርግልኛ፡

ወይቆራንከ፡ ወሰዶ፡ ለግራት፡ ወራት፡ ወይገራ፡ ለሙ

ሰስን፡ እውደሰሁ፡ ለጌቶ፡ ለወንድሞች፡ እኔ፡ እገሰሁ፡

የራሳም፡ ለወይቶ፡ ገንደቶ፡ ገንዳ፡ እገሰሁ፡ ለርስዎም፡

ጌታው፡ ለሰዓይና፡ ለሰዓይና፡ የሰገገዛ፡ ገግሁን፡ ለሆና፡

fol. 96v

እንደሰገደ፡ እስሙ ነው፡ እሰሁ፡ እገደ፡

ተሰታ፡ ሁሉ፡ በደሰታ፡ ግልግል፡ ንግ፡ ለጊና ^{February 12th 56}

በገሰሁ፡ ፍጥነት፡

fol. 97r

Lately I have become more ignorant. I have not pressed on with [my] studies.

As for my health, God be praised, I am well. The longing for my country, however, increases every day that passes. If God would do it for me, I would like Him to take me to France for a few months and [then] return me to my country.

I greet the masters, [your] brothers. I say to my friend Adula, "How are you?" I beg Him, the King who rules heaven and earth, to give health to you, [my] master. Amen.

Written in the island of Malta to Irún in (the land) of France. February 12th/56.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 96-97, Amharic original. The date on this letter is given in the Gregorian calendar and written in Latin script only. Dissatisfied with the education he was receiving and apparently lonely and homesick, Birru nevertheless refused to accuse his Protestant teachers of proselytizing, something that d'Abbadie apparently took for granted that they did.

Tēwodros to Walter Plowden [Feb. 1856]

I, the King, am engaged in a distant war. My Governors were left with orders to protect my territories simply, till my return. Till now Ethiopia has been without a Sovereign, but now that by the grace of God I wear the Crown, I shall not depart from those usages that become all Sovereigns. If you receive any further communication from Egypt before my return, refer it to me.

FO 401/1, p. 272, English translation inserted into a letter from Consul Plowden to the Earl of Clarendon, dated 5 March 1856. Tēwodros reportedly wrote this while on his first campaign in Shewa in reply to a letter from the British consul general in Egypt, Frederick Bruce, presumably forwarded to the king by Plowden. In addition to the letter Plowden reported that he had received the following message included in "a private note through Mr. Bell": "Answer for me as you think best for my dignity and your own. I am ready for peace or war." The king was in Gonder reported to be on his way to Harer and possibly from there to Jerusalem. In fact, he crossed the Abay into Gojjam in March on his way back to the north. See [Zeneb], *Ye-Tēwodros Tarik*, English title *The Chronicle of King Theodore of Abyssinia*, Princeton, 1902, pp. 25–26.

Tēwodros is referring in the letter to the unsettled frontier with Egypt, both on the Metemma–Taka side and possibly also on the mainland opposite Massawa. In order to gain better security for trade, Plowden was at this time advocating an agreement between the Ottoman and Ethiopian governments with regard to Massawa, including the possibility of transferring Massawa to Ethiopia. It was taken for granted that Tēwodros would eventually seize Massawa. See FO 401/1, pp. 263–271, for the correspondence between British Foreign Office officials on these issues.

Provided Plowden's translation can be relied upon, even this short letter clearly shows how concerned Tēwodros was to conduct his relations with other sovereigns on an equal basis and in accordance with established international procedures. For further information on these matters, see Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 172–223. There is actually an echo of the above lines in a fragment of a letter from Plowden, which eventually ended up in the hands of the French consul at Massawa (BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 62): The king believed himself "d'avoir le droit souverain de faire ce qu'il veut absolument dans son royaume n'ayant aucune traité . . . qui peut l'empêcher."

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to Napoleon III, 9 June 1856

ተጽህፈት፡ በዘመነ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ በወርህ፡ ሰቲ፡ ስኞት፡
ጌታችን፡ በተወለደ፡ ሽክ፡ ተ፲፱፡ ወ፡ ማ፲፮፡

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ዘኑ፡ መልእክት፡ ዘተፈ፡ ነውት፡ እምነ፡ በ፡ ደጀዝ
ማችን፡ ንጉሥ፡ ብጻሕ፡ ንበ፡ ና፡ ጸሊዎን፡ ንጉሠ፡
ነገሥት፡ ዘፈረንሲስ፡ ለክርስቲያን፡ ጸጋ፡ ለ
ተገፋ፡ ስዛኝ፡ ስጅጉን፡ እንደት፡ ስሉ፡ በዚና፡ የ
ሰማዩን፡ የምድርን፡ ን፡ ሆህል፡
እርስዎ፡ እባኑ፡ ይሁኑኝ፡ እኔም፡ ልጅ፡ እሆንዎ፡
ስለሁ፡ ስሁንም፡ ስሊገዛ፡ ንጉሡ፡ ተኔሽት፡ ብኛል፡
ክርስቲያኑን፡ ፈጅቶታልና፡ እንደ፡ እውቀትዎ፡
እድርገው፡ ይርደኝ፡ ቢሆን፡ እስክ፡ ነሀሴ፡ ባይሆን፡
እስክ፡ ሙስከረም፡ ድረስ፡ እስክገደድ፡ ሙደያና፡
ወደደብረ፡ ስያልሁ፡ እስክ፡ ብታለሁ፡ ስቡኑ፡ ያለቅ
ብን፡ እባኑ፡ ስባኑ፡ ስድር፡ ስለሁ፡ በቀረ፡ ሙም፡
ከፈቃድዎ፡ ስልወጣም፡



Written in the year of John in the month of Senē [on] the third day, in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1848.

May this letter sent by *Dejjazmach* Nigusē reach Napoleon (Napuliwon), king of kings of France, he who defends the Christians and feels compassion for the oppressed. [Although I know you only] by hearsay, how are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth? Be my father and I will be your son. Now a godless (lit. infidel) king has risen against me. Since he has destroyed the Christians, help me according to your knowledge, if possible by Nehasē, if not, by Meskerem. Until then I will wait, moving about here and there. I have made Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) my father. As for the rest, I will abide by your will.

Seal: *Dejjazmach* Nigusē.

AACP, Égypte, Massouah 2, fol. 107, Amharic original; fol. 106, French translation. The letter was forwarded with a covering letter from the French vice-consul at Massawa, C. Chauvin-Beillard, dated 30 June (*ibid.*, fols 104–105). The consul complained that he had no interpreter and therefore had to keep Nigusē's messenger a whole week, before he could find out what the letter was about. The person who helped him was apparently De Jacobis, who wrote to his superiors on 17 June that the consul had promised to forward Nigusē's request on condition that he undertook to protect the Catholics, and that Nigusē had promised to do so both in the letter to Paris and in a letter to the bishop himself (CML, *Lettres manuscrites de Mgr. De Jacobis*, vol. 2, no. 371). There is nothing in this letter to support the conclusion that Nigusē offered to cede territory to France at this time, though there may of course have been discussions about it (cf. Crummev, p. 101).

To my knowledge this is the earliest preserved letter from Wibe's nephew, commonly known as Agew Nigusē (see ACTA I, no. 43), and the only letter with this crude seal. During the first five years of Tēwodros's reign, Nigusē was one of the most powerful rebels in the country, partly because of his foreign contacts. While Tēwodros was absent subduing Wello and Shewa, Nigusē captured Gonder, where he was reported by Consul Plowden in November 1855 (*Correspondence 1846–68*, p. 161; see also *Vicende*, pp. 519–520). The "godless king" (we have read the letters preceding *nigus* as *alawē*) is obviously a reference to Tēwodros. The French translation has "un chef sans croyance".

The attempts to involve France on Nigusē's side against Tēwodros continued (see nos 36, 37, 46), and led to a French mission to the Red Sea coast, described by the head of the mission Count Stanislas Russel, *Une mission en Abyssinie et dans la Mer Rouge 23 octobre 1859—7 mai 1860*, Paris, 1884. See nos 48–50, 52–54; also Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 189–207.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie, 11 June 1856

7 May 1856
 ማቴ: ጦጦጦ: ዘተ ረገደ ገብ: አምላክ: ግራ:
 ት ጠጃሽ: ገብ: ገብ: ለገጠጥ ገብ: ዘአገደ።
 እገደት: አሉ: የሌተ: አገጅ ቴ: ። የር ከወ: ተስ
 ፈ ስ: ምህን: የሞላበት: በሚያ: ። የተሄ
 ፈ: የረሰሰ ገ: የሌተ: ተሰ: ጠየ: ምህሽ: ሃፊ
 ንፍ ጠጠ። ይህ: ገን: የዘገ: ገው: ። የትም
 ር ተችገ: ፈተና: ለገጠ: ገበሬ: ስላዚህም:
 ገበሬ: በጌላ: አጽ ፍ ልም: ጠየ: ዘገጥሁኝ:
 አሁን: ገን: አላፈ: ሁሉት: *maiz* ት ጠጠ።
 ኝ: ጌተው: አሄን: ጠጠ። አጅግ: የተሰ
 ሁኝ: አይሙከልም: ተሰገሬ ጠፎ: አንሠ: ሁሉ
 ት: አሙት: ሆነ: ገብ: ገብ: ገብ: ገብ: ገብ:
 መረ: ገበሬት: ወራት: የምረ: እስከ:
 አሁን: ድረስ: ተሰገሬ ጠፎ: አስተ ሰገሬ ጠፎ:
 አሁን ስላ: ህይ: ገብ: እስከ: ሆነ: ገብ ጠፎ
 ቸው: ወረደ: አንጅ: ገሙት: ዘዚህ: በአገ
 ህኝ ገሁ: ገ: ሰዎት: የህይ: አይሙከሉኝ:
 ሰህህ: ለጠሰ ስ: ምህን: አገሬ: የሞሰ
 ግናቸ: አስገሁን: ድረ ስ: አላሰጡኝ ምህ:

May this letter sent by Birru reach the honoured Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥoniyoግ Ze'abadiye).

How are you, my master, my beloved (*anjete*)? I received your [letter], written on the . . . of May. [It was] so full of hope and advice. My master, I did not write you the reply immediately, because I was busy with the following (lit. this) matter. As the examinations (on our lessons) were approaching, (therefore) I postponed, intending to write to you later. Now it is over. I received two prizes.

Master, though I received this, do not think that I have learned much. Look, it is now two years since the school began to deteriorate. Beginning from that time up to now, the [number of] students and teachers has been decreasing. Their number has gone down from 100 to 30. I do not know, but at this rate I do not think 10 people will be attending next year.

May God reward them; they have not let me lack clothes and food up to now. But with regard to education, I am very unhappy with them. They have not enabled me to benefit. In one of my letters last year, I wrote to you (saying) that I would learn algebra and geometry. It is true, I started. However, because the one who was teaching it to us left the school right away, I did not progress. Now it happens

fol. 99r

በትምርት፣ ገዢ፣ የሚገገ፣ ግን፡
 እጅግ፣ እገደግጥ፣ ስላሁ፣ እንደ፣ እሁ-
 ጠቀም፣ እላይ፣ ገንጽ፡፡ ገንጽ፣ ወረቀ
 ቴ፣ እምና፣ አልጅበራ፣ ጅ የምትራ፣ እ
 ግራሳሁኝ፣ ጠየ፣ ጽሬዐዎ፣ ገበርሁኝ፣ እው
 ገት፣ ጅምራ፣ ገበርሁኝ፣ ደራ፣ ግን፣ የሚሰ
 ተምረኛው፣ የገበራ፣ ተሰ፣ ጠሰ፣ ጠተህግ
 ራ፣ በት፣ ስላ፣ ሰቀቀ፣ ገሰገ፣ ገራሁኝ፣ እሁ
 ንህ፣ በውትርትር፣ ቀኑ፣ ያለቅ፣ ሁ
 ገሰ፡፡ የረተ፣ እንጅቴ፣ ገደገ፣ እጅግ፣
 ስላሁ፣ እገደግጥ፣ ስላሁ፣ እንደገሰዎ
 ያሰ፣ ማሰገህ፣ ጌ፣ ት፣ ጠሰህ፣
 ለእርጌ፣ እገደ፣ ገርቆት፣ እንደ፣ ሰ፣
 ለሰደት፣ እጅግ፣ ተገ፣ ስላ፣ ሰ፣
 ይበሉሉ፣ የተወለደበት፣ እገደ፣ ያህሉ፣
 የሚወደድ፣ የእምና፣ ጌተው፣ ማሰገህ
 ግን፣ እየደገህ፣ ለጌተ፣ ማሰገህ፣ ሰ፣
 ቀርሱስ፣ ጠራ፣ እጅ፣ ያገሰ፣ ይጠራግ፡፡
 በሙሉ፣ ማሰገህ፣ የተሰቀሰው፣ ገደሰ
 ዎ፣ ገራ፣ ይሁን፣ እሁን፣ *M 1856 June 11*

that the days pass with trivialities.

My master, my beloved, I am very unhappy with Adula for leaving such a generous master as you and going away. If Argēpo longs for his country, you would be doing a great thing towards the Creator if you sent him [home], since nothing can be loved more than the country where one is born.

Master, you are not my messenger. [Nevertheless, please] tell Master Michel (Mika'el) and Master Charles (Qērilos), "Birru sends greetings."

May the One who was crucified on the cross be with you. Amen.

1856 June 11.

fol. 99v

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 99, Amharic original. The word "prizes" and, as usual, the date are in English also in the original. Birru's dissatisfaction with the school he was attending, and his homesickness, were apparently deepening. Also for his old friend Argēpo he recommended a return to Ethiopia, lest he follow the example of Adula and run away.

Kasa Subagadis to Raffaele Baroni [c. 1 Nov. 1856]

Handwritten Amharic text, likely the body of the letter, consisting of approximately 10 lines of script.



Handwritten Amharic text, possibly a signature or a closing phrase, located below the main body of the letter.

May this letter sent by *Dejjazmach* Kasa reach *Wakīl* Baroni (*Wekīl* Boronī). How are you? They say that you are well.

The capsules you sent me have reached me. The matter of friendship with the English did not start today. It began in the days of King George (*Gērgīs*) and *Dejjazmach* Subagadis (*Seba* Gadis) and has continued until now (lit. me). Now may our friendship be strengthened. We will increase it and not diminish (lit. divide) it.

Write (lit. send) to your country that I have arrived safely. If you have any business, let me know; if I have any business, I will let you know.

Dejjazmach Kasa.

Dejjazmach Kasa.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 68, Amharic original. On the back of this letter there is a note stating that this letter from "*Dejac* Kassai" had been brought by his servant "Samuel" on 3 Nov. 1856 and answered on 7 Nov. That Samu'el Giyorgīs handled this letter is evident from the fact that the second "*Dejjazmach* Kasa" at the bottom of the letter is written in his handwriting. A box of capsules destined to Schimper had been dispatched from Massawa by Baroni some time after 17 May 1856 (AACP, Égypte, Massouah 2, fol. 111–16).

The BN list of Ethiop. 184 documents states that this letter came from the "*futur* Teodoros"; this is certainly a mistake. He would not have called himself *dejjazmach* after his coronation. The first governor appointed by Tēwodros over Tigray was Araya Sillasē Dimṣu (ACTA I, no. 50). He was deposed in favour of Kasa Subagadis after a few months (IOL, Aden archives, vol 148, Baroni, 20 June 1855; Lejean, *Théodore II*, pp. 52–53; *Correspondence 1846–68*, p. 169). For Kasa's earlier career, see no. 3 above and for Subagadis Weldu's contacts with George IV, ACTA I, nos 21 and 23.

Welde Gebri'el to Alessandro Barnabò [Nov. 1856]

Most Eminent Prefect,

The undersigned petitioner, Catholic priest in Abyssinia, apostolic missionary for the Propaganda Fide [wishes to] disclose to Your Most Reverend Eminence what follows.

He was born in Shewa, and as a student of the Propaganda Fide he was many years ago ordained priest in Rome and sent back to his home country as a missionary. As the ignorance of the native priests in his country has been very great for many years, with the loss of many souls through the poor administration of the Sacraments, he accordingly finds himself incessantly distressed by [his] doubts that he has been badly baptized.

To the other Abyssinians who came to Rome the Sacred Congregation granted baptism *sub conditione* before ordaining them priests, but the petitioner was deprived of this great favour, so that he lives in the most deadly distress because of the above-mentioned doubts, which torment him without respite.

This suspicion that he has not been properly baptized is not without justification, since he knows from having seen with his own eyes how many heretic Abyssinian priests have administered baptism invalidly. For besides adding many needless things to the necessary formula in Holy Baptism, it also often happens that the formula "I baptize you in the name, etc., etc.," is pronounced before or after the child has been immersed in the baptismal water, that is to say not accompanying the immersion simultaneously with the necessary formula. The petitioner fears that he has been baptized in this way or some other that falls short of the necessary conditions (as often happens in Abyssinia). Hence he forwards with humility to Your Most Reverend Eminence the request to grant him Holy Baptism *sub conditione* with the other sacraments of Confirmation and of the priesthood, as he does not see any way to be able to find peace from such great and persistent distress. Since there is nothing that he wants more than the salvation of his soul, therefore, he hopes to see this favour granted, without which the petitioner is afraid to die unbaptized and deserving hell.

He who is by grace Your Most Reverend Eminence's

most humble and faithful servant Welde Gebri'el,
Abyssinian monk, missionary for Propaganda Fide.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 5, fol. 1128, Italian original. Welde Gebri'el was one of the Ethiopian priests, who in 1841 accompanied Father De Jacobis to Rome, where he received education at the Propaganda Fide for about three years. In the document recording his abjuration of the Orthodox faith on 8 September 1841 he is introduced as "*Sacerdos Walda filius Gabrielis*" (my emphasis), aged 33 (*ibid.*, vol. 4, fol. 142). He was apparently re-ordained in Rome (see above). A certificate "to whom it may concern", issued by Cardinal Fransoni on 10 June 1844 (vol 5, fol. 1129), introduces him as an "Abyssinian priest of the Coptic rite" (my emphasis), who was sent to the Orient to "exercise the office of an apostolic missionary to which he had been appointed by the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide". Since there is no indication in the preserved documents that he had ever lived in Egypt, much less joined the Catholic Church there, it must be assumed that "Coptic" here stands for the Catholic but Gi'iz rite which Bishop De Jacobis was establishing in Ethiopia.

Apparently he was at the time of this letter completely trusted by De Jacobis, since he was confidentially entrusted with the message that the missionary Giusto da Urbino, who was about to leave Ethiopia, should not be allowed to return (ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 5, fol. 1287).

The lack of consistency with regard to the treatment of the Ethiopian Orthodox clergy who entered the service of the Catholic mission led to conscientious scruples of this kind in more cases than this. See nos 85–86 below.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 18 Nov. 1856

Although matters may be *in statu quo*, and no change is in sight, it does not suit me to postpone; on the contrary I consider it my duty to write to you at all events.

We live in Abyssinia and still we do not know [anything] for certain, [there is] always "it is said, it is told, and it is being done" and never "[this] is the truth, and [this is] how things are going".

We always hope for the best, for the cessation of the evils, [of] which the sole obstacle and the source (sic) are the *abun* and the emperor—Antichrist to the Catholics, and no less to the schismatics, [but] idol of the Protestants, who have written to Egypt about everything, and not without success, as for the villains so also for the good to such an extent that the French consul general at Alexandria has been obliged to say, "The missionaries in Abyssinia not only do no good but even cause damage, because they contribute to strife."

But what is this strife, as they call it? The preaching of the doctrine of Christ, "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters", the search for the scattered sheep, their rescue from the jaws of the wolf, and [their] guidance to the unity of the faith, to love, to true peace, [this] they call strife! "Their throat is an open grave . . . their mouth is full of curses . . . and they know not the way of peace." Civilizing masters of vices never known before; well speaks the Holy Spirit, "And not content with gross error in their knowledge of God, men live in the constant warfare of ignorance and call this monstrous evil peace. All is in chaos . . . theft and fraud, corruption and treachery, riot and perjury . . . oblivion of God, corruption of souls." To teach and approve all these things they call peace. "And they have healed the bruises of the daughter slightly, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace."

Not least in Europe have they been able, through letters and newspapers, to make people believe [him] incomparable in justice and moral to all the kings of the past, warriors [such] as Alexander the Macedonian, as Julius Caesar, Frederick, [and] especially Napoleon I, an example for the present and a model for the future. Now, this Antichrist, this idol, this giant is said to have departed for the other world, to account at his evident cost for what he has done.

He has a son, who is to succeed [him], but the *abun* has created a large party with the intention of usurping the crown for himself. All this is true, but the *abun* with his followers maintain that the emperor is among the living, and it is because of this that he has sent a chief to Alitēna and Gwela, pretending that there has been a decree from the king and that the arrival of His Majesty in Tigray is imminent. Almost all the Catholics have escaped, but their property has been confiscated. Since the beginning of October all, with their children and wives, are at Halay on the back of Mgr. De Jacobis.

But this whole attempt of the *abun* is futile; [once] the emperor [is] removed, the right arm of the *abun* is incurably broken, never to heal again. We are waiting, contemplating the outcome. I believe that when the time has arrived, a universal repentance, or at least tolerance, can result from this. Even the schismatics, after having experienced the persecution and observed the *abun* well, should finally bend, and we will say, "Look whom they honoured."

Mgr. De Jacobis left for Halay on the 6th of July. He has left me here. I obey and remain, doing what I can to discharge my ministry. I believe that I would be able to do a little more elsewhere, but for the present in the circumstances of time and place where I find myself, I cannot aspire to more.

On the 6th of November I received the prayer books about which the letter of 27 February informed me, a testimony to the fatherly love towards a son who is most delighted and rejoices greatly, as he notices the fervour increase among his brothers as a result of these articles.

The letter of 19 July 1854 informed me as follows, "I have already made the proper arrangements for the requested directory on the spiritual exercises to be forwarded to you, how Maldonato, *On the Gospels*, could still be made use of in the explanations, etc." The directory I have already received and acknowledged. Concerning Maldonato, *On the Gospels*, I cannot believe that what was at the time of great benefit would be regarded as less useful now, but it was to my regret probably lost on the way.

I am Your Most Reverend Excellency's most humble and devote servant,
Zekkariyas the priest.

Minkullu, 18 November 1856.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 5, fol. 1139, Italian original. The writing in this document is weak, in some places almost illegible. An earlier letter (fols 1003–1004) from the same writer dated 16 October 1855 has had to be omitted, being too difficult to decipher. The quotations from the bible—Matt. 12, 30; Romans 3, 13–17; The Wisdom of Solomon, 14, 22–26; and Jeremiah 6, 14—are all in Latin. They are reproduced here in accordance with the New English Bible, except where this differs substantially from the Latin version. The theological work referred to in this letter as Maldonato, *Sopra i vangeli*, is the commentary on the four gospels published in 1596–97 by the Spanish Jesuit Maldonado.

The sentence in the beginning of the letter, "We always hope for the best, for the cessation of evils . . ." is confused. What Zekkariyas was trying to say was no doubt that the bishop and the king were the *source* of the evils, not the *obstacle* to the *cessation* of the evils.

In the document recording his abjuration in 1841 of the Ethiopian Orthodox faith (ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol 4, fol. 140), Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el is introduced as an 18-year-old deacon, "Zacharias filius Zarik" from Aksum. He had accompanied De Jacobis to Rome in 1841, received eleven years of education there and was ordained Catholic priest before he returned to Ethiopia. He was known as Zekkariyas the Elder, while the Zekkariyas from 'Zengwe' (?) listed by O'Mahoney (vol. I, p. 231) was known as Zekkariyas the Younger (*ibid.*, vol. III, p. 202, see no. 47 below). Among the signatories of the letter of protest against Bishop Biancheri dated 26 February 1861 (no. 87) we find both Zekkariyas of Aksum and a Zekkariyas of Segli. Though known in the Catholic sources as "abba", Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el consistently signed his letters in Italian "Zaccaria Cahen".

Zekkariyas was no doubt one of the best educated and most independent of the Catholic priests. He served mainly in Bogos, where he was given the unenviable task of cleaning up the "mess" after Father Giovanni Stella in Keren. He was deeply involved in the conflicts with De Jacobis's successors and was about to withdraw from active service when he died at Adwa in late 1867 or early 1868. See below, nos 35, 68–69, 82, 95, 146, 149; also O'Mahoney, II, pp. 26, 44, 66–67.

መጥ፡ አገቴ፡ ሰውአ፡ ል፡ ግ፡ ተዋውሎ፡ ሰዶይኝ፡
 እንደ፡ አሁንም፡ እያሁ፡ ወገኑት፡ ሆነ፡ ያነን፡ ወራት፡
 ገሰራ፡ ለአሁንም፡ ገሰራ፡ ይገባ፡ ሂድ፡ ሂድ፡ ፃ
 ሚ፡ ገገሊኝ፡ ይገተራ፡ ተወቅዶም፡ ገገ፡ ግሪ፡
 ገይዋሰዳችሁ፡ ገሰራ፡ አሁን፡ እኩይ፡ እጠነገራም
 ወይሁሰኝ፡ ማህዳ፡ የሚችላኝ፡ ለሆን፡ እ
 ገሰራ፡ ሰላላቅ፡ አገራ፡ ማግኘት፡ ነው፡ ይህም
 ሰኛ፡ አሁንም፡ የጌተ፡ አንጀቴ፡ እላምንም፡
 ነገረሁ፡ ገሰራ፡ ሰላላ፡ እናሰው፡ እገደባችኋል
 ሰላላ፡ ለሰላላ፡ እኛ፡ አገራ፡ ገሰራ፡ ይገባ፡ ሂድ፡ ሂድ፡ ፃ
 ሰኛ፡ ለሰላላ፡ ወራ፡ ጌተ፡ ሚካኤል፡ ገሰራ
 ሰኛ፡ ለሰላላ፡ እገደባሁ፡ ሰላላ፡ አሁንም፡ ለሰላላ
 ጌተ፡ ለሰላላ፡ ሚካኤል፡ ገሰራ፡ ይገባ፡ ሂድ፡ ሂድ፡ ፃ
 እኛ፡ ለሰላላ፡ ሰላላ፡ እናሰው፡ እገደባችኋል
 እንደ፡ አሁንም፡ ይገባ፡ ሂድ፡ ሂድ፡ ፃ

Debtera Tewelde Medhin, I would not have stayed until now. Even if I am able to get to Abyssinia, it seems to be a shame for me to return to my country without knowing crafts.

Now once more, my master, my beloved, I beg you to take (lit. be in) the place of my uncle for me. If you would give me advice, it would please me very much. I have not heard any news about Abyssinia, except what Master Michel (Mīka'ēl) told me.

My master, you are not my messenger. [But, please] tell your brothers, Master Michel and Master Charles (Qērlos), "He greets [you]" and to Argēpo, "How are you, really, really?"

Written on the 14th of the month of March, in the Year of Grace 1857.

ተገሰራት፡ አሁን፡ ሰላላ፡ ለሰላላ፡ ሚካኤል፡ ገሰራ
 ሰላላ፡ ለሰላላ፡ ሰላላ፡ እናሰው፡ እገደባችኋል

fol. 130v

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 130, Amharic original. When Birru finally makes up his mind to leave Malta, against the will of his teachers there, he takes courage in the fact that Bishop Gobat and his own uncle and guardian at the time, *Debtera* Tewelde Medhin, had once agreed that he was to stay there for four years only. According to an unpublished history of the Birru family, kindly put at my disposal by Reverend G. Arén, Uppsala, Birru was sent from Jerusalem to Beirut for education and only went on to Malta later. Letters published here and in the first volume of ACTA seem to exclude a stay at Beirut. The information in the family history, however, that Birru disagreed on matters of conscience with his teachers at the college in Malta, is supported by this and the following letter. Some letters in the right margin, concealed by the binding of the volume, have been added to the right of a line above. This is the case in document no. 21 as well.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie, 23 Sept. 1857

ዛቲ፡ ጠሀዳ፡ ዘተ፡ ልገሠት፡ እጎጣጥ፡ ጥራ፡ ተገላጒ፡ ገብ፡
 ጳጳሳ፡ እገጠሁ፡ ስ፡ ዘእገዲዮ፡ እኛግገ፡ እገዲት፡ ስገበቱ፡ ጻፈተ፡
 እገዲቴ፡ ገርዖ፡ እኛግ፡ እገጠጠ፡ ተጨገጧ፡ እገራ፡ ተማሪ፡ ጭ
 ቱም፡ እያሌ፡ ጊዜ፡ እገዳ፡ ገርህም፡ ጠላላት፡ እሰታ፡ ጀምሮ፡ ገ
 ቅ፡ ገቅ፡ ገራዎ፡ ጭ፡ ገገ፡ እገዲው፡ ገገ፡ ሆኖ፡ ሆኖ፡
 ነበረ፡ ስለዚህም፡ እኛግ፡ ጻገላት፡ ተነግተው፡ በጽሑፍ፡ ተፈ
 ግ፡ ጭ፡ ገ፡ እኛግ፡ እገጠጠ፡ ገሠዱ፡ እገዲውም፡ በባላቸው፡
 እስጡ፡ ተመገ፡ ጭ፡ እገዲ፡ ቀል፡ ደቀዱ፡ ጻገ፡ ገገ፡ ጠገነበሩ፡
 ግገ፡ እገጠጠ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡ ጭ፡
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May this letter sent by Birru reach the honoured Antoine d'Abbadie (Intōniyos Ze' abadiye). How have you been, really, my master, my beloved (anjētē)?

I, [your] slave, am extremely worried. As I have said to you many times, starting three years ago the school has been deteriorating. This year, however, it has become even worse. Therefore many adversaries arose who criticized the school very severely in their writings. They even contemplated moving the school.

The society, however, which is located in England, on hearing [about] this said that they would reorganize everything and dismissed the principal. They also discharged two teachers and all the servants. They have not yet sent another principal.

When I had received your letter, however, I wrote two letters to England, asking them to discharge me, but no reply has reached me. [The reason] why they do not want me to leave is this. Since they want to be successful with collecting money from people by saying that an Abyssinian youth is studying in their school, I do not think they will discharge me soon.

When you promised me that you would send money for my journey, I had already decided to go. But I was prevented from going by two matters. Firstly, my passport was not in my

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 ጠላት፡ ተሰረ፡ ገላጽ ገጥሞ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ተጠቅሞ፡ ገደገጡ፡
 ነበር፡ ለሕዝብ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡
 ለክብራት፡ ለገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡
 ለገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡ ገደገጡ፡
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hands. Secondly, I said to my-
 self that it was not proper that I
 should leave, sneaking away like
 a thief, without a certificate, after
 having stayed eating with these
 [people] for such a long time.
 [So] I began to write to those
 [people in England].

Now, my master, I am per-
 plexed about what to do. It
 seems to me as if I am being
 kept in exile in this place. If they
 were giving me a useful educa-
 tion or teaching me [some] craft
 in this place, I would not have
 been so distressed. However, as
 my days have passed in vain, I
 am (lit. my heart is) angry.

My master, since you have
 given me hope, may God, the
 good Lord, grant you long life
 (lit. years) and health in this
 world and the happiness of Pa-
 radise in the world to come.
 Amen.

I greet your brothers.
 Written in Malta 23 September
 1857.

The cost of the journey from
 Malta to Alexandria is (this):
 first class £9, second £6, third
 £4.

fol. 134r

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 134, Amharic original. Note that Birru cannot find words for “passport” and “certificate” in his own language and resorts to the English language instead. As in many of his letters, the date is given in the Gregorian calendar, though in Ethiopic script.

More and more frustrated about the situation at the school and the unwillingness of the staff to let him leave, Birru arrives at the conclusion that the society running the school was keeping him simply to use his presence as an argument in soliciting contributions for their work.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

May this message sent by King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia reach my friend Sa'id *Pasha* (Seyid *Basha*), the ruler of Egypt. How are you really? How is your health? Last year, in the month of Tahsas, our father, *Abba* Kirillus, the patriarch of Alexandria, reached me in peace. I am happy that you sent him to me, providing well for him on his departure.

I am very pleased [to know] that you are a good man and watch over your people, and that you have made Muslims and Christians live in equality. When I was told by my father the patriarch that you love me [and] want my friendship, I was very happy. I also want friendship between the two of us. As a beginning of our friendship, I have sent three excellent and four average horses, one shield coated with gold and silver, two spears, one gilded armllet [and] one dagger, with my men, the priest of the palace *Abba* Gebre İyyesus, the *shaleqa kentiba*, [and as] translator, Adam, the Arab.

May God increase our friendship. By the power of God my house will be your house and your house will be my house. And now I have sent back to you our father *Abba* Kirillus, the friend of both of us. [Please] receive him well and with honour. Love him as I love him. If he says he will come to me, see him off properly and send him to me. We are all his children. We want him always to come and bless us and pray for us. I received the letter you sent me when he came from Khartoum [and] from Shendi last year. I heard the message and was very happy. For the future do not withhold letters of friendship from me. I will not withhold them from you; I will write to you. May God keep you in good health.

Written on Hidar 5, in the year of the birth of Christ 1850.

ENA, Carton 19 Bahr Barra, no. 71, Amharic original. As far as we know, this is the earliest preserved letter of Tēwodros with the seal which was later used for all important letters. It was written in reply to a letter from Muḥammad Sa'id *Pasha* written at Shendi on 20 Rabi' al-Awwal 1273, *i. e.* approximately one year earlier, and brought to Ethiopia by the Coptic patriarch Qērīlos in December 1856. See no. 23 for an Arabic version of the above letter.

It was also an indirect reply to the demand from the Foreign Office in London of 27 November 1855 that Tēwodros "give a distinct assurance that he renounces all idea of conquest in Egypt and at Massowah". That Consul Plowden was close to Tēwodros at this time and probably assisted in wording the letter is evident from the fact that he addressed a letter to the Foreign Office the day before, stating that Tēwodros had shown him the draft of a letter that he intended to write. The substance of this letter was: "That he had hitherto given no provocation to Egypt, and that, while he reserved to himself the right to demand hereafter certain territories, gradually wrested from Abyssinia, during the reigns of feeble princes, or the extinction of all responsible government, he promised to take no steps of a hostile nature until he should receive our reply." Plowden regretted that he could not be precise, pending a formal letter from the king, but suggested that the territories referred to "the village of Sennaar, also Massawa, Bogos, Mensa, Halhal, the Hababs, etc." (*Correspondence 1846-68*, p. 173).

The letter should not be confused with the letter which Kirillus and Selama reportedly wrote to Muḥammad Sa'id on Tēwodros's behalf much earlier and which was one of the causes of a conflict between the king and the two ecclesiastics. That letter was in all probability never dispatched. For the mission of Kirillus to Ethiopia and the conflict, see Zeneb, pp. 29-31; Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 210-11.

The title of *kentiba* (now "mayor") was in the past given to district governors, particularly in Hamasēn and Dembiya. Whether the two words "*yeshaleqa kentiba*" should be read as two titles following on each other—thus the *shaleqa* who was also *kentiba*—or as *Shaleqa* *Kentiba* (proper noun) has been impossible to ascertain.

The envoys proceeded to Jerusalem, where they were reported in June 1858 as "a Councillor of State (Maccar) named Michail (or Guebra Yussos), and a military commander of 8,000 Infantry and 7,000 Cavalry" (FO 401/1, pp. 309-310). This description indicates the political importance of "the priest of the palace" as well as the military character of the second emissary.

Muḥammad Sa'id in due time responded to this by sending an envoy to Tēwodros with some gifts, including four cannon (FO 401/1, p. 327).

Tēwodros to Muḥammad Sa'īd, 24 Nov. 1857



من حضرت ملك ملوك الحبشة الامير الطور فاود رجب ابى حضرت المقتادى محمد سيدنا ساكاف دنابر
الغربية لازال محفوظا حيا به رتبته

اما بعد انت الاسراف الزيادة لمساكنة والسور من حشوة صراجه نعلم انه في اورد الاوقات ويشتد به كبريت
حضرت اظرفا حضرت قدس رينا البربرون ابى امير البربرون الاضاطو حضور لطفنا عملنا فانه النسخ وقبله بالاوامر والتمويل
كالمين بدمه وبالسؤال منه عن حياكم اطمان حياكم لنا ورجيتكم وروام المحبة والوداد بيننا وبينكم وزجنا بانه كثيرا
فلعل كنفك مانفا قدمه عدكم بين الرعه وساونكم بين الرعي والصبر والصبر والسرور من هنا تعلم ان طيبكم الاصله
حلت للجهود المصالح وكذلك عن زرد وروام المحبة بيننا وبينكم وروام المحضر كما يحب لمو عاجوز ومن سماها شمرن
عسر بيننا من كلام الخلاق وحسن حكمه وذلما لاجل انضال الله وسلسا الحايينا وبين حياكم بسببه حل منهم بلانه علا واجبه
وسط وواحد دعه وعفته مقلبه بالذهب هههههه وواحد بيننا ولسر السكر مقلبه بالذهب وواحد سونل وهو رطب
مرسولون حجة للبربر من طرفنا الكه من اسوس من القلابة وسلكا كنيسه وسهم ترجات ادم الرعي من الامه صلتنا
بارادته تعالى استقامير المحبة بيننا وبينكم وبيننا بغير كينكم وخير يصل لطفكم حضرت قدس رينا البربرون ابى امير البربرون
الطريف كثر من كالمنا عندكم وحسنه كحياكم لنا واذا اراد المصور لطفنا رسلونه عندنا بيايه الكرام لنا حيا
اولاده وكثرا نفع بجهود لطفنا الاجل التعلق من قدس والتمس الادعية من حضرتنا وكلا حيا فلا تفسد قلبنا بكم
الحاوية الجلسه لطفكم ودم سالت حراسه رعا العالميا

محمد
٥٥ رجب الاول



دعصلا من المصلح بن عبد الملك
وهو بوجهه كالمنا عندكم وحسنه كحياكم لنا
١٢٩١
٥٥ رجب الاول

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

From His Majesty, the king of kings of Abyssinia, Emperor Tēwodros to His Highness, the most noble, the magnificent pleasure, and the true lover [of God], Muḥammad Sa'īd *Pasha*, Protector of the land of Egypt. May he continue to be preserved through the care of the Lord of Creation.

Now to the point. Expressing profuse good wishes to Your Excellency and inquiries about the soundness of your health, we inform you that at the most favourable time, in the year of 1273, on the 24th of Kihayk, His Holiness, our father the patriarch, *Anbā* Kīrillus, the patriarch of the Copts, came to us. By his coming to us, the greatest joy overwhelmed us, and we received him with respect and reverence, as befits His Holiness. And when we asked him about Your Excellency, he informed us about your friendship for us and your desire that the friendship and affection between us and yourself may continue. We were very happy at this. He also informed us about your fairness and impartiality towards [your] subjects, and your equity towards the strong and the weak, the poor and the noble. From this we came to know that your true character was created for generosity and righteousness.

We desire, likewise, that our friendship continue, as well as the exchange which is necessary for true neighbourliness. As we heard from His Holiness, our father, about your noble character and your good disposition, we have sent—as the gift of love, which is a link between us and Your Excellency—seven horses, three of which are first class and four average, one shield, decorated with gilded silver, two spears, one gilded armllet (*bīṭāwa*), a dress embroidered with gold, and one dagger (*shawtal*). These have been sent with our two emissaries, *Aleqa* Gebre Ḳyyesus, the priest of the court, and the *shaleqa kentiba*. With them is a translator, Adam the Arab.

May there henceforth, God willing, by His sublime will, be love between us and you, and may our house be your house and your house be our house. When His Holiness, our master the patriarch, *Anbā* Kīrillus, comes back to you, may [our] mutual love honour him with our honour for you and may you favour him with your love for us. If he wants to reside with us, please send him with full honours, because we are all his children. We are very pleased with his visit to us, because of the spoils [left behind] by His Holiness and the prayerful touch of his permanent presence. Do not deprive us of your letters with news about your well-being. May you live forever under the protection of the Lord of the two worlds.

1274 A.H., 25 Rabi' al-Awwal.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

Your letter from Shendi dated 1273, 5 Rabi' al-Awwal, has reached us. It was properly translated into the language of Abyssinia for us and we have understood it perfectly word for word.

1274 A.H., 25 Rabi' al-Awwal.

ENA, Carton 19 Bahr Barra, no number, Arabic original. The letter is a translation of the Amharic letter dated eleven days earlier (no. 22). Since it includes some additional material and is sealed by the sender, we have decided to include it in its own right. Although there are grammatical errors in the text, the treatment of the Arabic language indicates a well-educated person. The names of some objects (*bīṭawa*, *shawtal*) were simply transferred to the Arabic text. The Arabic word translated "spoils", which also means "left-overs", is most probably used here in a spiritual sense about the blessings or surplus of good deeds which the patriarch supposedly left behind for the benefit of the Ethiopian Christians. This phrase does not appear in the Amharic version of the letter.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie, 25 Nov. 1857

ዛጅ፡ጠጠር፡ዘተሬ፡ዓብነት፡ጌጥጥ፡ጠሬ፡ዘኢትዮጵያ፡ትጥፃ።
 ንወገኑ፡እገጠጥ፡ዘልገገ፡የርስዎ፡የተሠደደ፡ወረዓት፡
 በጌታ፡ወጀር፡እጅ፡የሰላላ፡በገር፡ገዚ፡እጅግ፡ጎሃ፡ጠፍ፡
 ጽብ፡አላጅ፡ፍጠ፡ጠር፡ገጥ፡ጠሁላት፡ጸዓት፡በጌታ፡ገለጸ፡ሐ፡
 ሆነ፡እኔም፡ያልተሰጻ፡ደሠኝ፡አለሆገሁኝ፡ከመከዛ፡ርጀር፡ገራ፡መ
 ሰላ፡ዘገገ፡አልተቻለኝም።
 እነዚህ፡ሰዎች፡ሆሰዩኝ፡አሠደደም፡ያልዎ፡በፍቅር፡ጠገላ፡
 ነው፡በጸጡ፡ገገ፡አገዛ፡ሰው፡እትሔሮ፡ጠሁ፡የሠጧሰጠኝ፡ዩዳም፡
 ሄራገገ፡እኔ፡እኪነገ፡ያል፡ዳህተ፡እነዚህ፡ጋሎ፡ተቀጥሯል፡ዘ
 በጎ፡እገደገጥቀ፡እወደሰሁ።

እገደገጥ፡በቸ፡እከሁገገ፡እገደገ፡ያገደ፡ያገራ፡
 ሰዎች፡ገደገ፡ገዚ፡በተረት፡እገደገ፡እገደገሁኝ፡ጎገደር፡
 ወጣህ፡ገህገ፡አሁንህ፡አሁንህ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡እከሁገገ፡አሁ፡
 ፈጠራዎ፡እገደገ፡ደገ፡ደገ፡ደገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡
 በጠ፡ተሆነ፡ወህ፡ትገህርት፡ገገ፡ወደ፡አገራ፡እሁሰሰ፡
 ዘገደ፡ፈጠራዎ፡ያልዎ፡እገደገ፡ገገ፡እገራ፡ያሁሰሰ፡
 ሆነ፡በሰላላ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡
 እገደገ፡አሁን፡እከሁገገ፡አሁን፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡
 ወረገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡
 ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡ገገ፡

ተጽኅፊት፡በጠጠ፡ገ፡25# 1857

May this letter sent by Birru of Ethiopia reach the honoured Antoine d'Abbadie (Intoniayos Ze-abadiye).

I was very pleased when your esteemed letter, which you sent me by the hand of Mr. Rochet (Rojer), reached me. It was not possible for me to go with Mr. Rochet because the steamboat was about to depart after two hours and I was not ready.

When I said that the people here do not want to let me go, I meant out of love. Were it due to disagreement, there would not be one person who would prevent me from going. Nevertheless, having lived for so many years with these [people], I would like to part on good terms.

But there is one thing that troubles me and that is that my countrymen, when they see me, might (not) say to me, as the story [goes], "You went up to Gonder; what did you bring back?" Therefore, I beg of you, master, that if it be your will, you tell me [to come] to France so that, after learning some craft there or pushing on with my studies, I may return to my country. If it is not your wish, however, I will go back to my country right away with the money which, God reward you, you have sent me. For the good you have done for me, I always pray to the Lord [to give you] your due reward, honour and health in this world and in the next the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

And to your brothers I send greetings.

Written in Malta, November 25th 1857.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 133, Amharic original. As usual in Birru's letters the date is in the Gregorian calendar. The identification of "Mr. Rojer" with M. Rochet (d'Héricourt) is tentative. He was an old acquaintance of the d'Abbadie brothers, and French consul at Jidda in the 1850's (see ACTA I, nos 150 and 161), but I have not been able to establish whether he was on his way to his post when this letter was written. Whoever the person was, it seems as if Antoine d'Abbadie had asked him to take Birru with him, presumably as close to Ethiopia as possible. Birru was apparently worried that his countrymen would ridicule him on his return to Ethiopia as one who had failed to get a useful education—much in the same way as people were taunted, who failed to secure advancement in spite of "going up to Gonder".

Selama to Muhammad Sa'id, 11 Dec. 1857

بهاشكروا له نعم انتم سعيد باشا عزيز مصر المحمد حفظه رب البرية

اجازتها السيد الخليل السامي المرموق المحمدي النعمي المحض ناج الرباسة غزال السداينة الملوذ والسلاطين مستانق رباح سجده وعمرها ولبريهم سده
 شعزها وعطر الحارس بانفسه وعزها وكتب تحفيها وكتب لجبارها في صحف الابرار وسطرها ولايجز احدا لكن فضده بلحا وظف الزمان بتناقه ملئ
 امرها المملوك بواصل بالادعية التي يرجوا الخش الايتاخ عنها الاجابة والاشيخه التي يعجز عن وصفها وتسطرها افلام الكتابه وبسبب الزمان
 كما انقل من اجال السما المستطابه وما سمعه عن ارائيه المفروقه بالتوفيق والامابه ونقطتها الامثال اجليله وشهدهم بحيل حيله
 وسه اخلايقه في كسر الامور وتقليله حين يقول كل من يرويه ان كلامه عرف انت غصصه وقيله وكلامه بان انت محكمه وقيله وكلامه بان انت مناجه وسيله
 وكلامه بان انت والده وسيله ولما اجتمعت في قباله المهرلك ابا بكر ليريد اذ كانت الاوقات عرفت وعرفه سعادة ملك اجتهده من حين شيخ
 السنا فاشهد لي رزقا وسمي طرشا وطر في نورا وذكر من احب المولى ما صاوت عن الزمان شرحه واستغفر في وصف من كرام السياه بالكلين وصفه
 فلاجل هذا تجاسرت باقدام هذا العرض من بعد تبديل تراب الارض وهو ما يجب العارضة على السامع كرمه والعلو والرحمة انما عن لنا في الحاشه
 حرسه عز سوات ولناج وله اولاد وذلك الاخ ديعي خليل ابرهم وهو اولاده مغنين بحرية الدنيا الاقاليم الوسطى نوموا وزجوا من لدن من احبهم
 ونفوس احكامهم وحزب احكامهم انتموا على عدكم نتم فذات سديه بلا مال لاجل معاشه وشرفا عن ككر شام من رعيكم وبذلك
 حصل لنا الشرف واصبر معتمود ومنوت افضل الجوي الاعلم وارفع ارفع الضربه ليريد البلاغ ان يدوم مجد السنا ودام السنت
 وواجه من وصير شرف وحش في الحش بلدي قديره وثلاثة جلود غمر اسود يوجد في بلاد القناتله ارسلناهم ليل ان كوت في ارض القناتله
 ولا زال حصنه سعادته معروف ما الصلقت والوصا ولايجز الزمان واقعدا في خدمته متكفعا ولا انك لما جعلته في وجه البر معروف
 والى البان منقطعا والمحدث بال سجده معروف اوشم السما سجدوا ونظرا الحشا على الاحشا مسدودا وشاه ممدودا بالنسبة الابرار تشوذا
 في السنا في السنا لفضله مكملا مسنودا وباب العزم له مفتوحا وباب العزم في وجهه عدوه مسدودا بمنزلة السنا
 ١٢٧٤
 عسكر سلاطه
 سلطان الحاشه



[To] His Highness, the friend of God, His Excellency Effendi Sa'id Pasha, ruler of Egypt, the protected. May the Lord of the World protect him.

His Venerable Highness, the revered eminent master, he who is to be trusted, he who is to be served, the generous and beneficent, the crown of leadership, the pride of kings and sultāns. God has set up the quarters of his glory and made them endure. He has caused his good fortune to continue and made it abundant. He has made the chambers of his government (pashalik) fragrant and covered them with ambergris, and suppressed those who envy him. Their deeds are recorded and written down in the annals of history (lit. book of time). His charity has been extended to all who freely call upon him. This era has been turned through his immortality into the fulness of joy.

The servant persists in his prayers, anticipating that answers will not be delayed, and in praise which is impossible to describe or write down (with a pen). He presents to his master whatever good and pleasant news has arrived, and what ideas he has heard in connection with prosperity and misery. He has made him disposed to charity towards the children of his generation. He has cared for them with abundant favour [and] the grandeur of his character in great and small things to the extent that whoever knows him says:

Of all virtue you are the origin and the safeguard,
of all vice you are the destruction and the annihilation.
Of all sustenance you are the way and the path,
and of all abundance you are the father and the son.

When I met and (one word illegible) the master, the patriarch, *Anbā Kīrillus*, the patriarch of the See of the Copts, and he informed me and His Majesty, the king of the Abyssinians, of the irreproachable conduct of Your Highness, my heart was filled with delight; my ears with joy and my eyes with brightness. He reported about the benevolence of the master, that its exposition was unrestricted by time. He engaged fully in the description of Your Highness's indescribable noble qualities. For this reason I have the audacity to present this proposal after kissing the dust of the earth.

This is what should not escape the noble ears and compassionate feelings: We have been in Abyssinia for about sixteen years. We have a brother who has children. This brother is called Khalīl Ibrāhīm. He and his children live in the province of Minyā in the central regions. We hope and request because of your sympathy, your abundant kindness, and ample beneficence, that you grant your servant some *feddans* of tax-free country estate for his livelihood. Give us that honour, for our existence derives from your care. In this way honour will be bestowed upon us. I will be refreshed by and grateful for the khedivial magnificence. I raise the hands of submissiveness to the Lord of Eloquence. May the glory of His grace continue as long as the sun and the moon, and may He suppress his enemies under his feet in a torrent of calamities. The gift from my humble self is one dagger with a golden handle, one armet (*bītāwa*) of silver, coated with gold, one skin of the fur of a wild animal which is called *gurēza* in Abyssinia, and three black leopard skins found in the country of the Galla (*Qallah*), which we have sent so that I can be within the sphere of [your] noble thought.

May His Honourable Highness continue to be famous for truthfulness and faithfulness; may he remain upright and respectful in his service; may he remain generous, whatever disturbs him in his charitable ways, and favourably disposed towards the patriarchs. May glory [stay] aglow by the edges of his glory, and the stars of heaven [stay] fortunate by means of his star. May his good deeds continue to excel other good deeds; may his praise be sung by the tongues of the time longed-for; may he who envies him be chained and tied to his defeat with the strap of his [own] envy; may the gate of joy be opened for him, and may the gate of happiness be closed in the face of his enemies by the power of the Lord of the two worlds. Amen.

2 Kihayk 1574.

Your servant Selama, metropolitan of Abyssinia.

Seal: [1]256. Selama, the metropolitan of Abyssinia. 1859 (*sic*).

ENA, Carton 19 Bahr Barra, fol. 108, Arabic original. The date 2 Kihayk 1574 of the era of the martyrs corresponds to 2 Tahsas 1850 of the Ethiopian calendar and 11 December 1857 of the Gregorian calendar, that is almost one month after the date of the original of Tēwodros's letter to Muḥammad Sa'īd. Since the letter was almost certainly forwarded to Egypt with *Anbā Kīrillus*, the date indicates that the patriarch stayed on with *Abune Selama* for some time after he had been dismissed by Tēwodros.

The flattery of this letter is typical of Ottoman phraseology in letters to superiors. The real purpose of the letter seems to have been the request for a piece of land for Selama's brother.

Birru Pētros to Antoine d'Abbadie, 12 March 1858

Cairo, March 12th, 1858



Cairo March 12th 1858

Handwritten Amharic text, likely the body of the letter, starting with 'ሁር፡ ጠጠር፡ ዘተ፡ ፈፈላ፡ ወተ፡ ገፈፈላ፡ ጠሩ፡ ተ፡ ጠላኩ፡ ገፈፈላ፡'.

May this letter sent by Birru reach the honoured Antoine d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyos Ze-abadiye). May the peace of God be upon you, O honoured one.

After having received the money, the 100 francs which you sent me through the French consul (firej nsul) in Malta I, your slave, arrived at Alexandria at the end of February. On receiving the remaining 100 francs there, I came to Cairo. And now it is ten days that I have been here.

When I was in Malta, I thought that Abyssinia was peaceful under the rule of one king. However, on coming to this country and inquiring, I found [the truth] to be different. Someone called Agew Nigusē rules Tigray. And it is reported that the king, while persuading the Galla [to submit], is training his soldiers as is done in your country. It is reported that, if a European who knows some craft goes to the king, he will maintain him with honour. And I am very angry because I do not know any craft.

I cannot go up to Abyssinia as I do not have enough money for the journey. May God reward you, I still have some 10 thalers left of what you sent me after bringing me here from Malta. Saying [to themselves], "His friend has sent him many thalers," the staff of the school did not tell me, "Here is the money for your journey." It is not because of this only, but [also] be-

fol 2r

May this letter from *Azzazh* Ingida reach Arnauld d'Abbadie (Arno Debedi).

How are you? How are you, to the extent of heaven and earth? Why have you become more distant from us than the sky? [Even] a letter you have begrudged us. It was our one hope, but when *Weldē* came, there was no letter.

Because there is famine in the country, we are in need and distress. We have no friend but you. Now that we heard of your well-being, we have sent this letter. We have sent two letters before. (With) this one (it) is our third. We could not send you letters all the time (lit. morning and evening) because *Aleqa* Fenta has gone away, having fallen ill and abandoned the country. It was for this reason that we did not write. It is two years since he left the country.

All your friends (lit. all who are like you) are well. *Abēsēlom* went to Gonder with his brother on the day of St. George of *Hamlē*. They have died; otherwise everyone else is well.

This letter was written on the day of *Be'ale Igzi'abihēr* of *Meggabīt*.

Peace be to you and may the peace of God be with you. Amen.

The female slave that you said should be bought has not been purchased. When he did nothing for a [whole] year, saying "Tomorrow, the day after tomorrow," after [the end of] the year, I said to him, "Bring [the money]," and [I myself] spent it.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 126, Amharic original. *Be'ale Igzi'abihēr* (the feast of God) is the 29th of the Ethiopian month, thus the 6th of April. What year the letter was written is more uncertain. If the collaborator and friend of the d'Abbadie brothers known as *Aleqa* or *Debtera* Fenta (ACTA I, no. 92 and *passim*) is the same person as the *Abba* Fenta who accompanied Plowden to Gonder in 1855 (*Vicende*, pp. 527–528), the letter can be dated 1857 at the earliest. The writer of the letter is Michel d'Abbadie's old servant and caretaker of his property, after Michel's departure from Ethiopia attached to the household of Michel's wife *Welette Rufa'ēl* at *Adwa* (ACTA I, nos 90, 174, 179). Note that Ingida uses the first of Michel's baptismal names, Arnauld. See also no. 55. In this respect Ingida seems to have been unique among Michel's Ethiopian friends and contacts.

Abēsēlom was an early contact of the Catholics and also involved with the activities of the d'Abbadie brothers (ACTA I, nos 30, 97), but it has not been possible to establish when the trip to Gonder referred to here took place.

Irsen yemessele hullu (all who are like you) has a more specific meaning than "all your friends". Ingida is most probably referring either to Michel's co-religionists, the Catholics, or to the foreigners in the area, but it is impossible to know with certainty. Both the grammar and the calligraphy of this letter are very poor.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Ferdinand Alphonse Hamelin, 4 July 1858

للإمام

إلى محبنا العزيز وصديقنا الامام والامير الدولة العلية في عصره واوانه وزمانه اعني به اعلى من سائر ادي
 للماكم العادل في حكمه وبعكم من صعبير كبير وفقير وغني وضعيف وقوي بالسوية لا يميل من ضعفه الى كبير
 ولا من فقيره الى غني ولا من ضعيف الى قوي وينظر الصغبي والكبي والفقير والغني والضعيف والقوي
 بعين واحد دام الله اجلاله فان سلمت عافيتي في خير وعافيتي جعلكم الله كذلك واحسن من ذلك
 ويعرف بالذي تعرفكم وصل خطابكم للجسيم وفيها ما شرحت لنا وصلنا لدينا مفهوم ومعلوم وسلام
 الذي ارسلتم لنا في كتاب قنسل وصلني وبلغني واربعين الالف الذي اخذوه عني باطل وحكمت
 انها يريدوها في جزاكم الله الف خير كلثا الله انت تاكل مشوه كما الترك وانت غني منها ولا تحتاج شي
 من المالكين دام الله اجلالكم وعالمكم وحفظكم وايضا عرفت قنسل بما يحتاج ابو بكر في كتاب قنسل
 وكتاب قنسل واعلمني قنسل هكذا اجزاكم الله الف خير وانما مثل شتي شي الا اريد ان يكون
 خدامكم وصاحبكم ومحبتم لافرنسيس كبير اعلى من الاجيرين واعلم من غيره وان اريد اعلى الف
 هدي ريشاني ودوانه مرها طيب وبهاها طيب وفيها خطب وطريق الحبسة منها اذا احتجتهم
 بغول والكمير والخيرول كلها يحصل منها اي من طريقها والعبيد كذلك ولكن ريشاني ودوانه لسلطان
 محمد واحد شيب وهو من مسكين وضعيف ولكن يريد مننا عشرة الاف ونسظر جوابكم وما
 امرتم علينا نعمد فيه وايضا نعرف اذا احتجت مواجدي عرفنا حتى اجي مع قنسل واجهدك واما
 نحن ما عندنا مرآكب ولا عسك ولا مدافع واذا احتجتنا شي من مركب ومن عسك ومن مدافع نعرفك
 حيث نحن خالفين من الاجيرين ومن الترك يكون لديكم معلوم وانت كل جواب عرف قنسل وهو
 يعرف نحن وانت كلما تحتاج من عندنا عرف قنسل وهو يعرف نحن واللام دمتم تانغ در القعد
 ٢٢
 ٢٤

من الحاج
 ابراهيم
 ابن
 ابي
 بكر

Praise be to God.

To our dearly beloved and most praiseworthy friend, who is the most distinguished [official] of the great empire of his age, time and era. I mean Hamelin, Minister of the Marine (Amilī, *min istī li-marin*), who is known as the ruler who is just in his verdict; who judges between the young and the old, the poor and the rich, and the weak and the strong with impartiality; who does not turn from the the young to the old, nor from the poor to the rich, nor from the weak to the strong; who looks upon the young and the old, the poor and the rich, and the weak and the strong with equity. May God sustain his fame.

As for your inquiry about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise and even better. And now, what we want to inform you [about] is that your very important letter has arrived. We have understood what you have explained to us; it became understood and known to us. The greetings that you conveyed to us in the letter of the consul have reached me and come to my ears. The 4000 [thalers] which they took from me illegally, you have [rightly] judged that they should return to me. May God reward you with a thousand good things. God forbid that you should take bribes as the Turks do; you are richer than they, and you do not need anything from the poor. May God sustain your fame and protect and guard you.

You had, moreover, informed the consul about what Abū Bakr needs. We know that. You mentioned that in the consul's letter. The consul told me that. May God reward you with a thousand good things. I desire nothing; I only want to become your servant, your friend, and your beloved. For the French are much greater than the English (*Injriḏ*) and others. I want to make a gift to the French ruler: Ras Alī (Rayshālī) and Awana (Dawwāna). Their ports are good and their water is good and there is wood. The route to Abyssinia [starts] from there. If you need mules, donkeys and horses, you can find all of these there. I mean along the route; and also slaves. Ras Alī and Awana, however, belong to *Sulṭān* Muḥammad, an old man. He is the poor and weak one among us. However, he wants ten thousand [thalers] from us. We will wait for your letter. Whatever you order us, we will do and also inform you. If you need to meet me, inform us, so that I can come with the consul and meet you. As for us, we have no ships, troops and cannon. If we want some ships, troops and cannon, we will inform you because we are afraid of the English and the Turks.

May this be known to you. Inform the consul about all your answers; he will let us know. Whatever you need from us, inform the consul, and he will let us know. Peace be with you forever.

Dated 22 the month of Dhū-l-Qa'da [12]74.

The message comes from *al-Hājj* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shāhīm. May God preserve him in peace.

Seal: His servant Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 45, Arabic original; fols 54–56, French translation. In a letter written from Aden 5 July (fols 43–44), the French vice-consul Henri Lambert relates a long speech by Abū Bakr of approximately the same content as the above letter.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm was an Afar of the Assoba clan near Tajura, who had gained control of Zeyla, where he was known as *Shaykh* or *Amīr* Abū Bakr and where he had controlled the trade before the British–French competition started. The 4,000 thalers restored to him had been confiscated some years earlier by a French captain. Faced with Abū Bakr's offer, Lambert states that he showed great reserve, "ne pouvant rien promettre, ni rien refuter", but that he undertook to forward a letter with Abū Bakr's offer to renounce his sovereignty over the two ports and see to it that Abū Bakr would be informed within two months whether his offer had been accepted or not. Lambert stressed that Abū Bakr's enclosed letter contained "son abdication parfaitement en règle". On 25 August Lambert was instructed to continue his negotiations. Further acquisitions and larger amounts of money were then involved (AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 90–93). For the outcome see nos 92 and 98 below.

At the top of the Arabic letter Lambert identifies it as a letter "pour la concession à la France de Ras-Ali et d'Ouano". If he dictated the names of what he wanted, which is most probable, it is the French preposition "de" that has given rise to the "D" in "Dawwāna". The translation, however, has "Reicholi" and "Dewano".

Tekle Maryam Abdella to Antoine d'Abbadie [6? July 1858]

Handwritten Amharic text of a letter. The text is dense and includes a signature 'abdella' at the bottom.

May this letter sent by Tekle Maryam, the one from Zagra, reach Antoine (Itōnēwos), the Frenchman. How are you to the extent of heaven and earth, three times [over]? Amen.

Now, the town where I am is called Trouville (Tirubil). It is near the sea. But if a letter has come, send it to me. If it has not come, write to me about everything. If you have heard anything about Abyssinia, let me know. I am very happy; and the reason why I am very happy is that in this country you know Amharic. It is not because I know how to write that I am saying all this, but [it is] in order that you may understand it.

And now, please write to me about everything. Whether a letter has come or not, write to me. Now it is two months since the letter was dispatched. It has not reached me. If yours has arrived, write to me. Write to me about everything as soon as possible.

Written in the hospital in the town of Trouville in the land of France on the day of John, in the year 1858 after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the French calendar. The writer is Tekle Maryam Abdella from Zagra.

Abdella (*sic*).

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 140bis, Amharic original. This letter is extremely poor in every respect. We have assumed that *ferī* or *ferīgī* in the fifth line from the bottom stands for France or *ferenj*. To read the third character as the figure 7, and thus part of the date, leads to complications. The figure 7 calls for the name of a month and there is no month of Yohannis. In fact the writer might have seen this and decided to omit it by drawing a line over it. To read *werha Yohannis* as *zemene Yohannis* would perhaps be possible, but the year 1858 (1850 according to the Ethiopian calendar) was a year of Mark, not John. We have therefore concluded that the writer was thinking of the day when the birth of John the Baptist is celebrated. The date is Senē 30, which, however, coincided with 6 July in the 19th century. D'Abbadie has noted that he replied to this letter on 7 August 1858.

The writer was most probably a converted Muslim, known both as "Zagrawī Tekle Maryam" and as Abdella. "Zagra" has been read as a place name. *Zagra* is the Tigrīñña word for *jigra* (guinea fowl), which leads to the conclusion that Abdella's homeland was the area called Jigra Mēda in Akkele Guzay.

Tedla Welette Fiqir to Michel d'Abbadie, 6 Aug. [1858]

ዛቂ፡ መሪ ስገታ፡ ዘተፈኑ ወቅ፡ ስምዖን፡ ይጽዕኑ ዘመገብ
 ች፡ ብሩ፡ ሳኹ፡ ትብዳሕ፡ ሳብ፡ ፈሰ፡ መካኒ ል፡ ስንደ
 ት፡ ስሉ፡ ስጽጉ፡ ግ፡ ብተላዎዎ፡ ስሰከ፡ ዛሬ፡ ድረስ፡ መ
 ታሰራ፡ ስገላስ መሳገዎ፡ ምኑው፡ ሳታስመይቀኝ፡ ዘ
 መድ፡ ስንደህነው፡ ስሁ፡ ስሰመድ፡ ስሉ፡ ስብረው፡
 ታሥራው፡ ያሉቱ፡ ወንድሞች፡ ፍታው፡ ፈሪ፡ ተሰማ፡
 ልጅ፡ ያሉሙ፡ ልጅ፡ ግጉ ልህ፡ ስቶው፡ የተላኩ
 ትሙ፡ ስኒ፡ ተደለ፡ ወለተ፡ ፍቅር፡ ስኝ፡ የላኩኝ፡ ግ
 ሮ፡ ስለ፡ ያሉሁቱ፡ ስኚ፡ የመደወግባቱ፡ ፈልገህ፡ ስ
 ይደረግ፡ ብለዋል፡ ቀድሞ፡ ያልተሟሉ፡ ሰው፡ ስ
 ግዳዎው፡ ብለው፡ በቃል፡ ግገረው፡ ብለውኝ፡ ነበር፡
 ምስር፡ ሁኝ፡ ወረቀት፡ ስይደሁ፡ የኢሃሳም
 ስ፡ ቢቀር፡ ወይቢረት፡ ህይወት፡ ልጅቱ፡ ስህደ፡
 ስለት፡ ቢሉይ፡ ህይወት፡ ወረቀት፡ ብለው፡
 ነገሩኝ፡ ስህግም፡ ቶሉ፡ ምላሹ፡ ግ፡ ያላኩልኝ፡
 ነቀሲ፡ ስሰህሰቅ፡ ኢየሱስ ስም፡ ስቀመኝ ካለ
 ሁ፡ ስከሃ፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡
 ተደላ፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡
 ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡

የሆመግ፡ ወረቀት፡ ስርሰ
 ም፡ የሰይደት፡ ስኒ፡ ስህደት
 ት፡ ስህደት፡ ስህደት፡ ቢረት፡ ግ
 ሁ፡)

May this message sent by *Dejj-azmach* Birru Goshu reach *Ras* Michel (Mika'el).

He says: "How have you been really, from the day we parted until today? Have you not heard about my imprisonment? Why have you not had inquiries made about me? Is this what a close friend is like? And now have [someone] make inquiries about me!"

Imprisoned together with him are his brothers, *Fitawrarī* Tesemma, *Lij Yelēmtu*, *Lij Nigusē*. And I, Tedla Welette Fiqir, am the messenger.

When I say there is something he has sent me for, [it is] that he said, "Find and send me means by which I can free myself." That [this] was not written earlier, is because he, concerned that no one should see it, told me to tell you by word of mouth. While I was in Cairo, I sent [you] a letter.

When the answer did not come, I went to Beirut because they told me that [your] daughter was there. When I had gone there and returned, they told me that a letter had arrived. And now send me a reply quickly. I shall remain in Jerusalem until the end of *Nehasē*. Then I will go [back].

Written on 1 *Nehasē*. Tedla.

I have not seen the letter which you sent, [the one] that has arrived, only heard [about it]. I was in Beirut.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 84, Amharic original. As in the case of document no. 28, Birru Goshu is not himself the author of this letter. Tedla Welette Fiqir makes it clear that he was entrusted with a verbal message only, and that he had been obliged to write it down only because he had failed to meet Michel d'Abbadie in person. This letter was mailed to Antoine d'Abbadie's address in Paris, reached there 16 September 1858, and was forwarded to Bayonne (fol. 85v).

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 25 Aug. 1858

Minkullu, 25 August 1858

Most Reverend Eminence,

My intention has always been not to wait for the time when I am compelled to write, [writing] not only every three, four or five months but even more often. As, however, we do not lack mercurial [persons](?) here and there, and I have the means by which to know that my letters not only are not appreciated, but [even] more, that they have been put aside and judged not to be read.

Such information, on the other hand, cannot exempt me from my obligation, nor stop me at all. With the grace of God I therefore break all barriers and do my duty. I am in the habit of not writing what concerns others, what they do or what happens [to them], and now [too] I do and maintain this. As long as the expressed intention has not been carried out, I know that it is not decided upon, nor is it necessary, and so I can conscientiously present what is going on, not in order to do harm or to give offence to anyone, but rather for the good of the mission and for the honour of my own people, standing before God the Superior.

Everyone is aware, of course, that he knows the one who is close by better, more or less, than the one who is far away; notwithstanding this, leaving aside the others as I have said above, I speak only of the mission, to which I belong at least in part, if not entirely.

I have said many times and I repeat that Mgr. De Jacobis is a saint—truly a saint—and whoever is truthful cannot say the opposite. I believe that I have said all with this statement. And it is so, that [even] if the discord is not made explicit, it exists among the monks. As a duty at least, I speak because I believe it is my duty. Besides what is now going on, I tell and predict what will happen to the mission. Having said this once for all should be enough. Do not say and believe that I harbour the slightest resentment, because I live in Massawa and they in Halay. I have nothing to do with them. Mgr. Biancheri and Mgr. Massaja, too, know this.

I always remember the favours received from Rome. I am doing what I can and the circumstances permit. This year four conversions have taken place, of one Armenian man, two women and one boy; three baptisms, two adults and one child; one marriage. Confessions and communions among Europeans [and] especially Abyssinians, are numerous and frequent.

I close here, kissing the sacred ring and requesting your holy blessing.

He who is the most humble servant and subject of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Zekkariyas the priest.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 176, Italian original. The wording of this letter is confused or obscure, either because Zekkariyas's mastery of the Italian language was poor or because he hesitated to be outspoken about the situation in the mission.

Apparently Zekkariyas (see no. 18), did not feel that he really belonged to the circle of priests who were educated locally and worked closely with Bishop De Jacobis, the group often defined as "the children of *Abune Ya'iqob*". His many years in Rome had made Zekkariyas quite conscious that he was a missionary commissioned by the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, and entitled to be listened to by Cardinal Barnabò himself.

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to Pius IX, 19 Oct. 1858

^{ማሳይ}
 ዘቲ፡ዘተፈነውት፡አም፡ንጉሠ፡ኢትዮ፡ጵያ፡ንጉሣ፡ነበር፡
 ክሰ፡ከታነ፡ፋፋሳት፡ፕፑስ፡ዘሮማ።
 ወተጽሐፈት፡አመ፤ለጥቅምት፡አም፡ልድተ፡አግዚአብሔር፡
 ቢ፤ወጥፑ፤ወፊዳመት፡በሐሳብ፡ኢትዮ፡ጵያ፡ወበሐሳብ፡
 ሮማ፡በ፤ወጥፑ፤ወጥፋመት።
 ኦ፡ኦብ፡ክቡር፡ወቅዱስ፡አመ፡ሰማዕት፡ዜናክ፡አም፡አ
 ፈ፡ኤ፡ጲስቶ፡ጵስ፡ደዕቅብ፡ወልድ፡ክ፡ጊዜ፡ተራክቦት
 ዮ፡ምስሴሁ፡ወአም፡አፈ፡ቀሳውስት፡አለ፡በኃቢሁ፡ወሲቦ፡
 አአመርኩ፡አም፤ፊደም፡ነገረ፡ሃይማኖት፡ነገረ፡ክ፡አይ፡አ
 ጭቀርኩ፡ክመ፡ክወስክ፡ርእስዮ፡በሃይማኖት፡ምክለ፡ደቀ
 ቅክ፡አስመ፡ይቤ፡ፍትሐ፡ነገሥት፡መጽሐፈ፡ዚክነ፡ዘዮ፡
 ቢ፡አም፡ነገረ፡መጽሐፍቲ፡ወይኩን፡ኪቀ፡ወመኩን፡
 ኢበዓሎ፡መንበረ፡ጁ፡ኖሮክ፡ዘሮም፡በክመ፡አዘዙ፡ሐፕ
 ሮያት፡አስመ፡ወአቱ፡ሊቅ፡ክመ፡ጁ፡ኖሮክ፡ህዮ፡ክር
 ክቅከ፡አግዚአብሔር፡በክመ፡ከሊቀ፡ፋፋሳት፡ቦቱ፡ሥልጣን፡
 ወትከዛዝ፡አለ፡በታሐት፡አዲሁ፡ክማሁ፡ቦቱ፡ሥልጣን፡
 ክሊዳስ፡መንበረ፡ጁ፡ኖሮክ፡ዘሮም፡መልዕልተ፡ነፕሎም፡
 ጳጳሳት፡በሐቱ፡ክመ፡ኢይኩን፡ህክኩ፡ወጋዕዘ፡በብሔርዮ፡
 ቢምክንዮት፡ሃይማኖት፡አጸንሐ፡አከክ፡የረት፡ዕ፡ወየጸንሰ፡
 መንግሥትዮ፡አግዚአብሔር፡አከክሊክ፡ክመ፡ታ፡ብራ፡ከመ
 ማረ፡በፊት፡ዮ፡ዘፈነውክ፡ምክለ፡ዘቲ፡መልክት፡በሳዕለ
 መቃብራሁ፡ለቅዱስ፡ጁ፡ኖሮክ፡ክመ፡ዮ፡ቦጽሐኒውስተ፡ዘቲ፡
 ሃይማኖት፡ወበዓቂቦቶሙ፡ሰ፡ለክቶሊካውያን፡ምክለ፡ቤተክ
 ሮኪቲያናቲሆም፡ፍልው፡አነ፡አም፡አመ፡ከ፡ነገሩ፡አከክ፡ይክ
 ዜቅወአም፡ደአዚኒ፡አዓቅብ፡ቢኾኩ፡ነገር፡ዘይትክህበረ፡ቅደዕሙ፡
 ዳለ፡በክንቲኤዮ፡ክመ፡ይ፡ፈ፡ጽም፡ዘንተ፡አግዚአብሔር፡ህሲ፡
 ልብዮቅ

ወሰማዕት፡ክመ፡ህለው፡ክቡራን፡ወልዑሳን፡ነገሥት፡ዮ፡ዘዮ
 ራብሩ፡ምስሴክ፡በሃይማኖት፡በክንተዝ፡አከክ፡አም፡ነ

ቤክ፡ክመ፡ታከተፋቅረ፡ረ፡ምስሌ፡ሆሙ፡ውናሆ፡ፈነውክም፡ለወ
 ልደ፡እሕተ፡አምዮ፡ኅበ፡ግጉሠ፡ነገሥቱ፡ኖቶልዮ፡ግ፡ክንዘ፡አኃ
 ሥሥ፡ፍቅረቀውህዋ፡ተ፡ዚክየ፡ረ፡የአምላክ፡ግረ፡ክንቲክከቀ
 ክ፡አብ፡አስክሶክ፡ክመ፡ት፡ግበር፡ሲተ፡ይብጻሕ፡ቅድመ፡ገድ፡
 ስግጉሠ፡ነገሥቱ፡ኖቶልዮ፡ግ፡
 ክ፡አብ፡ክቡር፡ግረ፡ረ፡ዘቅ፡ፈቅ፡ይ፡ህሲ፡ፈብክ፡ክከመ፡አነ፡ክ
 ግብሮ፡በፍቅር፡ወበት፡ፍሥሐቅቱ፡
 ብዙኃ፡ግ፡አመ፡ግቱ፡ጸላክት፡የ፡በሕቱ፡ብየ፡ተከፋ፡ክመ፡አክ
 ይደመ፡በኃይሶ፡ጸሎት፡ክቀወክመ፡ይክው፡ግ፡ፈቃደ፡ክገዚ
 ክ፡በሔር፡ክሄሲ፡ክገገሥ፡በቅብ፡መግግሥቱ፡በክመ፡ሥ
 ርዓተ፡ካቶሊካውያንቱ፡
 ክገዚክ፡በሔር፡የሀበነ፡ኪያክ፡ለገዋ፡መዋዕል፡ሰዓሰመ፡ዓሰ
 ቅመ፡አሀጸግቱ፡
 በገደ፡ተፈጸመት፡መልእክት፡ወተፈነውት፡በእይሆሙ፡
 ሰፍእደው፡ወክሱ፡አመ፡ግቱ፡አባ፡አምነቱ፡ክቶሊካዊ፡ግ
 ቃዬ፡ወሰ፡ፍረሰ፡ፈረንሳይ፡።



This letter is sent by Nigusē, the king of Ethiopia, to Pope Pius (*Ri'ise Liqane Pappasat Piyos*) of Rome.

Written on the 10th of Ṭiqimt 1851 after the birth of Our Lord according to the Ethiopian calendar, and in 1858 according to the Roman calendar.

O honoured and holy father! When I heard about you from the mouth of your son, Bishop De Jacobis (*Epīsqoppo Ya'iqob*), at the time I met him, and from the mouth of priests who were with him, and when I learned about the Catholic faith from them, I longed to join your sons in the faith, because our book, the *Fitha Negest*, which is greater than all our other books, declares, "Let the possessor of the chair of Peter in Rome be the head and governor as stipulated by the Apostles, because this head is like Peter, who represents Christ, Our Lord." As an archbishop (*liqe pappasat*) has the power and authority over those who are under him, so the incumbent (lit. head) of the see of Rome has the power over all the bishops.

ስ ስ ለ ተ ፡ ወ ፡ በ ሰ ዓ ት ፡ ዘ ገ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ገ ጉ ፡ ሠ ፡ ኢ ት ዮ ቶ ይ ፡ ገ ጉ ፡ ሠ ፡ ት
 ል ፡ ን ፡ ወ ፡ ወ ፡ ከ ተ ፡ ብ ሐ ፡ ራ ፡ ይ ፡ ም ፡ ከ ፡ መ ፡ ይ ፡ ገ ገ ፡ በ ራ ፡ በ መ
 ቀ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ሆ ፡ መ ፡ ለ ት ይ ፡ ሳ ገ ፡ ሐ ፡ ሞ ራ ፡ ይ ፡ ት ፡ ጴ ፡ ጊ ራ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ጳ ፡ ወ ፡
 ሎ ስ ፡ ስ ሚ ገ ፡ ።
 በ ክ መ ፡ ይ ፡ ቤ ፡ ሎ ፡ ክ ፡ ግ ፡ ዚ ፡ ክ ፡ ነ ፡ ለ ቀ ፡ ከ ማ ገ ማ ፡ ም ፡ ከ ፡ ቀ ፡ ጳ ፡ ሚ ፡ ክ ገ
 ዘ ፡ ሀ ሎ ፡ በ ሠ ራ ፡ ዓ ተ ፡ ክ ፡ ክ ፡ ዛ ፡ ብ ፡ ወ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ ይ ራ ፡ ክ ፡ ዮ ፡ ት ፡ ክ ፡ ም ራ ፡ ተ ፡
 መ ስ ቀ ል ፡ በ ገ ገ ገ ፡ ት ፡ ት ፡ መ ፡ ወ ፡ ዕ ፡ ጸ ላ ፡ ክ ፡ ተ ፡ ክ ፡ ወ ፡ ክ ፡ ማ ፡ ሆ ፡ ይ ፡ ቤ ፡ ሎ ፡ ነ ፡
 ሆ ፡ ም ፡ ለ ሰ ገ ፡ ኒ ፡ ሆ ፡ ለ ራ ፡ ክ ፡ ሰ ፡ ለ ፡ ቀ ፡ ነ ፡ ጳ ፡ ጳ ፡ ሳ ፡ ት ፡ ፕ ፡ ዮ ፡ ከ ፡ ዘ ፡ ል ፡ ነ ፡ ም ፡
 መ ገ ገ ለ ፡ ብ ሐ ፡ ራ ፡ ሆ ፡ ወ ፡ ሀ ሎ ፡ ነ ፡ ም ፡ ክ ፡ ራ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ ይ ፡ ብ ሎ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ ት ፡ ት ፡
 መ ፡ ወ ፡ ሰ ፡ ክ ፡ ሰ ፡ ራ ፡ ከ ፡ በ ስ ም ፡ ክ ፡ ም ፡ ሳ ፡ ክ ፡ ፕ ፡ ዮ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ጴ ፡ ጊ ፡ ራ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ጳ ፡
 ወ ፡ ሎ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ በ ስ ገ ገ ፡ ት ፡ ገ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ ገ ፡ ገ ፡ ሠ ፡ ገ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ጉ ፡ በ ሰ ሰ ሰ ፡ ጳ ገ ገ ፡ ገ ፡
 ክ ፡ ብ ል ፡ ክ ፡ መ ፡ ይ ፡ ሆ ፡ በ ፊ ፡ ክ ፡ ም ፡ ሳ ፡ ክ ፡ ፕ ፡ ዮ ፡ ከ ፡ መ ፡ ዋ ፡ ዓ ፡ በ ዲ ፡ በ ፡ ጸ ላ ፡ ክ ፡ ት ፡ ዮ
 ወ ፡ ጳ ገ ገ ፡ ሰ ፡ መ ገ ገ ፡ ሠ ፡ ት ፡ ዮ ፡ ክ ፡ ት ፡ ዋ ፡ ክ ፡ ፍ ፡ ክ ፡ ፍ ፡ ሙ ፡ ነ ፡ ላ ይ ፡ ማ ፡ ም ፡ ተ ፡ ራ ፡
 ማ ፡ ክ ፡ ት ፡ ለ ፡ ገ ፡ ዊ ፡ ተ ፡ ወ ፡ ክ ፡ ዓ ፡ ት ፡ ስ ፡ ከ ፡ ከ ፡ ጉ ፡ ዚ ፡ ሞ ፡ ት ፡ ዮ ፡ ገ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ጉ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡
 ክ ፡ ክ ፡ ነ ፡ ገ ፡ ሠ ፡ ዘ ገ ገ ፡ ት ፡ በ ሰ ሰ ፡ ተ ፡ በ ት ይ ፡ መ ፡ ሠ ፡ ሳ ፡ ሎ ፡ ት ፡ ዮ ፡ ከ ፡ ት ፡ ወ ፡
 በ ት ዮ ፡ መ ፡ ይ ፡ ገ ፡ ገ ፡ ል ፡ ማ ራ ፡ ም ፡ ዘ ፡ ተ ፡ ፀ ፡ ገ ፡ ሠ ፡ ት ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ በ ሰ ፡ ም ፡ ስ ፡ ሐ ፡ ት ፡ ሐ ፡
 ጳ ም ፡ ወ ፡ በ ት ዮ ፡ ሚ ፡ ሆ ፡ መ ፡ ለ ት ይ ፡ ሳ ገ ፡ ሐ ፡ ሞ ራ ፡ ይ ፡ ት ፡ ጴ ፡ ጊ ፡ ራ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ጳ ፡
 ወ ፡ ሎ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ክ ፡ ነ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ሐ ገ ገ ገ ፡ ት ፡ በ ሰ ሰ ፡ ተ ፡ ሞ ማ ራ ፡ ዮ ፡ በ ዲ ፡ በ ፡ መ ፡ ቀ ፡ በ ፡
 ራ ፡ ሆ ፡ ለ ፡ ጴ ፡ ጊ ፡ ራ ፡ ከ ፡ ክ ገ ገ ፡ ሀ ሎ ፡ በ መ ገ ገ ፡ በ ራ ፡ ፕ ፡ ዮ ፡ ከ ፡ ት ይ ፡ ከ ፡ ወ ፡ ጳ ፡
 ት ፡ ሆ ፡ መ ፡ ለ ፡ ክ ፡ ሎ ፡ መ ፡ ም ፡ ክ ፡ መ ፡ ም ፡ ።



Voto di Negussie Re della Etiopia depositato sul Sepolcro in S. Chiesa dei
 Santi apostoli Pietro e Paolo l'anno 1838 e del Pontificato di Pio IX Summo.
 Quando Nabba signora Gedi fece vedere a Castiglione, tuttora signore della
 sua Pace nel Uch gli disse: Tu con questa simbolo vinco. Oggi non
 gli separati nel mio paese da Pio IX Pontefice Romano e Pontefice dei
 Padri miei condogliano Eglia e mi dicono: Tu nel nome del Dio di
 Pio IX e dei Principi degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo trasferai di tutti i
 nemici tuoi. Quindi o che ho Negussie giuro e fo Voto di abbracciare
 e far abbracciare la Cattolica fede voglio stare mio rebito quando il
 Dio di Pio IX superati ad humiliati i miei nemici avra confermato tutto
 l'evento il mio potere.
 Nella pratica dunque e nel nome della Santissima Trinita e del patre
 mio di Maria Concepita senza peccato, e degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo giuro e
 fo Voto come sopra, ed in Uch illo depongo questo voto sigillato nel mio
 sigillo sulla Tomba di S. Pietro mentre Pio Santo e Padre di tutti
 i Gedi viile nella sua Chiesa Apostolica.

I shall wait, however, until Our Lord establishes and strengthens my government, so that strife and quarrels do not arise in my country due to religion. O father, I ask you to place the statement (lit. letter) of my vow, which I send together with this message, on the tomb of St. Peter, so that he will let me attain this faith. As for protecting the Catholics and their churches, I have been ready [to do so] from the time I took power until now. In the future, too, I shall protect them by all means within my power. But pray for me, that God may fulfil the desire of my heart.

I have heard that there are honoured and great kings that share your faith. Therefore I beg you to establish friendship between them and me. Now I have sent the son of my mother's sister to Emperor Napoleon (*Nigusē Negest* Napoliyon) to seek friendship. He shall kiss your feet on my behalf. O father, I beg you, for my sake, to enable him to reach the court of Emperor Napoleon. O father, tell me the desire of your heart, since I am going to carry it out with love and joy.

Many are my enemies, but by the power of your prayer I hope to destroy them. And if it is the will of God, I intend to be enthroned with the ointment of kingship according to the rules of the Catholics. May God grant us you[r presence] for a long time; for ever and ever, amen.

Here ends the message. It is sent by the hand of three persons. They are *Abba* Imnetu, the Catholic, Ṭaqayē, and Lapéreuse, the Frenchman.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .

Vow and covenant made by Nigusē, the king of Ethiopia, [and] sent to the city of Rome in order to be placed on the tombs of the apostolic saints Peter and Paul. Amen.

In the same way that the Lord said to Constantine I, when he was [still] a pagan and He showed him the sign of the cross, "With this you shall conquer your enemies," so the messengers of Pope Pius, whom he sent to this country, have now told and advised me, saying, "You also shall conquer your enemies in the name of the God of Pius, Peter, and Paul." And so I, Nigusē, have made a vow, saying, "If the God of Pius gives me victory over my enemies and strengthens my kingdom, I shall forthwith accept the Catholic faith of Rome, and I shall keep it until the day of my death."

I, Nigusē, have made this vow before the Holy Trinity and before the Virgin Mary, who was conceived without the transgression of Adam, and before the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. I shall put this statement of my vow on the tomb of Peter, whose chair is occupied by His Holiness Pius, the father of all believers.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .

Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Ep. ad Princ., Posizioni et Minutae 1859, carton 36, no. 98, Gi'iz original and Italian translation by G. Sapeto, dated 6 March 1859. That a letter had been forwarded to Pope Pius has been known. It was mentioned in a note dated 28 June 1859 (ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 377), but to our knowledge it has never been quoted and it has been very difficult to locate. We are indebted to the prefect of the Vatican archives, Monsignor Giuseppe Metzler, for having finally located it for us.

The letter consists of two large sheets of very thick paper, folded in the middle. The first is the letter itself and the second the "vow and covenant . . . to be placed on the tombs of the apostolic saints Peter and Paul". These sheets were wrapped in a cover addressed "Alla Santità di Nostro Signore Pio IX" and in Ethiopic characters "*Larom liqē pappasat Piyus 9'*". The cover was sealed with the seal of the Catholic mission in Abyssinia in sealing wax. Except for the omission and later addition of the second word "*tomar*" at the top, the letter is written with great care in beautiful *qum ṣihfet* with lines 1–2, 6–7, and 11–18 (from *isime yibē* to *kwelomu pappasat*) on the first page in red ink.

The odd stamping of the vow with half of Nigusē's seal in the left and half in the right margin is almost certain proof that the Italian text was added first, leaving no other space for the seal. These circumstances indicate that the letter was written and dispatched under the direct supervision of the head of the Catholic mission, Bishop De Jacobis. More important, there can be no doubt that De Jacobis, rather than the French consul Chauvin-Beillard, played the leading role in bringing about the mission to Europe. Compare Rubenson, *Survival*, p. 194, with O'Mahoney, I, pp. 190–192. O'Mahoney's exoneration of De Jacobis is effectively contradicted by the bishop's own jubilant words to the consul in a letter written on 24 September 1858 (BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 92): "Il est parfaitement dans vos mains, dans mes mains, dans nos mains". For *Abba* Imnetu (Imnete. Maryam Gibretu) and Father Lapéreuse, see nos 37 and 44; in no. 37 Ṭaqayē is introduced as *Lij* Ṭaqayē, a cousin of Nigusē's.

A copy of the reply from Pius IX, dated 30 May 1859, is found with the above letter.

Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Napoleon III [Oct.? 1858]

I have heard of your power and your kindness from my father De Jacobis. That is why I am sending you this letter by the hand of my cousin Mr. *Lij Taqayē*, *Abba Imnetu* and Father Lapéreuse. It will express to you the sentiments of my heart.

Earlier, finding myself beset by my enemies, I sent you a letter through the intermediation of your consul at Massawa, and I have not yet received any reply. When this consul, however, in his capacity of envoy, came to see me in my camp, it seemed to me as if I was conversing with yourself, and I experienced great comfort through it. If therefore you desire to send consuls to my country, I will receive them with great pleasure.

Looking forward [to this], I will tell you: It is a long time since Abyssinia fell from her greatness, and in order to rise again she claims your assistance, for mine only is insufficient to raise her again. This is what brings me to ask you to reach out your powerful hand to me without delay. Our country is divided into three main creeds; the man from Qwara, however, acting like a fanatic savage, has forced all the Abyssinians of these three creeds to accept a new definition of Christianity which he has imposed upon them. From the moment when I perceived this detestable inclination in him, I rose against this impious system, trusting in the help of God, the blessed Virgin and the prayers of the Catholics, and with small forces I have beaten his generals six times and seized the territories of my uncle.

For my part, with the exception of the protection which I can provide for Mr. De Jacobis and his co-workers, I do not know what things are agreeable to you. I am completely ignorant of whether my country presents anything which could suit you in terms of commercial relations, strategy or any other useful matter, but you can send an intelligent person capable of examining everything; as for me, I give you the assurance that I will always be prepared to assist him by all means at my disposal.

This letter, which will be given to you by *Abba Imnetu*, *Lij Taqayē* and Father Lapéreuse, is accompanied by a saddle adorned with silver according to the custom of the country, two bracelets of the same metal, one lion skin, making up the complement of the military uniform of Abyssinia, and two swords of the most ancient model.

Giuseppe Sapeto, *Etiopia. Notizie raccolte dal Prof. Giuseppe Sapeto*, Rome, n. d., pp. 339–340, French text reproduced in Sapeto's Italian book. No original of this letter has been found. According to *Abba Imnetu Maryam* it was written by Father Lapéreuse (no. 44), thus in French. Whether this was done before the mission left for Europe or after their arrival in Rome is an open question. That envoys of Nigusē forwarded a letter to Napoleon III is mentioned in an undated draft of Napoleon's somewhat evasive reply (AED, Protocole C41, Éthiopie), as well as in a Quai d'Orsay memorandum of 15 March 1859 (AECF, Égypte, Massouah 2, fols 309–310). It has proved impossible, however, to locate any text of the letter itself anywhere in the files of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The only document we have is the Italian draft or copy of a message which was probably delivered orally by Imnetu Maryam (no. 46).

The letter referred to in the second paragraph is almost certainly the letter written in June 1856 (no. 14 above). Consul Chauvin-Beillard reported his visit to Nigusē's camp in a letter written on 19 October 1857 (*ibid.*, fols 172–180). That De Jacobis was deeply involved in the mission to Paris as well as Rome is evident from a long memorandum, which he addressed to Napoleon III on 26 October 1858 (*ibid.*, fols 283–286) as well as in a letter to his mission headquarters on 8 November (CML, Lettres, vol. 2, no. 383). See also the footnote of no. 36 above.

Nevertheless contradicting views about the political involvement of De Jacobis are common. See *i.a.* Coulbeaux, II, pp. 424, 434, and O'Mahoney, I, pp. 189–192, 195, who minimize any political involvement of his, and Lejean, *Théodore II*, pp. 39–41, and Crummey, pp. 100–105, who assert that De Jacobis was not above political intrigue. See also Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 192–196.

ኃገል፡ኃይሉ፡ዋንጉሣ፡ጦር፡ጠላት፡ጻ
 ገደ፡ጊዜ፡ዘሌሊት፡ወደሰጊዮ፡ሸሸ፡ገዚያህ፡
 ስላ፡ትቶ፡ተዋጋው፡ደራ፡ግን፡አላ፡ገደ
 ም፡፡ አገው፡ንጉሣ፡ነሱ፡ገደ፡ወገሰ፡
 ጌደ፡ጸ፡ዘላ፡ትቶ፡ነገረ፡፡ስገጋደላ
 ገሳ፡ጠራ፡አስገላ፡ገዚያ፡ጋራ፡ጸ
 ዋጋላሁ፡ገላ፡ሳሳ፡ማይደ፡ጋራ፡
 ምጽዋ፡ትቶ፡ወደዚህ፡መጣ፡አሁንም፡
 አርሱ፡ተሰ፡የሚሆኑ፡ገደ፡መሰጸኝ፡
 ገ፡የሰዋ፡አንድ፡ሆነ፡አርሱ፡የደሰሠ፡ሆነ
 ልጁ፡ነገሱ፡ሰሠ፡ሆነ፡ጌሰዋ፡ሆነ፡
 አ፡ገደያዎ፡ገማገማ፡ሳላቅ፡አንድ፡ገዚያዎ
 አገራ፡በገገሁኝ፡ጊዜ፡አንድ፡ወራቀት፡ጸ፡
 ሰደደ፡ነገረሁኝ፡አገራ፡መሃድ፡አጸ
 ገ፡አገሱ፡በሸገሁኝ፡ጊዜ፡ገምሰር፡አምሰት
 ወር፡ያህሁ፡አንድ፡ሆነ፡ሰሠ፡ሆነ፡ገደ፡
 ተቀመጥሁኝ፡ጌላ፡ገን፡ነገራ፡አይቸ፡ሰራ፡
 ጌላገሁኝ፡አሁንም፡አ፡የሚሆኑ፡ገደ
 አማራሰሁ፡ገምሰር፡አገርያዎ፡ደገኝ
 ጌ፡ደገኝ፡አንድ፡ሆነ፡ጌላ፡ገደ፡

P. Birru Telegraph office
 Care of Mr. George Cairo

fol. 132r

made 60 fall like leaves and wounded the [remaining] 40, not excluding [Nigusē] himself. If darkness and his army had not arrived quickly, he would have been killed by the one-eyed. When he saw the multitude of Nigusē's army, Habal Haylu fled during the night to Serayē. Then he mobilized and fought him, but was not successful. Agew Nigusē had left six *dejjazmaches* in central Tigray.

When Subagadis Kasa, after mobilizing his army, intended to fight with them, Mahdere Qal left Massawa and came here. Now, he is to return soon. If you have a message, he will be happy to be your messenger.

I, your slave, had written and sent you one letter before I left Malta, and one letter as soon as I entered this country. When I found it very difficult to go to my country, I remained in Cairo for five months without doing anything at all. But then, perceiving the situation, I looked for work. I am now learning electric telegraphy. In case you write a letter to your slave, this is [my address]:

P. Bru Telegraph office.
 Care of Mr. George, Cairo.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 131–132, Amharic original. This is Birru's last preserved letter to Antoine d'Abbadie. He had found a profession for himself and was able to save money for his return to Ethiopia. The content of this letter is very important, as it was written so close to the events described, and in a most interesting manner corroborates and supplements the chronicles and other narratives. See, for instance, Zeneb, pp. 32–39. The expected attack on Tigray was delayed for another year, owing to rebellion in Shewa.

According to family history Birru spent one and a half years in Cairo. After returning to Ethiopia he served as Tēwodros's interpreter and translator, e. g. together with Samu'el Giyorgīs during the crisis in 1863 involving Consul Cameron and the missionaries H.A. Stern and H. Rosenthal (Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 232–233, and sources quoted there). He was at times called to undertake official duties also for Yohannis IV, but he is reported to have devoted himself mainly to commerce.

"Habal" (the skew-eyed or one-eyed) Haylu was the nickname of *Dejjazmach* Haylu Tewelde Medhin of Hamasēn, who was for many years one of Tēwodros's most loyal vassals. See nos 213, 223 and 224.

Hayle Mika'el Sahle Sillasē to Michel d'Abbadie [1858?]



Seal: *Merid Azmach* Hayle Mika'el.

በግብርና ዘመን ስለኖሩ አገራችን ጋራ ሆኖ ለሚኖሩ ሕዝብ ጋራ ገንዘብ ለመገኘት ለመቻል ለወጣታችን ደንበኞችን ለማግኘት ለአዲስ ስራዎች ለመጀመር እንደሚችሉ ለሁሉም ደንበኞቻችን ለመጠየቅ እንደሚችሉ እንገብርለን።

Letter from *Merid Azmach* Hayle Mika'el. May it reach the Frenchman *Ras* Michel (Mika'el), the name of whose country is *Abbadie* (Debedi). Although acquainted [only] by hearsay, [I ask] how are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth?

Since a father's friend is for the son [as] the dirt of the nose is for the hand, I have received what you sent, saying, "Whatever you remember, write to me." As Solomon said, "Generations go and generations come."

I also like you as my father *Sahle Sillasē* did. I have received what you said, "If I were a man of God, I would have blessed your reign, but I am a soldier." When I asked *Abba* Gebre Hiywet what you wanted, he told me, "It is a saddle and a cross."

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 142, Gi'iz/Amharic original. Hayle Mika'el was *merid azmach* of *Shewa* under *Tēwodros* 1855–1858. The dating 1858 is based on the assumption that it was written at the same time as no. 40 below. Although of no immediate political importance, the letter illustrates how widespread the contacts of the French 'ras' were, as well as the colourful style of some of the semi-private letters of the period.

Hayle Mika'el Sahle Sillasē to Antoine d'Abbadie [1858?]



Seal: *Merid Azmach* Hayle Mika'el.

በግብርና ዘመን ስለኖሩ አገራችን ጋራ ሆኖ ለሚኖሩ ሕዝብ ጋራ ገንዘብ ለመገኘት ለመቻል ለወጣታችን ደንበኞችን ለማግኘት ለአዲስ ስራዎች ለመጀመር እንደሚችሉ ለሁሉም ደንበኞቻችን ለመጠየቅ እንደሚችሉ እንገብርለን።

Letter from *Merid Azmach* Hayle Mika'el. May it reach *Antoine* (ጠጥኒዮስ). How are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth? Even if a country is far away, [this] does not prevent friendship.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 141, Gi'iz/Amharic original. This note was sent together with no. 39. It is annotated "3 ans de date en 7bre 1861" in pencil, followed by "(=1858)" in ink. In a letter also annotated 1861 (no. 94), *Abba* Gebre Hiywet Welde Ab mentions that he has forwarded letters from the king of *Shewa*. *Antoine* apparently concluded that they had been on their way since 1858.

Selama to Michel d'Abbadie, 3 Feb.1859



حضرة السيد الجليل وحدهم فريد عمره مكابيل دابادي بك لانزلت ايامه هنيهة
بما فيه من الاكدار واعداثه خجته معتمه بالاوتزار وخرسه من التجار الزمسه وكلا الشرا

بعد هذا جزيل السلام الروحاني عليكم والسؤال عن عزيز خاظم الكريم ومراجعتكم الركي السلام
ثم اذا سلمت عننا فمن الحمد لله طيبين بخير وعافيه وما نسأل الا عن صحة سلامتكم
في عناية القصد والمراد من رب العباد ايضا نعم الجنا الشرف انه ونحن في اوتنا النصح الشديد
اوقات اخبار الشا وصل لنا عزيز خطابكم الكريم صحة تاعتم ولدي فقلنا بالتم والتبديل
التسفة من دايتا كسفا العليل ولكن كان حضوره عندنا من بعد مسافة سهه واسبق
دم سلوك الطريق من التقريه بسبب انه حاكمها افونا قومي انك تحت خمس دحرفات اوسيه
بذلك صار معلونا رسالتكم لنا واحده شمس كبريه وكسر الله حركه وحمد جميله
ما من ججهه كلام البديري ججهه الذي كان مفتحا في بيت لحم والكلام الذي خطاه له تكلموا
بما لم ياصل بالجلسه بل وجد في بيت لحم وعده جمله تلاميذ يتعلم معهم لسان الفتر
زي هو السواسو والشبهه هم سفا الملك فاصبل ملك اس من طرفه وناس من طرفنا وعرف
شبهه بسببان بيت لحم بلاد الشقيه كما حضرتم تعرفون ذلك وما حضر الي الصفر قايلاه
طبيب وجلساه في بيت لوجه بوهنر سيل الانكليزي وما حضر الملك امره بالسفر الى بلاد
عنا بالطيب واعطناه ناس من الملك لاجل عدم المعارضه بالطريق وم علمنا معه من الجلام
الحرقه فيه موجدين ناس يتر من اوريا الكيز ونهسا وبين فاذا شجروا علينا بكلمه واحده
من كلام القصر المذكور مثل ربه او كلاتا يشوش الضمير فاتم احسبونا عنكم مثل الكاوين
لمزورين ولم نقلنا معه ادني شر وجاتكم وجياه الخالت الباري وقصص الاكبره مسجده
لمنا هو ولكن كان من بلاد اوريا المقيمين بالحسن فلا يكون عنكم نكدر بذلك
يزدرو الناس المسافرين في بلاد القله والكافه لم نقلنا معهم ادني شيئا من الزور

fol. 125r

بهم ولا ينف يتبعهم فلا تصدقون كلام العدويين وكيف انا اعمل بهم شر من غير ان اطالع بذلك
 من غير جنابكم لاني اعلم ان حضرتكم رجلا شريفا الفذ وودرجتكم ومقامكم مرتفع وكلامكم
 سموع عند كل الجموع فليق ان الخائف كلام حضرتكم واعز ضميري واخضر حجتكم لان تصديق
 ذلك بل انتمما بحسب الحق القدح الذي بيننا وبينكم ولكن حضرتكم كتمت عاهدتوا ان
 حين دناكم الي الموضع تخلصون لنا المال الممسوك بسببنا مال الرجل النعبي التاجر المدعو
 خير فخرجتم ان تخلصون له ذلك المال الممسوك بسببنا لانه رجلا مملوكنا صاحب عيال وخدمتكم
 قد اهماكم بالنفقه منها ما كتمت عندنا بالحسنة فكم كلامهم الصادق شعوب في خلاصه من
 القصة حكم رجائنا فكم وكذلك ارسلنا بالوصية على بيتكم فحاضر علي بن ابي طالب جميع ما يلزم
 لهم نيله وقد اعطاهم سابقا حين يرافقنا من اصل المائة ريال الذي امرتم لنا باخذ
 من طرف القنصل بلودين الباقين من اصل المائتين ريال الذي كتمت لخدمتهم من ابا الحشيش
 وانشا الله تعالى لما رجا يرجع لنا بلاد الوقد حقا الذي بالتقريبه نامر لاهل بيتكم علي بن محمد
 من البلاد من جميع ما يلزم لهم لان بلاد ابي ابي الان حاكمين يداقونا قومي والذوي
 في مسكنها ابا يعقوب وقدوم ذلك في شريف عليكم ولا تقطعون عما جوا بانكم في احيان
 لاجل ان تكون مصيبنين على صحة سلامتكم وايضا زحوم من افعالكم رسولنا
 عرفي ماشق مستغافه لاجل الطريق واذا وجد نبيدا اسبق يكون ارساله والتمن
 عن نطقه لاهل بيتكم حكم ما نامروا في جوابكم ودمهم سالمين عراسه رب العالمين
 ١٢٤٥

٢٨ جمادى اخر

سلامه
مطران الحشيشه



for jones 1566
 de richelieu no. 114 126

وديار بروقتة واخوته الذين
 من برطون وتله قولوا عاصي الان
 في صوجام وما سكتها وما سلك حبله
 ومثوره واقرا قومي ما سلك النوربه
 والملك والسيس في الولوبسب لخدمتكم
 لانه عاجي فيها والان صار خرابا للو وهما
 واذا مرضت التقرية لا تخافا بيمسبه
 لانه اللوا لا اخذت يد جارية من العشاء ولا يخدم من الجيش

Seal: Selama, the metropolitan of Abyssinia. 1557.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

In the name of God, the benevolent and merciful. God is my helper. I will not fear.

[His] Excellency, the revered master, the unparalleled of his era, the incomparable of his age, Michel d'Abbadie Bey (*Mikāyil Dābādī Bīk*). May his days continue to be pleasant, free from distress, and may those [who are] his enemies be overwhelmed and beset by calamities. May God protect him against the temptations of the times, and against all evil.

After presenting abundant spiritual greetings to you, and inquiries about the strength of your noble mind and your blameless unimpaired character—if you ask about us, we are well and in good health, praise be to God. We ask only for your health [and] well-being; [that it be given] by the Lord of the faithful is [our] ultimate aim and desire. Besides, we notify Your Noble Excellency that we are filled with the agony of strong yearning to see some news about Your Honour. Your precious and esteemed letter has reached us through your follower *Weldē* whom we received with kissing and hugging. It was a relief from our distress, like a medicine for someone who is sick.

He reached us, however, after a long time—more than a year—because of the absence of a passable route from Tigray. This is because its governor is *Agew Nigusē*, the son of *Dejjazmach Wībē*'s sister. We have also been informed that you have sent us a big parasol. May God increase your wealth and glorify your generosity. As for the words of Father *Giusto (al-badrī Justū)*, who lived in Bētlehem, the words which he spoke to you deceitfully, there is absolutely no foundation for them. Rather, we found him in Bētlehem with a group of students with whom he was learning the Gi'iz language, that is grammar (*sewasew*), and scripture(?) (*shīqa*) in obedience to His Majesty, the king. The king sent people from his side and from our side and the side of the [scholars of] scripture(?), because Bētlehem is the land of scripture(?), as Your Excellency knows.

And when the envoy came to me, we received him in a friendly way and we had him stay in the house of Mr. John Bell (*Khawāja Yūhannis Bīl*), the Englishman. And when His Majesty the king instructed him to depart to his country, we took leave of him in a friendly way. We gave him men from the king so that he would meet no opposition on the way. We did not do anything against him behind [his back], thank God. Here are many people from Europe: Englishmen and Germans. If they testify against us with a single word of the words of the above-mentioned priest, such as imprisonment, or by talking in a way which disturbs the mind, you may think of us as liars and cheats. But we did not do the slightest evil against him—on your life and on the life of God, the Creator.

The consul of England and everyone [else] from the countries of Europe who is staying in Abyssinia testify against us. You should not feel any concern over this matter. Likewise, we did not do anything wrong against the men who travelled to [the country of] the Galla and Kefa, or against those who accompanied them. Do not believe the words of enemies. How can I do wrong against them without disclosing it to Your Noble Excellency? For I know that Your Excellency is a man of high respect, that your rank and position are elevated, and that your words are listened to by all the assemblies. How can I go against the words of Your Excellency, disturb my conscience and lose your friendship? Do not believe that. Rather, I abide by the former love which exists between us and you.

Your Excellency promised us, however, when you went home, to arrange for us [about] the money which was withheld because of us, the money belonging to the Coptic merchant called *al-Hajj Khayr*. Since he is a poor man who has dependents, we plead with you to arrange the money, withheld because of us, for him. Your Honour, we have already informed you of the matter orally when you were with us in Abyssinia. The assurance of your solemn words that you could settle this affair is the assurance of our trust in you.

You also sent us [a letter] about the guardianship of your household, and we are ready [to be] at your service. We are doing all that is necessary for them. We have given them 50 French francs

already out of the 100 francs. which you had ordered us to take from Consul Plowden (Blawdīn), which are the remainder of the 200 francs which you took from us in Abyssinia. When the Lord restores to us, if that is the will of God Almighty, our legally endowed land in Tigray, we will authorize your family to be paid from the land for whatever they need. Since the district of Adi Abun has now been seized by Agew Nigusē; and the one who pushed for its seizure was Father De Jacobis (*Abba Ya'qūb*). This should be known by you.

Do not deprive us of your letters at any time, so that we will be reassured about your health [and] well-being. We also plead [with you] to send us out of your favour a jar of dry araki for journeys; if dry wine could be found, that could also be sent. We will pay the expenses to your family according to how you instruct us in your letter. Keep well under the protection of the Lord of the two worlds.

In the year of 1275, 28 Jumādā al-Ākhira.

Selama, metropolitan of Abyssinia .

Seal: [1]256. Selama, the metropolitan of Abyssinia. 1859 (sic).

Dejjazmach Birru and Tesemma and his brothers are still in prison. Tedla Gwalu is now in revolt in Gojjam which he controls. He holds Jibella and Mutara. Agew Nigusē holds Tigray. The king is in Wello because of Amedē Beshīr who is in revolt there. And now Wello is ravaged and he has plundered it. If he returns to Tigray, there is no one who can fight with him, for there is no one among the rebels, nor any other Abyssinian, who can fight the king.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 125, Arabic original. The first few lines of the opening paragraph appear as follows in French on fol. 124: "a son Ex le Seig. Maitre, l'unique de son temps, la perle de son siècle, Mich. d'A. Bek que ses jours ne cessent d'être agreables pars(?) de tout trouble que ses ennemies soyent dans l'embarras et que Dieu le preserve des epreuves du siècle et de tout mal." The Arabic seal at the end of the document is illegible but known from other documents, for instance no. 26 in this volume. The letter is written in the same handwriting as that letter to Muḥammad Sa'id.

Selama, or his scribe, first wrote *Ras* Wibē, but corrected the title to *dejjazmach*. He was never a *ras*, though he may have been called so by some, nor was he (or Nigusē's father Welde Mika'ēl) a Tigrean. The word *shīqa* (or *shayka*), which appears three times at the end of the third paragraph in the above translation, is puzzling. It has not been possible even to establish with certainty whether it is Gi'iz or Arabic. The context indicates Gi'iz and some linguistic or theological discipline associated with the monastery of Bētlehem. At least it has something to do with books and scholarship. We have tentatively suggested the non-committal "scripture".

The second part of the sentence about the fate of Selama's fief Adi Abun and the involvement of De Jacobis could also possibly be understood, "and the one who [then] occupied it (or took it over) was Father De Jacobis."

Giusto da Urbino had lived at Bētlehem in Ethiopia but decided to leave in May 1855, although he was not personally threatened by Tēwodros or Selama (Crummey, pp. 98–99). The person referred to as "the envoy" in the fourth paragraph might well be the Capuchin missionary Leon des Avanchers, who approached both Tēwodros and Nigusē with the intention of promoting Italian interests in Ethiopia (see nos 42–43 below). For the business of Ḥājj Khayr mentioned in this letter, see ACTA I, nos 149–162, 161–163, 181.

In spite of Selama's plea that Michel d'Abbadie remain in contact, this was apparently the end of their correspondence. Selama was suspended by the king in 1864 and sent to Meqdela, where he died in October 1867 (Crummey, pp. 138, 141).

Draft treaty between Simēn–Tigray and Sardinia, 10 Feb. 1859

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

His Majesty Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia, Cyprus and Jerusalem, and *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, king in Ethiopia, desiring to be united by a treaty of friendship and commerce, have nominated as their plenipotentiaries, His Majesty Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia, Mr. NN; *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, king in Ethiopia, Mr. NN.

After having communicated their powers of attorney, which they have found to be in good order, they have loyally and in good faith agreed on the following conditions:

1. There shall be union and friendship between His Majesty Victor Emmanuel, king of Sardinia, and his successors, and *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, king in Ethiopia, and his successors.
2. Ministers of the Catholic religion, whether subjects of His Majesty the king of Sardinia or any other nation, shall enjoy full and complete liberty in the practice of their ministry in all the domains of King Nigusē; they shall be able to erect churches, schools and hospitals, whether for the subjects of His Majesty the king of Sardinia who reside in Ethiopia, or for the Ethiopian Catholics, and no one among them shall be persecuted because of his faith. The subjects of *Dejjazmach* Nigusē who reside in the domains of the king of Sardinia shall enjoy the same rights.
3. The commerce or trade in slaves, being contrary to the principles of the Christian religion, which is professed by the contracting governments, and the European nations having declared it an infamous business, King Nigusē and his successors consent to prevent with all their power in every way that anyone amongst their subjects shall engage in this commerce, and that no caravan of slaves shall cross their domains. It shall be legal for the consuls and other agents of the government of His Majesty the king of Sardinia, whether residing in Ethiopia or outside this country, to seize, confiscate and set at liberty all the slaves which have been sold or brought into slavery by the subjects of King Nigusē, or whoever crosses his domains.
4. All the rivers, ports, towns and territories subject to King Nigusē and his successors shall be open to the commerce of the subjects or the protégés of the government of His Majesty the king of Sardinia; they shall above all enjoy the most complete freedom, whether with regard to the profession of their religion or for commerce, and they shall be able to buy and possess in complete freedom land and houses. The subjects of King Nigusē shall enjoy the same rights in the domains of the king of Sardinia.
5. Merchandise, whether for import or export, under the Sardinian flag or belonging to Sardinian subjects shall pay a duty of . . . per cent on entering and leaving the domains of King Nigusē, which rate shall be stipulated later by the representatives of the two governments.
6. *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, king in Ethiopia, desiring to introduce civilization in the territories submitted to his government, shall find in those of His Majesty the king of Sardinia support and protection to the extent which the distance between the places and the events permit.
7. The government of His Majesty the king of Sardinia shall for the realization of the treaty have the right to have in the domains of *Dejjazmach* Nigusē and his successors, consuls or agents

who shall enjoy all the rights and privileges which they have in all civilized nations. King Nigusē and his successors shall have the same rights in the domains of the king of Sardinia.

8. The present treaty shall be valid for ten years, and notification shall be given one year before the end of its term.

The present treaty, signed . . . shall be exchanged within a period of . . .

I, the undersigned, deputy visitor of Monsignor Massaja, vicar apostolic of the Galla countries, having proceeded to the camp of *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, king in Ethiopia, have communicated the attached treaty to him. And I have received the reply from the mouth of the prince that he will be very happy to be able to conclude it.

Made in the camp of King Nigusē on 10 February 1859.

Leon des Avanchers, missionary apostolic, deputy visitor of the vicar apostolic of the Galla.

P.S. I have left one copy of this treaty in the Ethiopian language in the hands of King Nigusē.

ASMAI 36/1/1, fols. 18–21, French draft, allegedly accepted by Nigusē, but not signed by him. The document was printed in *AP.DD.*, XV, pp. 9–10, and noted in E. Hertslet, *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, reprint, London, 1967, vol. II, p. 446. It is quite obvious from the text that it is a draft only. Nevertheless it has, by Europeans, been regarded as a valid treaty because of the reported verbal consent of Nigusē. Hertslet, for instance, comments that it “was only to remain in force for 10 years”!

While the purpose of the initiative is quite clear—to secure open doors and protection for the Catholic mission and for Sardinian commerce—the diplomatic recognition given to Nigusē in exchange is ambiguous. He is consistently called “king in Ethiopia”, not *of* Ethiopia, while Victor Emmanuel is called “king of Sardinia”. This was most probably done to keep open the option to recognize Tēwodros as well—in a divided Ethiopia. The duplicity of the text and the fact that it was accepted as a valid treaty between “Sardinia and Ethiopia” for ten years provide a glorious example of the level of international morality in European diplomacy once a non-European part was involved. In relations between European governments the treaty would never have been defined as a treaty at all, and when Nigusē, “king *in*” but not “king *of*” Ethiopia, and in reality only a *dejjazmach*, was defeated and died less than two years after the visit of Leon des Avanchers, the pretense that a valid treaty existed became absurd.

The same draft with necessary changes of names, etc., was also proposed to Tēwodros. This shows that Leon des Avanchers as representative of Catholic and Italian interests—he was a Franciscan from Savoy—was not committed to one side in the internal struggle but quite prepared to try to gain influence wherever possible. See *AP.DD.*, XV, p. 12. Massaja reports that Father Leon had been well received on a mission to Tēwodros not later than January 1859 (Guglielmo Massaja, *I miei trentacinque anni di missione nell'alta Etiopia*, Rome, 1885–1895, IV, p. 173). See Carlo Giglio, *Etiopia—Mar Rosso*, Rome, 1958, I, pp. 54–57. Leon des Avanchers was most certainly an enterprising agent, actually reported to have smuggled gunpowder through Massawa for Plowden at Gonder two years earlier (AECF, Égypte, Massouah 2, fols 134–135).

Innete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò, 11 Feb. 1859

Per quanto alle immunità, e l'invio
una donna Cardinal Pastore, per
nella Congregazione della S. S.

Alfonsus quor Jacobus scribere a Roma
per la nostra venuta: ed io non che
De hac ho indico di viva voce, non
sappiedo, la lingua italiana, l'ho
Dati sa Antonio solito, orda, tra
Dottore in italiano lo conosco
E mi pare che la
per me, e cosa venuta, ed io non
sua, e sui apper cosa è sua cosa, ut
2 la sua giustizia è cosa di pregio: non
per i miei non per noi che la compo
ma che usano parola e propria gente
per il Re Negusse capo nostro. Ora
noi parliamo da parte del Re Negusse
Lettera sigillata col suggello in
sta lettera sono di quelle parole per
che esse sono di venerazione alla
De S. Pietro, e fanno fede dell'ubbidienza
a Colui che l'occupa ancora fa
per bene della fede cattolica fuori
In quale non ho verità né salvezza
L'ordine del Re Negusse, dopo aver
avuto la sua professione di fede
soggerione complessa ai piedi del
to Padre o Fedele, desidera che
Lettera, in via a grandi lettere per
Datate videtur si scrive sopra una
posta nella chiesetta di S. Pietro, l'onde

dia l'ultima mia della sua obbra dall'esi-
 ma di tutti gli altri. Con divenute fig. $\text{h} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z}$. $\text{P} \text{h} \text{W} \text{h} \text{t} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z} \text{z}$.
 luolo della vera chiesa il nostro re $\text{C} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 guscio che è buono, ho la fiducia che $\text{U} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 Sua Santità bellamente vorrà consigli $\text{P} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 di consiglio di aiuto e di protezione, $\text{C} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 i numeri, che non manchassero, $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 fatto cattolico: che vorrà fare per venire $\text{W} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 l'ambasciata al Re di Etiopia, $\text{C} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 per la ristorazione del regno abissino, $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 disprezzato, dalla Fede e dalla grandezza di $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 molto tempo per l'innalzamento della $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 fede cattolica, per l'aiuto de' Missionari, $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 onde possono predicar l'evangelio dovunque, $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 Per questo al Signor nostro Jacobo Vicario, $\text{P} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 del Sommo Pontefice in Etiopia, e il re, $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 che si vorrà un tempo pregano la Santa $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 del Papa, o volere dar lettere a $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 onde si degna riceverli. I
 E a questo re:
 Desidero, onde Sua Santità, voglia concedere $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 per un consiglio ed interprete Abuna Se- $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 puto, conosciuto da Monsignor Jacobo ed $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 reverendissimo, il quale, sapendo le lingue $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 abissina e francese, potrà bene dichiarare $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 ogni cosa davanti a Sua Santità e all'ambasciatore $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 di Sua Santità. Egli conosca tutte le ragioni $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 in che cosa per poter persuadere, e non dirà $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 di no ed alcuna ingratitudine, e non sia $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 alcuna grande potenza. Partendo io dall'Abissinia $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 mi disse Monsignore: se il Signor $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 e Venerando Cardinale Vicario di $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.
 pagare da alcuna Legazione, nella volontà di $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$. $\text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h} \text{h}$.

1. piedi

1. l'ho a me e a b...
 2. l'ho a me e a b...
 3. l'ho a me e a b...

4. l'ho a me e a b...
 5. l'ho a me e a b...
 6. l'ho a me e a b...

7. l'ho a me e a b...
 8. l'ho a me e a b...

9. l'ho a me e a b...
 10. l'ho a me e a b...

11. l'ho a me e a b...
 12. l'ho a me e a b...

13. l'ho a me e a b...
 14. l'ho a me e a b...

15. l'ho a me e a b...
 16. l'ho a me e a b...

17. l'ho a me e a b...
 18. l'ho a me e a b...

19. l'ho a me e a b...
 20. l'ho a me e a b...

21. l'ho a me e a b...
 22. l'ho a me e a b...

May it reach the eminent and honoured master Cardinal Barnabò, the head of the Congregation of the Faith.

Monsignor De Jacobis (*Monsiññor* Yaqobīs) has written to you about our coming to Rome. As I do not know [the] language, I have written in Amharic word for word what I have heard, and have given [it] to Father Sapeto (*Abune* Sapēto) to deliver it on my behalf, after translating it into the Italian language.

Though this message of ours, for which we have come, may seem insignificant, I being [but] a single stranger, in [terms of] its consequences (lit. fruit) it is of great value. It is not for us, the messengers, that we are doing [this]. We are insignificant and humble people. On the contrary, it is in order that [the plan] of King Nigusē may be successful. Now we have brought a letter from King Nigusē, sealed with his seal. In this letter there is a beautiful message. It clearly states that he venerates St. Peter and obeys the one who occupies his chair. In addition, he believes properly in the Catholic faith, [that] there is no true salvation without it. For this reason, after King Nigusē has declared his trust in and obedience to the Faith and bowed before the feet of the Holy Father of the faithful, he would like his letter to be engraved on a stone in bold characters and placed in the capital of St. Peter so that all might see it [and] so that it becomes a testimony to all heretics that he has abandoned his heresy.

Now, since King Nigusē, who is [a] fine [person], has become the son of the true Church, he has hopes that the head of the Church will advise, help and assist him properly. Since, in becoming a Catholic, he will not be without enemies, [it is important] that the message reaches Emperor Napoleon, so that he may help him in restoring the kingdom of Abyssinia—for it is a long time since it deteriorated in regard to religion [and] order—in establishing the Catholic faith [and] assisting missionaries to preach the faith in all areas. For this reason, our master De Jacobis, the representative of the Pope in Ethiopia, and King Nigusē beg through us, prostrating themselves (lit. falling under your feet), that the Pope in his kindness would give us a letter to Napoleon in order to make him receive us [in a] friendly [manner].

Moreover, we ask you to give us Father Sapeto to be our adviser and interpreter, because he is a man well known to Monsignor De Jacobis and Nigusē, and, because he knows French and Amharic, he can explain the whole matter properly. And when we are received by (lit. enter to) the Pope, let him come (lit. enter) with us. And even in front of Napoleon, he will know how to explain the issue, and for this reason [Napoleon] will not say no to Father Sapeto, and [so] he will help us according to his great ability. For when I, Imnetu, left Ethiopia, our father said to me, “If the eminent and honoured Cardinal Barnabò would give you Father Sapeto and send you off [to Paris], the planting of Catholicism in Ethiopia is the will of God.”

Father Sapeto wants to rectify the affairs of Abyssinia. He knows Gi’iz, the language of the country. He knows the whole situation of Abyssinia and our sufferings. He is also a person well known to Napoleon. He is the one who arranged for (lit. made) the ship to sail to Massawa.

Lapéreuse (Laprus), the Frenchman, who is with me, does not know any language other than French. Because he had no money to go back to his country, the bishop felt compassion for him and sent him with us. He is the one who wrote the letter sent (lit. that came) to Napoleon. He is not a man for this kind of business. And there is another important Catholic issue [requiring] Father Sapeto’s going. Nigusē has written to Napoleon, saying, “Send a consul who will stay in my kingdom and protect your people.” The man whom we want to go should be a man who loves God, his faith and his king, [a man] of wisdom, married in the Church. For this reason Father Sapeto will be needed. For us to go to Paris without him will be in vain.

Moreover, we have no money for our journey and for suitable clothes in which to appear in front of a pope and a king. Therefore we rely on the generosity of the Congregation of the Faith for the money for our journey and for proper clothes when we are received by the king, and to live on as we

ought to for the duration of our stay in Paris until we return. For you know that the season there now is cold. In addition to myself and Ṭaqayē, there is [also] a Catholic servant. He has no clothing to protect himself from the cold and to make him [look] worthy of escorting us. Lapéreuse, too, is in the same condition (lit. just like him). Now, we all want our mission to be successfully completed, based on the arrangements that you will make. If this is not done, it will [not] be to the honour of Catholicism in Abyssinia. However, if this is done and Father Sapeto goes with us, it will be successful.

Now passing on to another matter, I shall explain to Your Eminence what I have in mind (lit. what is in my heart). It would be fine, if you planned from now on—while Monsignor De Jacobis is still alive—about the man who is to become bishop after him. It would be good if they could spend this time living (lit. sitting) together, instead of (lit. without) his wanting to be alone, so that he would get used to virtuous deeds, to the situation [and] the customs.

Moreover, if you have ten boys whose age is not more than twelve years brought over to you from Abyssinia in order to study in the house of the Congregation, the Catholic religion will be planted in Abyssinia. If it is your wish, we shall send [them] immediately. They will be good missionaries, since they [will] have grown up under the supervision of Your Eminence and in accordance with the customs of Catholic priests. If the Congregation of the Faith writes to the Society for the Faith at Lyons, it will provide the expenses for their travel; it will not be much. French ships will transport the boys for nothing. If the Propaganda requests this from them, they will do it at once.

I have something to add about church ordinances, about the liturgy. According to the rules in Ethiopia, the book ordains that one priest and one deacon should administer the mass to all the people. But oral tradition has it that the liturgy should be administered by five [or] seven administrators. Since the ceremonies and the prescriptions are many, three or four hours are needed for them to complete this ceremony. Therefore it becomes very difficult for the people and the children to follow the liturgy. Monsignor De Jacobis told us that he could not allow one priest and one assistant to administer the mass or abridge the long liturgy except by the order of the Congregation of the Faith.

It is also painful to administer the rite of Baptism (*Yeṭimqet Meṣihaf*), because, according to the Ethiopian order, the ceremony is long, and many priests are needed to perform it. For this reason, since there is much that is not mandatory [and it is too much] for one priest, we would like it to be abridged. Be it one child or many, [the rule] is that all [the priests] must perform it together.

Thirdly, the rite of the Anointing of the Sick (*Meṣihafe Qendil*) contains a lot of difficulties. The book orders that seven priests should anoint the sick person. It rules that they should also anoint all the healthy persons in the house. Now too, [we request] that one priest only administer the unction to the sick person. Since the rite is too long, we request from Your Eminence that it be abridged, as our bishop has told us that he has no power to abridge rites.

The rite of Matrimony (*Meṣihafe Teklil*) is similar [and] has created difficulties for priests in the same manner. Before they complete all the rules, people get exhausted. When they find that the ceremonies of the priests take a long time, many people get bored, will not listen attentively to the liturgy, and will not have much love for spiritual matters. For this reason I have brought sections of the church ordinances [with me], in order that you, honoured and eminent master, might scrutinize them and arrange them according to how they should be.

I have brought the liturgy too, in order to have it printed. It is in two parts: one complete for the major mass, and another shorter for the minor one. However, they should be in two volumes in order to make them easy to carry. I have given Master Sapeto the *Moralē*, the story of the heretics, in order that it may be [used for] instruction to the Abyssinian Catholic priests. The author is Bishop De Jacobis. I have also given a grammar of the Gi'iz language, the rules of which are [prepared] by the martyr Gebre Mika'ēl, to Master Sapeto to be printed. [Let him] correct [it] as he thinks best, if there

are [any] mistakes, because he knows the language, and [let him] edit the Gi'iz, since it will be for instruction. All the missionaries in Abyssinia and even the bishop will be grateful to him.

Later on, they will send the Theology (*Tēwologīya*) and the Theology of the Nature (*Teyayawī Tēwologīya*). With regard to the books, Monsignor De Jacobis has ordered me to place them before you (lit. put them under your feet), our eminent and honoured master Cardinal Barnabò, Head of the Congregation, so that you will scrutinize and correct them, or, if found bad, throw them away. On my part, I have nothing more to say.

I have begged Father Sapeto, on my behalf, to explain to you properly about my person [and] my standing. He will tell you everything that I have in mind. He will also tell you the reason for my request. What I have told him about the [future] benefits will show you the importance of our mission. After having reached Paris, I shall return to Rome with Father Sapeto. Then I shall immediately go to Abyssinia. I am waiting for an answer from you; I hope to return from Paris to Rome. From there I shall take your answer and that of the Congregation, together with your blessing, to Bishop De Jacobis. And now, kneeling, I kiss the hem of the blessed robe of the cardinal. With respect and humility, I am the servant of Your Eminence.

Rome, Yekkatit 11, 1859.

Imnete Maryam, Ethiopian priest, from the land of Abba Gerīma.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol 6, fols 240–243, Amharic and Italian original. The fact that the Italian text is very crammed at the end of some lines indicates that the Amharic text was most probably written first, as *Abba Imnetu* himself states. Nevertheless it is almost certain that Father Sapeto, who made and signed the translation, was also involved in formulating the original text. The fact that Bishop De Jacobis is called “Monsignor Yaqobis” in the Amharic text, rather than “*Abune Ya'iqob*”, is only one of the indications that a foreigner was dictating to Imnetu. After having written “Yaqobis” five times, it is only at the end of the letter that the writer uses “*Abune Ya'iqob*” twice.

The letter with the “beautiful message” referred to in the beginning of this document is the letter to Pope Pius IX of 19 October 1858 (no. 36). The letter to Napoleon written by Lapérouse is no. 37 above. The form *meharinnet* in the second paragraph of folio 241r is odd. We have understood it as *mihret*, though it might possibly have been intended as *merinnet*.

Abba Imnete Maryam Gibretu from Abba Gerīma (mostly called Imnetu) had been ordained by Massaja as early as 1847. He was one of the leaders of the opposition against Bishop Biancheri after the death of De Jacobis (nos 65, 71, 75, 84, 141 and 143; also O'Mahoney, I, pp. 59–60, 230; II, p. 4). He was certainly one of the more independent and politically minded of the Catholic priests. Starting from the mission described in this letter, he was deeply involved in the maneuvers to detach Tigray from the rest of Ethiopia and place it under French protection (nos 37, 48–49, 53–54). In later letters to Antoine d'Abbadie (nos 150, 222) he indicated that he remained willing to serve the interests of the French government. In the end he joined Giovanni Stella, the defrocked Lazarist missionary and self-styled governor, in his activities in Bogos; he became implicated in an attempt in September 1869 to assassinate the French consular agent Werner Munzinger, and died soon after at Massawa under suspicious circumstances (O'Mahoney, II, pp. 103–105).

Giuseppe Sapeto was the first nineteenth-century Catholic missionary to arrive in Ethiopia. He came with the d'Abbadie brothers in 1838. Though he returned to Italy after a few years, he continued to involve himself in Ethiopian affairs, and from an increasingly political angle (*ibid.*, I, pp. 17, 187–189, 193–195; ACTA I, nos. 30, 32, 185). In a comment to the above letter (fols 243–244) he calls it the happiest news from Ethiopia since Susinyos's acceptance of the Catholic faith in 1623.

Catholic clergy to Nigusē Welde Mika'el [April 1859]

The respect, friendship, and affection which bind and unite us to you, oblige us to inform your Highness that almost all the people of Adowa are against you, and devoted to Kasai Corvata, called the Emperor Theodore. This title is a blasphemy against you, and the proof that the population of Adowa is inimical to you is the bad reception we received from them and the priests of the town. We went there to pray the Almighty for you, and for the prosperity and success of your army; but the priests, who are the most brutal wretches that ever existed, excommunicated us and all who should serve, entertain, or show any hospitality to us.

The cause of this proceeding is the English Consul, Mr. Plowden, who must be your enemy, because he lives with the Emperor Theodore. He has also a house at Adowa, where are his servants and Political Agents. Every one aids him in his views, and hastes to execute his political messages, which are in opposition to your interests. You have understood our complaints and now we look to you for justice.

IOL, Aden archives 286, English translation or paraphrase of a letter quoted by Consul Plowden's agent at Massawa, Raffaele Baroni, in a letter to Coghlan at Aden on 24 April 1859; here reproduced as printed in FO 401/1, p. 324, with the exception of the word "complaints", which was changed (no doubt erroneously) to "compliments" somewhere along the way. The version in FO 401 is easier to understand than Baroni's text, without differing substantially from it. Coghlan comments, and rightly so, that Baroni's English was "somewhat obscure".

Whether Baroni or one of his agents managed to intercept the letter or only heard that a letter with this content had been written is impossible to know. The content fits in well with what other documents reveal about the activities of "a company Catholic-politick-religious", as Baroni calls the supporters of Nigusē. Nevertheless the information must be treated with circumspection.

Innete Maryam Gibretu to Napoleon III, 22 April 1859

The sentiments of Nigusē, the king of Ethiopia, towards H. M. Napoleon III, [presented] through the priest *Abba Innete Maryam*, Abyssinian missionary.

My messengers will communicate to you these words, O king of kings, namely that Nigusē desires the following from you: firstly, O great king, that you assist and strengthen me before the others destroy the country; if you send troops there, we shall at once surrender the country to you, and whatever you want to do in Abyssinia we shall permit, and whatever else you desire, we are prepared [to grant]. And if you take the port of this country, we shall be greatly pleased [and] always obedient to your orders, now that the government will be from the line of Nigusē, the Catholic; and if someone (lit. one of the people) is not a Catholic, I shall not make him a governor.

The proceedings, that is to say the rule, of the king is like that of France, which sets everyone at liberty, and we hope that you will also occupy another, neighbouring country, to which many come from India and desire to possess Shewa; the king of Shewa is allied with Nigusē. And since the government of France is the best, we desire that it acquires some other place near the sea. These are our wishes. And one bishop only sent by the Pope is [what is] desired, and we hope that no heretic Coptic bishop will come any more, so that there will be freedom for the Catholics.

The people love the present government because Your Majesty is excellent and Catholic, and we hope that in your time all the Catholics come to this country of ours with sound doctrine and discipline. Our people have with your help seen almost a new world because you have shown them a healthy way. O Majesty, if you send a person there on your behalf, all that is said above will endure between us; it means that Nigusē and Monsignor De Jacobis agree.

Send a consul because the Turks have entered territory which is close to us (this is what King Nigusē said). The other subject governors want to undermine the way for King Nigusē because he is a Catholic, and they want to turn the country upside down. Therefore supply him and assist him. These are the words of Nigusē.

These are the many messages to you from the king of Abyssinia: the name of France is great; it is the best government, so I have been told. And after all this, whether this is liked in France or not, do come because all Africa will certainly be under the government of France.

22 April 1859.

Your humble and obedient servant,
Abba Innete Maryam of Abba Gerīma,
Abyssinian missionary.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 336, Italian original. This document was produced by Innete Maryam on behalf of Nigusē Welde Mika'el. Whether the message was forwarded in written form is uncertain. It has been impossible to trace any copy in the French archives. The document is probably only the draft of a speech read by Innete Maryam in front of Napoleon III. It was not uncommon to entrust oral messages to emissaries. An earlier case in this volume is document no. 28. By delivering part of the message in the direct speech of his master and then referring to him in the third person, the emissary produced a rather confused text. In what was probably a covering letter to Rome, dated 23 April (fol. 337), Sapeto confirms that an audience with Napoleon took place on 22 April.

Nigusē had written to Napoleon III as early as June 1856 (no. 14). While there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of that letter, both the above and the letter sent from Rome to Paris in advance of the mission (no. 37) were the products of Father Lapérouse and/or Father Sapeto rather than of Nigusē, or even of Innete Maryam.

Zekkariyas to Antoine d'Abbadie, 21 June 1859

ዛ ት፡ መልእክት፡ ህብረ ነገሥት፡
 አምላክ፡ ሰባርዳስ ካሰን ህብረ፡ አብራሃም
 ት፡ ሰባርዳስ፡ ኃይል፡ ስጦታ ስ፡ አሰዷ፡ ጥራህ፡
 አንድ፡ ት፡ አሉ፡ አጅግ፡ አንድ፡ አሉ
 አጅግ፡ ደስ፡ አሉ፡ የኦርቶዶክስ፡ ወረቀት፡ ሰገኝ
 ሁ፡ ጊዜ፡ አኔ፡ በዚህ ጊዜ፡ ሰገኝ፡ ነበርሁ፡ የኦር
 ቶዶክስ፡ ወረቀት፡ ደረግ፡ አርባ፡ አንድ፡ አሉ፡ ስላሁ
 ሰገኝ፡ ነበርሁ፡ አሁን፡ አወሰሁ፡ ሰገኝ፡ አርባ
 ወደ፡ አ፡ የጽዮሁ ልብ፡ ት፡ ስጦታ፡ በሰጠኝ
 ጊዜ፡ ስላጽዋ፡ በደረሰ፡ ት፡ ጽዮሁ ፍል፡ አኔ
 ስላጽ፡ ሰገኝ፡ ነበርሁ፡ ሰገኝ፡ አሉ፡ ወሰን
 ገም፡ አርባ፡ አሉ፡ ስጦታ፡ መኖሩ፡ ነበር
 ሰገኝ፡ ሰገኝ፡ ነበር፡ አሉ፡ ደረግ፡ ወሰን
 መልእክት፡ አሉ፡ ነገሥት፡ ሰገኝ፡ አሉ
 ሰገኝ፡ አሉ፡ ነገሥት፡ አሉ፡ ሰገኝ፡ አሉ
 አሁን፡ የሆነ፡ አንድ፡ ት፡ ስላሁ፡ አን
 ደገ፡ ሰገኝ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ ሰገኝ፡ አሉ
 ሰገኝ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ
 አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ፡ አሉ

May this letter from Zekkariyas the priest, of the town of Aksum, reach Antoine d'Abbadie (Intōniyos Abe-dī), Paris.

How are you? How are you, really? I was very happy when I received your letter. I had heard news about you before, but that it was you, I did not know; now I am certain.

When you came back to Ethiopia the second time, and arrived at Adwa, we saw each other, since I used to live there.

Your brother Michel (Mīka'ēl) came to receive you [there], and we talked with each other. He is a good soldier and a fine horseman. When he was at Gonder, we used to know each other.

And now, I would like it very much, if you would write to me again at once. If you want to write in the French language, it is fine. I cannot speak [it], but I can translate quite well, because I have studied [the language].

I believe [the time of] my departure has not come. As it does not depend on my will, I do not know, and I cannot tell you definitely. When I know, however, I shall not fail to tell you.

fol. 260r

(At) Rome 15 Senē 1851.

ገጅ = ጸሐፊ = አጽናጊ = እተረገጠሃም = ስለሁ = ትምህርት

አለሁና።

ሆኖ = መሰረድ = ገንገና = ገደብ = ለመሰረድል = ስኬት

የቃድ = ስጽህናት = ስለሁሉም = ስለሁሉም = ስለሁሉም = ጸናጠ

ን = ልገገርዎ = ማህጽ = ጸጊ ገንገ = ባወቅሁ = ጊዜ

ሰጠህህርዎ = ስለተርዎ።

በጽሑፍ = በገጽ = ለወርቅ = ሰጠ

ገጽ = የገጽ = ገጽ = ገጽ

fol. 260v

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 260, Gi'iz/Amharic original. The content of this letter reveals that it is the first of three preserved letters to Antoine d'Abbadie (see also nos 51 and 56) from a Catholic priest named Zekkariyas. He introduces himself as a priest from Aksum, mentions the only contact they had had before he received what seems to have been an unexpected letter from Antoine, and informs the Frenchman that he knows the French language well enough to understand any future letter written in that language.

Though the author of this letter also defines himself as Zekkariyas from Aksum, he is a different person from the author of no. 18, whom we have identified as Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el, also known as "the Elder". When this letter was written from Rome, the latter was at Aksum and Adwa (no. 69). Therefore the author of the above is Zekkariyas "the Younger" from Zengwe(?) or Adi Selam, who was ordained by De Jacobis in the early 1850s. His second name does not appear in the lists of Catholic priests (O'Mahoney, I, p. 231; III, p. 202).

His appearance in Rome at this time and his uncertainty about his impending departure may indicate some connection with the diplomatic mission to Rome and Paris, headed by Imnete Maryam and *Lij* Ṭaqayē (nos 36, 37, 46). In Paris in April they had presumably met Antoine d'Abbadie and may have informed him of Zekkariyas's presence in Rome.

Some letters in the margin, concealed by the binding of the volume, have been added to the right of a line above.

Nigusē Welde Mīka'el: power of attorney for Imnete Maryam, 30 Sept. 1859

ኧኔ፡ ገንጉሠ፡ የኢትዮጵያ፡ ገንጉሠ ።



አባ፡ እምነቱ፡ የታመኑ፡ መካሪዮና፡ የኔ፡ መልክነት
ተኛ፡ በዚህች፡ ዓመት፡ ከኔ፡ ወደ፡ ሮምና፡ ወደ፡ ፓሪስ
ስ፡ ለፕዮስ፡ ዳድቅነትና፡ ለናጵልዮን፡ ሶስተኛ፡ ገንጉሠ
ገንጉሠ፡ ገንጉሠች፡ ልዑልነት፡ ተለኩ፡ ለርሳቸው፡ ለ
አባ፡ እምነቱ፡ መሆኑ፡ ለሰጠን፡ ለጥቸአለኩ፡ የ
ውልና፡ የሥራች፡ ወረቀት፡ ነገርም፡ ለያበዙና፡ ለ
ያሳንሱ፡ እንደ፡ ፈቃዳቸው፡ አቅንተው፡ በኔ፡ በገንጉሠ
ሠ፡ ማሳተፍ፡ አቸመው፡ ለልዑል፡ ናጵልዮን፡ መልክነት
ተኛ፡ እንዲሰጡ። ከመልክነትኛ፡ ጋራም፡ ተማክረው፡ የውልና፡ የሥራች፡ ወረቀት፡ እንዲያቀኑ፡ እንዲወሰኑ፡ የኔ፡ የገንጉሠ፡ ማሳተፍም፡ በአባ፡ እምነቱ፡ እጅ፡ አኩራ፡ አለኩ። ይህ፡ ሥራችና፡ ውል፡ የሚገባ፡ የጠና፡ እንዲሆን፡ ለዘለዓለም።

ይህች፡ ወረቀት፡ በሀውዚን፡ ተጻፈች፡ በመስከረም፡ ሠቅት፡ ከጌታችን፡ ልደት፡ ሽህ፡ ፳፻፶፬ በኋላ።



አባ፡ እምነት፡ ማርያም፡ ዘአባ፡ ገራማ፡ ነኝ።

Maryam

O. Imneté 19 / 11

I, Nigusē, king of Ethiopia.

Abba Imnetu, my trusted adviser and envoy, has been sent by me to Rome and Paris this year, to His Holiness Pius (Piyus) and His Majesty (lit. Highness), King of Kings Napoleon (Napoliyon) III.

I have given him, *Abba Imnetu*, full powers to formalize (lit. put straight) treaty and procedural documents; to add to or deduct from the matters [involved] as he pleases; and after sealing them with my royal seal to hand them over to the envoy of His Majesty Napoleon. I have placed my royal seal in the hands of *Abba Imnetu* so that he shall, after consulting with the envoy, formalize and conclude treaty and procedural documents in order that this protocol and treaty be valid and firm for ever.

This document is written at Hawzēn on Meskerem 30, 1851 years after the birth of Our Lord.

Seal [Nigusē king of] Ethiopia . . .

I am *Abba Imnete Maryam* of *Abba Gerīma*.

Seen: S. Russel

AOM.OI 19/104, no. 1, Amharic original and French translation. Copies of the French translations of this document and of nos 53 and 54 are also found in AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 410–413. Both versions are dated Hawzēn, the Amharic “Meskerem 30, 1851” and the French “30 septembre 1851 (1859)”, followed by the information in a different handwriting that “this date corresponds to 8 October in the Gregorian calendar”. Meskerem 1851, however, corresponds to September 1858, and the 30th of that month to 9 October. If we assume that the date on the Amharic original is correct, the document was prepared for Imnete Maryam before he left on the mission to Rome and Paris together with Nigusē’s relative Ṭaqayē, and the addition “1859” is an error. Since neither seal nor power of attorney are mentioned in connection with the letter written to Napoleon III in 1858 (no. 37), it is far more likely that the power of attorney was in fact produced the following year; it is hard to believe, moreover, that anyone who knew French would add “1859” unless that was the correct year. We must therefore conclude that the actual date of the document is 30 September 1859, and that the person who drafted it was thinking in terms of the Gregorian calendar and forgot that the difference is only seven years from the Ethiopian New Year in September until the beginning of the European year in January. This conclusion is supported by the fact that Imnete Maryam arrived at Massawa on 5 September on his way home from Europe (IOL, Aden archives 286, Baroni to Coghlan, 24 Sept. 1859). He would thus have had ample time to reach Nigusē’s camp and prepare himself for further negotiating with the French by obtaining this power of attorney.

Stanislas Russel, whose signature appears on the document, was sent to follow up the negotiations and explore the possibilities for French territorial acquisitions on the African coast of the Red Sea. His *Une mission en Abyssinie et dans la Mer Rouge 23 octobre 1859—7 mai 1860* contains a number of documents from the French side, including correspondence with his government, but none from the Ethiopian side. He arrived at Massawa on 11 December 1859 and was met not only by the French vice-consul, Théodore Gilbert, but by Bishop De Jacobis and *Abba Imnete Maryam* as well. Russel’s signature was obviously added on Imnete Maryam’s power of attorney after that date, most probably in connection with the signing of the two agreements (nos 53 and 54) on board the *Yemen* and at Halay around New Year 1860.

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to Napoleon III, 1 Nov. 1859

ተክሎት፡ በሐውዜን፡ አመፅ ለጎዳር፡ አመልደት
 አገዛዝ፡ በገደብ ሆኖ ሳይሆን፡ በሐሰት፡ ሮማ።
 ወበኢትዮጵያ፡ በገደብ ሆኖ ሳይሆን፡ አመፅ ወፀ
 ለጥቅምት።

333

ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ሆይ።



ካገራህ ራት፡ ከከቀድሚያ፡ በጣቃዬ፡ የክስቴል
 ጅ፡ ክርሱም፡ ከረረንሳዊ፡ አገር፡ ሲመለስ፡ መ
 ርክብ፡ በመሰበር፡ በባሕር፡ መሞቱ፡ ልቤን፡ የሚ
 ያሳዝነኝ፡ በደረገ ስት፡ መልካም፡ ሥራት፡ አ
 መሰጠት፡ አለኝ።
 የአንገሊዝኝ፡ ተገብሎ፡ ከውቃለኝ። ቁንከገ
 ቶውን፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ በሱኝ፡ ወደሚል፡ ቋረኛ፡ ከሰ
 መስደዳቸውን፡ ከውቃለኝ። ክፋታቸው፡ ሳይ
 በዘ፡ በሚገኝ፡ ጊዜ፡ ልቤን፡ ወደርሰም፡ የረረንሳዊ
 ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ አድርጌ፡ አለኝ። አድርጌም፡ ከ
 ርሰም፡ የኢጣልያን፡ ዓርጎት፡ ጠባቂ፡ በታላቅ፡ ሮኃ
 ይልም፡ ያገራን፡ ዓርጎት፡ አንደጠብቁልኝ፡ የሥራት
 ብርሃንም፡ ወዳገረ፡ አንደያደርሱልኝ፡ ከዘራራ
 ቴዎድሮስ፡ አጅ፡ አንደጠብቁልኝ፡ አለመነም፡ አለ
 ኝ። ይህንንም፡ አንደረገም፡ ሆለት፡ ነገር፡ ያስረ
 ልግል። አንድ፡ በራት፡ አንደሳክሁበም፡ ሥራትን፡ ሆ
 ሱ፡ የሚያይ፡ የርሰም፡ መስላ፡ ሲሰድልኝ፡ በገራ፡ አን
 ደ፡ ራሴ፡ አጠብቃለኝ። የረረንሳዊ፡ ባህንደራንም፡
 አስተክሳለኝ። ሆለት፡ አን፡ የመመኘው፡ አር
 ሱ፡ ነው፡ ሆለት፡ በተርያ፡ የመድፍ፡ ከነተኪሽ፡ ጋራ፡
 ነው። ስለሚደደር፡ ጉልኝ፡ ነገር፡ ደስ፡ አሰኘም፡ አለኝ
 ብዬ፡ ተከፋ፡ አለኝ። ስላደረጉልኝ፡ የሰዊስን፡ መገ

Written at Hawzēn on 1 Hidar 1859 after the birth of Our Lord, according to the Roman calendar, and on 24 Ṭiqimt 1851, according to the Ethiopian calendar.

O King of Kings!
 Before [mentioning] the affairs of my country, I thank you for the fine ceremony you held for Ṭaqayē, my cousin, whose death by shipwreck at sea, while returning from France, makes me sad at heart.

I know the intrigues of the English; I know that they have sent their consul to Qwareñña Kasa, who says, "Call me Tēwodros." Before their evil deeds increase, in this difficult time, I have put my trust in you, king of kings of the French.

And in doing this, I beg you, the protector of Italy's independence, to protect the independence of my country with your great power, to introduce the light of civilization into my country, and to protect it from the hands of the plunderer Tēwodros.

To achieve this, two things are necessary. As I wrote to you before, one of these is that—if you send me your representative, who shall observe all the procedures in my country—I will protect him like myself and I will also raise the French flag. The second is that I desire two batteries of mortars with crews. I have hopes to please you in return for what you are doing for me. For what you have

ገድግላርዎ፡፡በመገጠሙ፡፡ሳገራ፡፡ከሰሜንደር፡፡ጉልኛ
 ገ፡፡ራስ፡፡ደማራ፡፡የሚባል፡፡ዙላገ፡፡ከበርክቶ፡፡አለፉ፡፡”
 ንጉሠ፡፡ነገሥት፡፡ሆይ፡፡የገርሁዎ፡፡ዋሲ
 ን፡፡ሐሰብ፡፡ቶሎ፡፡ከገደ፡፡ፈጽሙ፡፡ልኛ፡፡ተከተ፡፡ከሰኛ፡፡።
 ተወክቶ፡፡ከመኃተ፡፡ትሐታተ፡፡ክመ
 ከጉክ፡፡ትሐታ፡፡ንጉሤ፡፡።

done for me and for what you are doing for my country by joining the seas through the Suez Canal, I present you with Zula which is called Ras Dumara.

O King of Kings! I have hopes that you will fulfil my heart's desire (lit. thought) without delay.

Accept humble greetings from your humble brother Nigusē.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .



fol. 333v

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 2, fol. 333, Amharic original; fols 331–32, French draft. The dating of this letter is exceptionally confused. The date in the Gregorian calendar, 1 Hidar (*i. e.* November) 1859 is equated with 24 Ṭiqimt 1851 in the Ethiopian calendar (= 2 November 1858) instead of the correct 22 Ṭiqimt 1852. The only possible explanation is that the letter was actually dated in the Gregorian calendar, and that the Ethiopian date was added, somewhat carelessly, to create the impression that the letter was more genuinely Ethiopian than it was. More important, the French version is dated 20 October 1859, which is equated with 9 Ṭiqimt. Thus it is in fact a draft, not a translation in spite of Consul Gilbert's signature under a "Pour traduction conforme à l'original".

The differences between the French and the Amharic versions are also considerable. Where the French calls Tēwodros a "créature pécuniairement achetée par les Anglais", for instance, the Amharic defines him as "Qwareñña Kasa". A reference to "our holy church" in the French, implying that Nigusē had been converted to the Catholic faith, is missing in the Amharic. Since Zula and Ras Dumara are not the same place, the phrase *Ras Dumara yemibal Zula* (Zula which is called Ras Dumara) must be a misunderstanding by Imnetu of the French "the island of Zula or Ras Dumara".

In all probability there was prior agreement between the French consul, the bishop, and the priest on how the letter should be worded, and the changes were made when Imnetu and Nigusē drew up the Amharic text. Though Imnete Maryam had been entrusted with Nigusē's seal and given a formal power of attorney (no. 48 above), and therefore could have written this letter as well as the following to Gilbert and to Ferdinand de Lesseps (nos 50 and 52) without consulting the prince, it is difficult to explain why he should have made the changes in the text, unless he was involved in some discussion with the prince or his advisers. It should be noted, too, that while the handwriting is quite clearly the same as in the power of attorney and in the agreements entered into with Russel two months later (nos 53–54), the closing phrase "I am *Abba* Imnete Maryam of *Abba Gerima*" does not appear on this or in the other two letters.

The letter was forwarded by Gilbert with a covering letter on 18 November (AECP, Égypte, Massouah 2, fols 325–330). There the consul states that the "cousin du Roi" (a reference to Imnete Maryam) "se trouve ici logé chez moi". In spite of this he did not bother to make the changes, either because he did not know about them or because he thought his own version was better.

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to Théodore Gilbert, 2 Nov. 1859

ተጽሕፈት በሐውዚ፡፡

እመሩወሮስወርቃ፡ጥቅምት፡እመላደተ፡እግ
ዚክነ፡በ፲ወ፲፱፻ወ፩ዓመት፡በሐሳብ፡ኢትዮ-
ጵያ፡ወበሐሳብ፡ሮማ፡በ፲ወ፲፱፻ወ፱ዓመት፡
እመ፡ይከተዳር፡፡

የሰማይ፡የመድር፡ያህል፡እጅጉ፡እንደት፡አለህ፡፡
ከቃልህ፡መልካም፡ወራ፡እንድትሰማ፡ተከፋ፡አስ-
ኝኖ፡በመጽዋ፡መገባትህ፡እጅግ፡ዳስ፡አለኝ፡፡
ወደ፡ገገሠ፡ገሥት፡ናጽልዮ፡፡
የሰጠሁ፡ዋቸው፡የጌሰዎች፡ሲመለሱ፡በጊገንዘ-
ጥ፡፡፳ተገዛ፡በሁለት፡ሣህን፡ያስ፡ገጽ፡የማይ-
ገኝሰቸው፡ቢሆን፡በቁገስል፡ፊት፡ሰዊስ፡ቅር-
ትዋልና፡ስለጌ፡ቅር፡ብለህ፡በጥበብህ፡፡
ሎትህ፡ሲመጣ፡እንድትደርግልኝ፡እጅግ፡ጠብቃ፡፡

Written at Hawzēn on the 25th of the month of Ṭiqimt in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1851, in the Ethiopian calendar, and in the Roman calendar in 1859 on the 2nd of Hidar.

How are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth? Since I hope to hear good news from you, I am very happy about your arrival at Massawa. When my people, whom I sent to King of Kings Napoleon (Napoliyon), were coming back, it became impossible for them [to pass through] two boxes of guns bought with my own money. Since they have been left at Suez in the presence of the consul, I want you, because of your love for me, to arrange through your ingenuity and ability that they reach me.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .



BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 86, Amharic original. The dating of this letter is also confused. It was apparently written the day after the preceding letter to Napoleon. Though the scribe (*Abba Imnete Maryam*) has in this case written the date—25 Ṭiqimt 1851—in the Ethiopian calendar first, the letter is in fact dated in the Gregorian calendar. The year 1859 is correct, but 1851 Ethiopian calendar (=1858/59) is wrong for the month of November. We have simply read Hidar as November without changing the date. 25 Ṭiqimt 1851 would be 3 November in 1858—4 November in 1859. See the notes of nos 48 and 49.

Because of the confusion of the tenses in the final paragraph, a “*biye*” might be conjectured, which would give the translation “When my people, whom I sent to King of Kings Napoleon, were coming back, [they thought, what] if it becomes impossible [to pass through the] two boxes of guns which I bought with my own money, and so they left them at Suez in the presence of the consul.”

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to Ferdinand de Lesseps, 23 Dec. 1859

ተጽሕፈት ዘቲ፡ መልክት ፡ ስመ፤ ወ
በከታ ገሣሥ ፡ ጸመል ጸተ ፡ እግዚእ ነ፡ ዘ፤ ወፎ
ፆፃ ወፎፃ መታ ፡ ብሔሰ ፡ ጌት ዮጵያ ፡፡

እኔ ፡ ንጉሤ ፡

እባ፡ ንክክ፡ የሊት ዮጵያ ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ይ፡
ጌት ጉጉ፡ በኢየሱስ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ እግ፡
ከመጽግ ፡ ከስኮ፡ ጉንግር ፡ የገዛኛ፡
ይህም ፡ የትግረ ፡ መግሥት ፡ ፍ፡
ሚገ፡ ወገራ፡ ወልታይት ፡ መገደ፡ ጸመ
ብያ፡ ወለዕ፡ ኪግ፡ ዝ፡ ሣህባ፡ ከገው፡ ሳ
ስታ፡ ስለጥ፡ በዘመናት ፡ ህይወት ጸገ
ትገ፡ ሥራት ፡ ለህይወት ፡ ህብርሃን
ወገ፡ ለፈርገደናን ጸ፡ ዘሴህጥስ፡
ሶለም ፡ እግሰኑ ፡፡

ለሰው ፡ ጥሎ ፡ እጅግ ፡ ጸዕታ ፡ የሚሆን
ን፡ ስሚሠሩት ፡ ሥራት ፡ ከመገርመ
ያ፡ ጌዜ ፡ ክስካህ ፡ ገ፡ ሆሎ ፡ ተከት ያሰኑ
ዛራም ፡ ተርግ፡ ከሆነ ፡ በመወጸው ፡ ልገ
ራና፡ በኒ፡ ስም ፡ ስመሰግን ፡ ስለተፈ፡ የ
ሰሊስገ፡ መረት ፡ በሣስኑ ፡ ፈረም ፡ ልገ
ራችን ፡ ካበለተ ፡ ገገር ፡ ኬውሮጥ ፡ ገራ
የሚያጋግሙ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ ነወና ፡ እገገደ
ህ፡ የርሰም ፡ ስም ፡ ከኛ ፡ ዘገደ ፡ ስይጠሩ
ም ፡ ከሰሊህ ፡ እገራችን ፡ ስም ፡ ስራገራ ፡ ስ
ገር ፡ የአህል ፡ ጎታ ፡ ይሆናል ፡ እንደህ፡ ከ
ሆነ ፡ እኔ ፡ ስገራ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ መውጸድ
ችን ፡ ይወቱልን ፡ በከተት ፡ ወይም ፡
በሴሳ ፡ ነገር ፡ ቢሆን ፡ ስሥራም ፡ ሰግዝ ፡ ነ፤
ወዳ፡ ጥሩ ፡ ከእግዚርም ፡ ከገደጠ ፡ በቀ
ም ፡ እስምናሰኑ ፡፡



This message was written on the 14th of Tahsas in the year 1852 after the birth of Our Lord, according to the Ethiopian calendar.

I, Nigusē Abba Nikes, king of Ethiopia, who by the law of Our Lord Jesus Christ rule from Massawa to Gonder, that is the kingdom of Tigray, Simēn, Wegera, Welqayit, Ṭegedē, Dembiya, Belesa, Kīnfaz, Sahla, Agew, Lasta [and] Selewa, salute Ferdinand de Lesseps (Ferndīnando Zēlēsēps) of the enlightened race, who in our age is carrying out a marvellous project (lit. procedure).

From the beginning until now, I have been following with [all] my heart the project you are undertaking, which will bring great happiness to the whole of mankind. And now that it is definitely decided, I thank you in the name of my beloved country and myself. Because it is you who are linking our country with the technologically advanced Europe by having the isthmus (lit. land) of Suez dug through, therefore your name will not be forgotten amongst us. As a result our country will become a granary for the countries of the West. Since this is so, be informed that I and my country love you. I would like to help you in your work, either by [providing] animals or in some other way, and I pray to God to protect you.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .

Ferdinand de Lesseps, *Principaux faits de l'histoire d'Abyssinie*, Paris, n.d., inserted printed photograph of the original letter. The letter was forwarded to Antoine d'Abbadie by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 26 October 1860 with a request for a translation. A copy in Antoine's hand exists in BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 155. Since the original cannot be located in the Ministry's archives, it was presumably returned to the owner. A translation into French of this letter is found in Coulbeaux, II, pp. 398–399.

Nigusē, or more likely *Abba Imnetu*, who carried Nigusē's seal, was probably induced to write this letter by a fake letter from de Lesseps to Nigusē (*Vicende*, p. 528). Antoine d'Abbadie seems to have been uncertain whether 1852 stood for 1859 (which is correct for September–December) or 1860. The latter is, however, excluded by the date of the covering letter to d'Abbadie. As the day of the month according to the Gregorian calendar was often combined with the name of the Ethiopian month in Nigusē's documents, the possibility cannot be excluded that the letter was actually written on the 14th instead of the 23rd of December.

The territory over which Nigusē, according to this particular document, claimed sovereignty is defined in much the same way as Wibē's in his letter to Louis Philippe in 1845 (ACTA I, no. 88), *i.e.* first the limits Massawa and Gonder, then the names of the provinces or districts included, although Wibē limited himself to the first five enumerated here. This letter is the only one in which we have come across Nigusē's horse-name (or nickname) Abba Nikes, "the biter".

Convention between Simën-Tigray and France, 9 Jan. 1860

ይህ ነገር፡ ውል፡ በሆሮ፡ መጋሮ መርያ፡
ቀገ፡ በበሐይ፡ ተገደ፡ ከጌታችን ንዳ፡
ልደት፡ በኋላ፡ በኢትዮጵያ፡ ተካላ፡
በኢ፡ ከስምንት፡ መቶ፡ ሺህ ስድስት

ክፍል፡ የገደብ ጉዞ ስም፡ ንጉሥ፡ ስ
ፈረንሳይ፡ መንግሥት፡ የግዛት፡ ጠር፡
ክስታ፡ መክሰ፡ ነገር፡ ከገደብ ጉዞ፡ ነገ
ሥጥ፡ ስለተከፈተ፡ ንጉሥ፡ መግደ፡ የታ
ሳክ፡ ክርሱ፡ ቢለምን፡ ከንግድ፡ ብድር
ጉዞ፡ ከጌሥልጣን፡ በታች፡ ስለሆነ፡ ስም፡
በከፍሪቃ፡ ሳሉ፡ የፈረንሳይ፡ መንግሥት፡
ከገሮች፡ ሠራተኞችን፡ ሲሆኑ፡ ውል፡
ከንግድ ሥራ፡ ይህም፡ ውል፡ ከፈረንሳይ
ጉዞ፡ ነገሥት ባሉ፡ የተደረገ፡ በግ
ዕዝና፡ ነው፡ ከንግድ፡ በግድ፡ አይደለም፡
ስለዚህ፡ ይህ ነገር፡ ከፈረንሳይ፡ ንጉ
ሥ፡ ነገሥት፡ ጋራ፡ በረቀቅ ጉዞ፡ ውል፡ ነ፡
የሚሥሩ፡ ከዚህ፡ ስም፡ ነ፡ ትው፡
የዚህም፡ ውል፡ ዘመን፡ ልክ፡ ከስድስት፡
ዓመት፡ ፤ የዚህ መዛቻው፡ መጠን፡ በ፲፱
ሮ፡ ስድስት፡ አምስት፡ ብር፡ ሠይ፡
በሲካ፡ ስሜመስል፡ ነገር፡ ይሆናል፡፡



fol. 111

This agreement is written at Halay on the first day of Tirr in the year 1852 after the birth of Our Lord, according to the Ethiopian calendar.

When Russel (Rusel), naval officer of the French government, who was sent to me from King of Kings Napoleon (Napoliyon) III, pleaded with me, I, Niguse, king of Ethiopia, told him as follows:

Persons who are under my authority who [wish to] become labourers in countries under the French government which lie in Africa will bind themselves by contract. And this contract, which is made with the French king of kings, is voluntary and not compulsory. Therefore, it is these persons who make this contract with the French king of kings of their own free will.

The duration of this contract shall be five years. And the amount of their salary shall be five thalers per month or something equivalent.

On their journey out and back the king shall provide them with money for the passage and for food. While residing in the country of the French king they shall be provided in the same way with assistance for their food and property free of charge. I would like them to be instructed in Christian practices if they wish. To finalize all these matters I would like a consul of the French king of kings to reside in my country Ethiopia.

He shall reside (lit. his place of residence shall be) wherever he likes. The place where he hoists his flag shall be like an inviolable monastery. If French people and other persons who hold the paper called a French passport want to reside in my country, I will protect their persons and property.

Ingida to Michel d'Abbadie [Jan. 1860]

ዘቲ፡ መ ሬ ኦ ስ ን ብ፡ ዘተ ሬ ነ ወ ኅ፡ ን ለ ም ሳ በ፡ ስ ሕ ዘ ር፡
 ን ነ ማ ደ ፡ ብ በ ጸ ስ ሰ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ነ፡ ን ነ ደ
 ጎ፡ ን ሌ ፡ ም ሳ በ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 መ ሕ ዘ ር ፡ ም ሳ በ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ማ ፡ ነ፡ ም ሳ በ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ን ሌ ፡ ም ሳ በ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ም ሳ በ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ዘ ታ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡ ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡

ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡
 ስ ሕ ር ፡ ም ፡ ደ በ ደ ፡

May this message sent by Azzazh Ingida reach Arnauld d'Abbadie (Arno Debedi). How are you, to the extent of heaven and earth?

Taking Hayle Mika'el with me, I [went and] met with the king, but His Majesty said to me, "Why is Mika'el not coming?" Then (lit. secondly) he said, "Send him a letter to come." When he said to me, "Why is it that he is not coming?" I answered him, "It must be because he has heard that *shifta* have seized the country." When soldiers invaded every house, His Majesty had us protected, saying, "Let no one enter Hayle Mika'el's house." (After) having plundered [Adwa] on the day of Tahsas Medhanē Alem, all the *shifta* have settled in Tigray.

All your friends (lit. all who are like you) are well. May God protect you from evil. Amen.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 172, Amharic original. The writer of this letter is Michel d'Abbadie's old servant and caretaker of his property, after Michel's departure from Ethiopia attached to the household of Michel's wife Welette Rufa'el at Adwa (ACTA I, nos 90, 174, 179); Hayle Mika'el is none other than Michel's son (see no. 80 below). Note that Ingida uses the first of Michel's baptismal names, Arnauld, under which he was not normally known in Ethiopia.

The letter almost certainly describes events which took place in connection with Tēwodros's first campaign against Nigusē and the latter's flight from Adwa. Gilbert reported that Tēwodros was camping at Feres May near the town on 16 January, and that Nigusē fled after having "ransacked, burnt and pillaged" Adwa (AECF, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 9-12). Tahsas Medhanē Alem (21 Tahsas) corresponds to 30 December in the Gregorian calendar. In the anonymous Tēwodros chronicle, published by Luigi Fusella, which describes both of Tēwodros's campaigns against Nigusē, we are told that the king celebrated Ṭimqet (18 January 1860) at Adwa (*Yaṣē Tēwodros Tarik*, Rome, 1959, pp. 24-26).

Mirḥa Werqē, Mahdere Qal Tewelde Medhin; and Mehammed to Raffaele Baroni [March, 1860]

My dear Mr. Barroni,

We send you melancholy news. The Almighty always does according to His own will, and not ours. Your dear friend, – Mr. Plowden, your father and our father, was pierced with a lance by a brigand, named Garred, near to Gondar, at the River Kaha, and after nine days he is dead. The brigand took a thousand \$ to deliver him up, which was advanced by the town of Gondar; without this money he was determined to take him with him in the mountains where he was going. We have lent that sum – thinking he could live and enter his country. We buried him in the King's Church at Gondar. It was a great Burial, after the Abyssinian manner. 30 of the clergy were present, besides all the population of Gondar. Pashia Mohammed, Mercha, and I, Maderakal, were with him when he was assassinated by Garred, who robbed us of our mules, money, and everything we had with us, and, moreover, we were severely bound together.

Dear Sir, now we have no time, but afterwards we will write you everything.

Your most humble,
(Signed) Mercha,
Maderakal and
Pashia Mohammed.

FO 1/11, fols 96–97, English copy. It is annotated "Copy of a Letter from Mr. Maderakal and Pashia Mohammed, – dated, Gondar, 18th February 1860, and received on the 26th March". Since Mahdere Qal apparently was the one who actually wrote the letter and it is known that he corresponded in English (see ACTA I, no. 187, and document no. 1 in this volume), the original was most probably in English. The date assigned to the letter, 18 February, is too early. By the time it was printed in *Correspondence 1846–68* (p. 194), this was noted by a question-mark after the date. Early March seems a more likely date. Nigusē reported Plowden's death from Simēn on 8 March (no. 60) and Mahdere Qal's letter was forwarded to Massawa by Dr. Schimper as late as 19 March. It is not likely that it would have taken Mahdere Qal and his companions a whole month to reach Adwa with the important news that the consul had died.

Both Mahdere Qal and Mirḥa (see ACTA I, no. 89) were interpreters and middlemen between Tēwodros and the British. *Basha* Mehammed was most probably the official in charge of the customs office at Adwa, later known as *Basha* Gebre Igzi'abihēr. Baroni was Plowden's deputy at Massawa, and after Plowden's death acting British consul until the arrival of Captain C.D. Cameron in February 1862 (FO 401/1, p. 410). In spite of the British–French rivalry Baroni was allegedly selling arms to Nigusē on a fairly large scale (FO 1/11, fols 25–26).

This letter is published with the orthography, including misspellings, and punctuation of the original.

Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Théodore Gilbert, 8 March 1860

I, King Nigusē, cordially greet Mr. Gilbert, the representative of the great Catholic nation at Massawa. How are you? Is your health better?

I have heard with great pleasure the news which you have given me on the subject of the nomination of Mr. Thouvenel to succeed Count Walewski at the [Ministry of] Foreign Affairs. I hasten to write to him, through you, to congratulate him and explain to him at the same time the motives which have made me make up my mind to retreat to the Simēn mountains, for this illustrious diplomate, who with such great sympathy interests himself in everything which concerns the civilization of the Orient, will, if I am not mistaken, without delay persuade the emperor to take possession of the region which I have just offered as a token of esteem. For the good of our country it is urgent to complete it as soon as possible.

I ask you, who know better than anyone my humanitarian feelings, and my most ardent desire to see my country prosper and my people devote themselves to agriculture and to commerce, to argue my cause properly. Make also known to the imperial government that the assistance with artillery which I had earlier requested is more necessary for me than ever in order to finish off the rebels with one blow. In order not to jeopardize my cause, which is purely Christian and civilizing, I shall follow your advice and that of Mr. Russel in keeping on the defensive, and I patiently await a reply to the requests which I have just made to the government of His Majesty the emperor. I am convinced in advance, Sir, that they will be favourably received, since France would not under any circumstance want to give up to some other power her noble role of rescuing and regenerating the still semi-savage and oppressed peoples.

Written at Inçhet Kab in Simēn the 30th of February 1860.

(The King's seal)

AACP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 36, French translation. This translation was attached to a report from the consul dated 1 April (*ibid.*, fols 31–32). No original is found in the files of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The existence of an Amharic original is clearly indicated by the date 30 February, which must be a translation of 30 Yekkañit, as in the letters to De Jacobis and Thouvenel (nos 59 and 60).

Nigusē Welde Mīka'ēl to Giustino De Jacobis, 8 March 1860

Inçhet Kab, 30 February 1860.

I and my soldiers are safe in my country. They have suffered nothing from the long marches by which I avoided a battle with Tēwodros. I have followed your advice.

Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission, Tome XXVI, 1 (1861), pp. 100–101, French translation inserted in a letter from Delmonte to Étienne dated 31 March 1860. As in the above letter “30 February” indicates an Amharic original version. It may, in addition to an opening phrase, have contained some other omitted material. What was transmitted to the readers of the *Annales* proves, however, that Nigusē kept De Jacobis informed of his movements and received advice from the bishop. This letter was probably a covering letter sent with nos 58 and 60.

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to E.A. Thouvenel, 8 March 1860

በየካቲት አመ፡፡።፱፡በክብሩ፡፡፡ ተክብሮት፡፡፡ ለባህዳራ፡፡፡
ክቲብ፡፡፡ ከመላእክት፡፡፡ አገጣጠም፡፡፡ በወ፡፡፡
፱፡ወ፡፡፡ ለመታ፡፡፡ በሐሳብ፡፡፡ ኢትዮጵያ፡፡፡ ወበታላቅ፡፡፡
ርግ፡፡፡ ወ፡፡፡ ፱፡፡፡

መልክት፡፡፡ ዘንጉ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ተብዳሎ፡፡፡ ላለ፡፡፡
ቤ፡፡፡ የሌላ፡፡፡ የታ፡፡፡ ልላ፡፡፡ ፱፡፡፡ ተብላ፡፡፡
ከለ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ፱፡፡፡
በኔ፡፡፡ መንግሥት፡፡፡ ልቤን፡፡፡ ክጀግ፡፡፡ የሚያሳዝንን፡፡፡
ራት፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ወቅል፡፡፡ ጎረቤት፡፡፡ የአገራዊ፡፡፡
ወኪል፡፡፡ ከጉንደር፡፡፡ ተነሥቶ፡፡፡ ለወጋ፡፡፡
ቲዎድሮስ፡፡፡ ሲመጣ፡፡፡ የኔ፡፡፡ ጎረቤት፡፡፡ በጠላት፡፡፡
ተይዞ፡፡፡ ሳለ፡፡፡ መገጥ፡፡፡ በሚባል፡፡፡ ገደ፡፡፡ ከጋራ፡፡፡
የኔ፡፡፡ ሎሎ፡፡፡ ጋራ፡፡፡ ተጋኛ፡፡፡ ጋራ፡፡፡ መ፡፡፡
ሮስ፡፡፡ የወገድ፡፡፡ ልጅ፡፡፡ ሲሆን፡፡፡ ከኔ፡፡፡ ተሾመ፡፡፡ ተ
ገናኝቶ፡፡፡ ወደ፡፡፡ ሊያመጣው፡፡፡ ተደገ፡፡፡ ቢለው፡፡፡
አደገው፡፡፡ በሎ፡፡፡ ተሞክሮ፡፡፡ ራሱን፡፡፡ አመጠቀ፡፡፡
ወገኖቹ፡፡፡ ታላቅ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ከዚህ፡፡፡ በኋላ፡፡፡ ወደ፡፡፡
ደረሰ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ከጉንደር፡፡፡ አካለ፡፡፡ ለው፡፡፡
፱፡፡፡ ተንታኝ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡
ው፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡
ው፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡
ው፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡ ሆኖ፡፡፡

(At) Inchet Kab (which is) in
Simēn, Yekkatit 30, 1852 after
the birth of our Lord according
to the Ethiopian calendar, and
1860 according to the calendar
of Rome.

May King Nigusē's message
reach Thouvenel (Tubēnal), the
minister of foreign affairs (*blan-*
tegēta (sic) *sile mēda sirat*) of
His Majesty Napoleon (Napolio-
yon) III.

In my kingdom something
happened which greatly saddens
my heart. Understand my situa-
tion. When the English repre-
sentative Plowden (Blawud)
was on his way (lit. coming)
from Gonder to [join] Tēwo-
dros and fight against me, my
domain being in enemy hands,
he met Gared, my servant, at a
place called Megech. Gared, al-
though a nephew of Tēwodros,
was appointed by me.

When they met, he asked
him to surrender so that he
would be able to bring him to
me. [Plowden] refused and put
up a fight. [Gared] fought in
self-defence and took him pri-
soner.

Later, without bringing him
to me, he released him and had
him sent back to Gonder. After
nine days he died. Since I do
not want any man to die, let alone a
European, even if he is my
enemy, I was grieved when I
heard of his death. And now,
since the English with this ex-
cuse are going to malign my

fol. 33r

ፍቅር፡ፍ፡አክብሮት፡ሰጠ፡ገገ፡አወቅታ፡ኢየሁዳ፡አንግሎ
ህ፡በሰላሳውይ፡በኒ፡በቲ፡ሰደ፡ራከ፡ጣኝ፡አ፡ጦ
ር፡ጎላ፡አንደ፡ወታደር፡ከወታደር፡ክፋ፡ቀተ፡
አንጂ፡በወመበደ፡ቅተ፡አደባ፡ገ፡አወራ፡ፍ፡
ባክ፡የፍ፡ጠፋ፡አለቃ፡ደባ፡አ፡አንጂ፡የአንግ
ሉ-ዝ፡አደባ፡ገ፡አለዚህ፡የርኩ፡ቀተ፡አንደ
ለመ፡ሁሉ፡ሆረ፡ቲ፡የፍ፡ሰደ፡ፎ፡አንደሰደ፡
የኤውራ፡አው፡ሁሉ፡ሲደውቅ፡አ፡አወ
ደለቁ፡፡

name, you should know about it in advance. Now, Plowden died as a soldier, at the hands of a soldier, while there is war between me and Tēwodros. It cannot be said that he died at the hands of bandits. And his title is *basha*, chief of musketeers; he is not referred to as an English representative.

Therefore, I desire everyone in Europe to know that, according to the law of all the world, his death is not my responsibility.

May God keep you in peace and health.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia



fol. 33v

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 33, Amharic original; fols 34-35, French translation, certified by Consul Gilbert. Instead of converting the Ethiopian date, the translator has simply replaced it with “30 February”. This proves that the Amharic text is really the original; it is not likely that any European would have dated a letter in a European language “30 February” (cf. nos 58 and 59). Nigusē’s description of Consul Plowden’s death and his concern that his own reputation might be hurt by it also seem genuine. On the other hand, a phrase like *yemēda sirat* (for “foreign affairs”) is odd, to say the least.

The Gareḍ referred to in the letter was the son of Tēwodros’s older brother *Dejjazmach* Kinfu Hayle Maryam.

Gilbert has taken some liberties with the main body of the letter. He has, for instance, added a date for Plowden’s departure from Gonder—“le 9 de ce mois-ci”, i.e. 16 February if we assume that “this month” means Yekkalīf. In fact Gilbert may have misunderstood the information he received, the “nine” referring to the number of days between the attack and Plowden’s death. For the encounter with Gareḍ and the death of Plowden, see also no. 57.

This letter was forwarded to Paris on 1 April together with no. 61 and the translation of the covering letter to Consul Gilbert (no. 58).

Nigusē Welde Mika'el to E.A. Thouvenel, 12 March 1860

በመጋቢት፡ 1 ሀ ቀን፡ ከጌታችን፡ ልደት፡ በኢ፡ክ፡ጊ፡የጽደቀመን፡
በሮም፡ ቀ፡ጥር፡ በኢ፡ክ፡ጊ፡የሃይደመን፡ በኢትዮጵያ፡ ቀ፡
ጥር፡ በከሜን፡ ።

ከጌንደር፡ እስከ፡ ዙላና፡ ዘይላ፡ ያለ፡ ባሕር፡ ሁሉ፡ ምሥራቃ
ዊ፡ ድረስ፡ የነገሥሁ፡ እኔ፡ ንጉሤ፡ የትግሬ፡ ንጉሥ፡ በሚገባ፡
የሰሜን፡ ባለርስት፡ የመኳንንትም፡ ራስ፡ ለቱበናል፡ የልዑ
ል፡ ናፖልዮን፡ ስስተኛ፡ ብላተንጌታ፡ አቀርባለኝ፡ ናፖል
ዮን፡ ያንተን፡ ብልህት፡ አይቶ፡ የመንግሥትን፡ የሚደንጋ
ራት፡ ሁሉ፡ ሳንተ፡ አንዷ፡ ሾመ፡ ወሬ፡ ሰማኙ፡ ደስ፡ አለኝ፡ ስን
ኳን፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ አደረሰህ፡ ያንተ፡ ፍቅር፡ ስላገሬ፡ አው
ቃለኝ፡ አገሬ፡ መልካም፡ ሲሆን፡ ወትር፡ በጦር፡ ይኖራል፡ ባለመ
ከራ፡ ነው፡ በኛ፡ እንድ፡ ወትር፡ ጦር፡ ይኖራልና፡ የኛን፡ መክ
ራ፡ ልናገር፡ አወዳለኝ፡ አሁንም፡ ከልዑል፡ ናፖልዮን፡ መ
ልክተኛ፡ ጋራ፡ እንደልገናኝ፡ የከለከለኝን፡ መክንያት፡ እ
ንደልጽፍ፡ ትርፍ፡ ነው፡ የመጽዋ፡ ከንቡል፡ ጽፎ፡ ሰዶ፡ ይ
መስለኛልና፡ ወደገሬ፡ ወደ፡ ስሜን፡ የመሔዴ፡ መክንያ
ት፡ ግን፡ እንዲህ፡ ነው፡ ከመንግሥት፡ ቀመኛ፡ ከካሳ፡ ጋራ፡
እንደልዋጋ፡ ነው፡ ከርሱ፡ ጋራ፡ መጽፍ፡ አለና፡ የወታደር
ቼ፡ ደም፡ በከንቱ፡ እንደይሬስ፡ ብዬ፡ ሰልዋጋ፡ ቀረኝ፡ ።
ጌታዬ፡ አቶጦርጥረኝ፡ ከንተ፡ መክር፡ አልወጣም፡ የታ
ሰቅ፡ ናፖልዮን፡ ወደጀ፡ እንድሆን፡ ሥራቴን፡ ሁሉ፡ በ
ሚገባ፡ አደርጋለኝ፡ በኔና፡ በከንቱ፡ ራሴል፡ የተወሰነ፡
ውሰችን፡ ወሬውን፡ ቶሎ፡ ልሰማ፡ አወዳለኝ፡ ይህንን፡

fol. 33r

ው ል: ለ. ቀ ና: ጸ በ ሻ. አ ገ ሬ: ክ ሸ ፍ ቶ ች: ይ ድ ና ል: ስ ፍ
ቶ ች: አ ይ ገ ኙ መ ና: ለ ሠ ሬ. ት: ሁ ሉ: በ ጥ ቂ ች: በ ጥ ቂ ች:
የ ቀ ና: ይ ሠ ና ል: ጌ ቶ ዬ: ሠ ይ: የ መ ሠ ሬ ት ገ: ሠ ሬ ቶ: ቶ
ው ቃ ለ ህ ና: ይ ህ ነ ገ: ነ ገ ር: ሁ ሉ: ለ ል ፀ. ል: ና ፖ ል ዮ ን:
አ ሳ ስ. በ ል ች:።



fol. 33v

(In) Simēn, Meggabīt 12, 1860 after the birth of Our Lord, according to the Roman calendar, and 1852, according to the Ethiopian calendar.

I, Nigusē, who reign from Gonder as far as the sea to the east, where Zula and Zeyla lie, king of Tigray, the true ruler of Simēn, head of the noblemen, address Thouvenel (Tubenal), the minister (*blattengēta*) of His Majesty Napoleon (Napoliyon) III. I heard [the] news that Napoleon, having perceived your wisdom, has appointed you over all the foreign affairs. I am delighted; congratulations. I know of your love for my country. Though my country is good, it is always at war. It is full of misery because there is always war amongst us. I would like to tell you about our misery. And now, it is unnecessary to write about the reason that prevented me from meeting with His Majesty Napoleon's envoy, since I believe the consul of Massawa has written (and sent) [about it]. The reason, however, for my departure to my country Simēn is as follows. It is in order not to fight with the usurper (lit. robber of the kingdom) Kasā, because he has cannon. I avoided fighting so that the blood of my soldiers would not be shed in vain.

Do not distrust me, my lord, I will not disregard (lit. go out of) your advice. I will observe all procedures [incumbent] on me properly, so that I may become the friend of the great Napoleon. I would like to hear quickly the news about the agreement which was concluded between myself and Count Russel (Kontē Rusēl). If this agreement succeeds, my country Abyssinia will be saved from *shifṭa*, for there will be no *shifṭa*. Little by little all policies will succeed. My lord, since you know the manners of the East, remind His Majesty Napoleon of all these matters.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .

AN.AP 255/3, fol. 33, Amharic original; fol. 33bis, French translation. Whether Meggabīt stands for the Ethiopian month or for March is difficult to know. The latter seems more probable, in view of the fact that it is immediately followed by the European year, not the Ethiopian. Provided the correct date is 12 March, this letter was written only four days after the three letters dated Inçhet Kab (nos 58–60).

There are indications that the above letter was written to improve upon Nigusē's letter to Thouvenel dated 8 March. Both the description of Nigusē's territory, mentioning the ports of Zula and Zeyla, and his congratulation of the new minister of foreign affairs point in this direction. The possibility that Imnete Maryam or some other Ethiopian in the service of the consul or the Catholic mission worded it cannot be dismissed. It has not been possible to determine why it ended up in Thouvenel's private archives instead of at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dimētros Ishetu to Michel d'Abbadie, 13 June 1860

146. 287

ሙሉ እኩት፡ አድሚኖሮ ስ፡ ሸቱ፡ ትብዳሐ፡ ሳባ፡ ራሱ፡ ሚካ
 ኤል፡ ደብዳቤ፡ እንደታ፡ አሉ፡ እጅግ፡ ጥሩ፡ የሰላም፡ የምድሩ፡
 የህል፡ አባቱም፡ ሞቱ፡ እኔም፡ አባቴ፡ ከሞቱ፡ ባከላ፡ እ
 ጅግ፡ ከፍተኛ ል፡ ርባሪ ል፡ በሐብሻ፡ መራት፡ አመድ፡ የሰ
 ሻም፡ ሰጠ፡ ነገር፡ ሰው፡ ነው፡ አመድ፡ አንድ፡ አመድ፡ ትታው
 ልኻ፡ የሉ፡ አባቴ፡ እርሳም፡ ነው፡ አሁንም፡ እኔ፡ ከሞደል
 መጣ፡ ስንቅ፡ አጠቃ፡ ከአሉ በት፡ ርደቱኝ፡ እንደሆነ፡ ይባ
 ኩብኝ፡ ወረቀት፡ እመጣለሁ፡ ጌታው፡ እንደሆነ ስ፡ ጌታ
 ሙ፡ ቁርጫ፡ ስ፡ እንደሆነ፡ አሉ፡ ሰባም፡ ይድረስልኝ፡ እናቴ፡
 ወሰታ፡ ሙሉ፡ ሞቷ፡ አሉ፡ ሰባም፡ እግዚአብሔር
 ይጠብቀዋል፡ አሉ፡ ያደርገው፡ ታውረዋል፡

ተደራሽ ሆኖ፡ በአድዋ፡ በሸኩ፡ ከፒየተህ፡ ይአመኛለሁ፡ በጌታ
 ሳ፡ ሰጠ፡

1852 = 1860

May the letter from Dimētros Ishetu reach *Ras* Michel d'Abbadie (Mīka'ēl Debedī). How are you, really, to the extent of heaven and earth?

My father has died. Since my father died, I am in great distress. I am starving. I have no relative in the land of Abyssinia. To me white people are my relatives. The only relative whom my father has left me is you. Now, [the reason why] I do not come is that I have no provisions. If you tell me to come to where you are, send me a letter and I will come.

How are Master Antoine (Intōniyos) and Master Charles (Qērilos)? Greet them for me. My mother Welette Maryam says, "How are you? May the peace of God protect you." She has become blind.

Written at Adwa on the 7th of Senē 1852.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 146, Amharic original. The writer was apparently the son of one of Michel d'Abbadie's many friends or retainers in Ethiopia. Dimētros writes his father's name "Shetu" but the normal spelling of this name today is "Ishetu".

Tēwodros/John Bell to Théodore Gilbert, 13 June 1860

Tanta 13 June 1860

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that I am desired by H. M. Theodoros Emperor of Ethiopia, to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed letter dated the 27 of February from Massowah, and at the same time to inform you that it is, his most earnest wish to cultivate not only the friendship of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the French, but all the Sovereigns of Europe not excluding one.

As regards the person of Mgr. de Jacobis being put in confinement it was done without the acknowledge or orders H.M. and on hearing of it, he immediately gave permission that he should be released and allowed to reside in his dominions as should be most convenient to himself.

I now conclude by saying that it is the greatest desire of H. M. Theodoros to assist in any way in his power all Europeans wishing to visit this country, or reside in it peaceably, and not mix in political affairs.

I have the honor, to be Sir etc etc.

/signed/ G.I. Bell

Likamaquass

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 53, copy of English original certified by Gilbert; fols 54-55, French translation. This letter is included because John Bell was at this time a high-ranking Ethiopian official, *liqemekwas*, writing, as he specifically states, on the instructions of Tēwodros in reply to a letter to the king. It is not the only letter from Tēwodros in connection with the events of early 1860. In a letter dated 22 February, De Jacobis mentions two letters from the king, to himself and to Russel respectively (CML, Lettres manuscrites de Mgr. De Jacobis, vol. 2, no. 414). They have in all probability been lost.

John Bell had arrived in Ethiopia in the early 1840s, and had served first *Ras* Alī Alula and later Tēwodros. Soon after the writing of this letter, Bell lost his life in action against the rebel Gared, who a few months earlier had caused the death of Consul Plowden (see nos 57 and 60).

This letter is reproduced with the orthography, including misspellings, and punctuation of the available English copy. In the middle of the second paragraph "acknowledge" obviously stands for "knowledge", and "of" is missing in front of "H. M.". Bell was best known as Yohannis; here he oddly uses "G" for "Giovanni" instead of "J" for the "John" of his mother tongue.

Nigusē Welde Mīka'el to Napoleon III, 13 July 1860

በትገረ፡
አመጌሰሐሴ፡

ወክመሥጋዌ፡በ፤ ወፀዮጎ፤ ወፀዳ፤ ወት፡በሐሳ
በ፡ብሔር፡።

ክብዙ፡ዘመገ፡ጋርመሮ፡በክበረኝ፡በታ
ላቅ፡ዙፋን፡ሰሚኖሩ፡ወንድሜ፡ሰስተኛ፡
ናጳልዮን፡የረረንሳ፡ንጉሠ፡ነገሥት፡
ሰላም፡ይሁን፡።

ክብር፡ልዑል፡ሆይ፡።

በአውነተኛ፡ፍቅር፡በትሕትና፡የልቤገ፡አነ
ግረመ፡አሐላ፡ኔንዲህ፡ከል፡አርሰመገ፡ወድ
ጂ፡አጋጅ፡ተመገ፡ከረሰግላ፡ለመስተኛ፡
ሳመት፡ሆነ፡ከሐዚህመ፡ጣታይንና፡ፃይነ
ተኛ፡ወዳጂዮና፡መካሪዮን፡አባቱ፡አምነቱ
ን፡ወደ፡ታላቅ፡ዳድቅ፡አባታችን፡ፕዮስና፡
ወደርሰመ፡ሰደድ፡ኋችው፡።ከናንተም፡ጋ
ራ፡በፍቅርና፡በታላቅ፡ነገር፡ከሐ፡ተገናኙ፡ወ
ዳጂ፡የሆነ፡አጅግ፡ደስ፡አሐው፡።ወላቶች፡
ገንዘብን፡ከሰበዛባችው፡ከዚህ፡ጋርመሮ፡ከ
ከካሁን፡ይታወካሉ፡።አርሰመም፡ፍቅረመገ፡
ለመግሰጥ፡ወደኔ፡መልክክተኛ፡መስደደዎ

fol. 48r

(In) Tigray, 7 Hamlē in the year 1852 after the Incarnation according to the calendar of our country.

Peace be unto my brother Napoleon (Napoliyon) III, the king of kings of France, who sits on the honoured and great throne which has existed for many centuries.

Honoured Prince!
With true love and humility, I will tell you what I have in my heart, (saying) as follows:

This is the fifth year since I sought your assistance because I loved you. Therefore I sent Ṭaqayē and my special friend and counsellor, *Abbatē Imnetu*, to our father, the great and holy Pius (Piyos), as well as to you. Because they met with you in friendship and greatness, all who are my friends were very pleased. But since my enemies were sorely grieved, they have been troubled ever since then.

When *Abbatē Imnetu* on his return told me that you were sending an emissary to me in order to declare your friendship, I at once gave him the authority, and my seal, in order that he might do for [the envoy], what he wanted. Therefore, the treaty which he concluded with

ገ፡ከ ባቲ፡ክምገቲ፡ክርሰም፡ተመልሰው፡
 ቢገግሩኝ፡መጋሪ መርያ፡ክርሱ፡የሚረፈ
 ገውን፡ሊያደርጉሱት፡ሥልጣንና፡ማን
 ተሚን፡ሰጠኋልው፡። ከሰዚህ፡ክገገተ፡
 ሩሴል፡ጋራ፡ያደረጉትን፡ውል፡ክንደ፡ፈ
 ታድ፡ነው፡። ወደ፡መጽዋም፡መደ
 ረሱን፡ሰምቼ፡ክንድገናሃው፡ክጅግ፡ቸኩ
 ልኩ፡። ክርሱ፡ግን፡ዘገገግኝ፡። በዚህ፡ማክ
 ክርሰም፡በሚያውቁዋቸው፡በጠላቶቼ፡
 መክር፡ቋረኛ፡ነሳ፡ቢመጣክኝ፡ነሳ፡ክም
 ነቱ፡ጋራ፡ተማክሮ፡ጥፋ፡ስፍራ፡ክንደደዝ፡
 ልኪ፡ወደ፡ከሚን፡ሐድኩ፡።
 ከኩሲታ፡ጠሬዬን፡ወደደ፡ማዋ፡ትቼ፡ከወን
 ድሜ፡ጋራ፡በሚያዚያ፡ወር፡ወደ፡ትገራ፡ተ
 መልኼ፡የርሰምን፡ወራ፡ክጠክቃለኩ፡። ከክ
 ረመት፡በኋላ፡የታላቅ፡ጭበበምና፡የሥልጣን
 ም፡ከርሃን፡ክንደጋርደኝ፡ተስፋ፡ክሰኝ፡።
 የሚገኝደንቅ፡ወራ፡ሰማኩ፡።
 የመጽዋ፡ሹም፡ጠደ፡ነሳ፡የሚያልፍን፡ነፍጥ፡
 ቢደዝ፡በዚያ፡ያሉ፡የርሰም፡ኩንሱል፡ክንግሊ
 ሆኑን፡ደስ፡ሲያሰኝ፡ከትርኩ፡ክሰሰቅቶ፡ወ
 ደ፡ጠላቲ፡ክንደወጣ፡ክደረገ፡። በኤውሮፓ፡

fol. 48v

Count Russel (Rusēl) is in accordance with my will.

When I heard that he had arrived at Massawa, I was eager to meet him. But he came too late (for me).

In the midst of this, when Kasa Qwareñña on the advice of my enemies, whom you know, came against me, I sent [a message] so that he in consultation with *Abba Imnetu* would find a safe place, and [then] I went to *Simēn*.

Leaving half of my army with my brother on the other side, I returned to Tigray in the month of *Miyazya*, and will wait for news from you. I hope that after the rainy season the light of your great wisdom and power will protect me.

I have heard astonishing news. When the governor of Massawa seized the rifles which were passing through to Kasa, your consul there—in order to please the English—secured their release from the Turks and arranged for their dispatch to my enemy.

He refused to give the rifles, which my men bought with my money when they were in Europe, to *Abba Imnetu*, and they are [still] in his hands.

It is good if he who is appointed at Massawa is a prudent man who looks after [the interests of] your government only. If it is your wish to do this, I have heard from my men that there is at

ሰሎ፡ ዩኒ፡ ስሙ ች፡ በገገዝቢ፡ የገዙት ገሙ፡ ነፍ
 ጥ፡ ሳገ፡ አሙ ነቱ፡ ኮሌ ስጥሙ፡ ብሎ፡ በርሱ፡
 ኔጅ፡ አሰ፡
 በሙድ፡ የሚሾሙ፡ መገገሥ ተሙ ገ፡ ብሾ፡
 የሚ፡ ብሎ ች፡ ሰገግ፡ ስሙ፡ ቢሆ ገ፡ መሰላላሙ፡ ነ
 ው፡ ። ይህ ነገሙ፡ ሲሁረ፡ ገ፡ ፈቃደሙ፡ አንጸ
 ሆ ገገ፡ ሲ፡ የሚገል፡ ፈረገ ሳግ፡ መሰላላሙ፡
 ስሙ፡ በሙድ፡ የ፡ አንገሱ፡ ነ፡ ኒ፡ ስሙ ች፡ ስማቱ፡

Massawa a good Frenchman
 named Don Risī(?).
 [Thus] have I, Nigusē,
 king of Ethiopia, obedient to
 your friendship, spoken.

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethio-
 pia...

ሰፍትረው፡ የሙ ቃዘዝ፡ አኒ፡ ንጉ
 ሚ፡ የኢትዮጵያ፡ ንጉሥ፡ አልጎ፡



fol. 49r

AEMD, Afrique 61, fols 48–49, Amharic original; fol. 47, French translation by Antoine d’Abbadie. There are several factors which favour the authenticity of this letter over the earlier letters of that year. The date, for instance, is given in the Ethiopian calendar alone, and the letter was apparently forwarded to Europe through other channels than the French consulate. A copy of the Amharic original in Antoine d’Abbadie’s handwriting is found in BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 153, followed by a French translation, in which Antoine has transcribed the name of the Frenchman suggested as future consul “Zan Risi”.

It is more likely, however, that the two characters inserted are ጶ and ን, thus Don Risī, and quite possible that the person referred to is Antonio Rizzo, who had accompanied Leon des Avanchers to Nigusē’s camp the year before (see nos 42 and 43) and was therefore known to Nigusē. He was the candidate for Sardinian, not French, consul at Massawa, but the difference between French and Italian was most probably not understood in the Tigrean camp. The important fact is that Nigusē was so unhappy with Consul Gilbert’s failure to look after his interests that he decided to by-pass him with this letter. In a letter dated 8 July and sent to Gilbert (unfortunately only reported to Paris) Nigusē complained that he had received no benefit from his negotiations with Russel (AEMD, Afrique 61, fols 56–57).

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò, 7 Aug. 1860

Eminence,

In the name of all my fellow priests, monks and Catholic laymen of the entire Abyssinian Ethiopia I now come to prostrate myself at the feet of Your Most Reverend Eminence in order to give you the painful news of the death of our saintly apostolic vicar, Mgr. De Jacobis, which took place on 31 July 1860. Yes, Most Reverend Eminence, the sun which shed light upon our poor Abyssinia has disappeared, the fountain of our hopes has dried up, and the example of the most beautiful virtue has vanished from us. We are therefore in continuous, heart-rending sorrow, and we await from Your Eminence the comforting remedy for all our sufferings.

Mgr. Massaja would be the only one who at present could alleviate our miseries until someone from Rome could come to us. If Your Eminence grants us this, we shall do everything possible to bring him from the Galla, and then Your Eminence can at your convenience provide us with a Lazarist bishop.

Also consider, Eminence, that we are all very dismayed, yet always the humble, most obedient sons of the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church. And as such we all ask through Your Eminence our Holy Father Pius IX for the Apostolic benediction.

And in the name of all I, prostrated at the feet of Your Eminence, kiss the border of the sacred purple and declare myself,

the most humble and obedient son
of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Abba Imnetu.
Your servant *Abba Imnetu*.

Massawa 7 August 1860.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 586, Italian original. This letter is in very good handwriting, quite different from Imnetu's other preserved letters in Italian; it can therefore be assumed that he had engaged someone else to write it for him. Imnetu's name appears twice under the letter, first spelled "Emnatou" in the same handwriting as the rest of the letter, then in Ethiopic script followed by *lolēwo* (your servant).

Abba Imnetu had accompanied Mgr. De Jacobis on his last fatal journey to Halay, but was sent back to Minkullu two days before the bishop's death on 31 July (see no. 67), apparently because De Jacobis feared that Imnetu's involvement with Nigusē might endanger his life (O'Mahoney, I, pp. 212–215).

The fact that Imnete Maryam took the first opportunity possible to bring up the matter of a successor to De Jacobis shows how determined he was to prevent the appointed co-adjutor and successor (O'Mahoney, I, pp. 114–115) from replacing the late bishop. Without awaiting Biancheri's arrival from Keren or even mentioning him in the letter, Imnete Maryam suggests that Bishop Massaja be called to Massawa to take over until a new Lazarist bishop could be consecrated. A Capuchin missionary, Father Gabriele de Rivolta, was accused of instigating the proposal, but Capuchin–Lazarist rivalry was hardly the main reason for the "sordid affair" (O'Mahoney, II, p. 5). The negative opinion and attitude that Biancheri showed towards the Ethiopian priests trained and ordained by De Jacobis was at any rate no recent development, and no secret to Rome. See O'Mahoney, I, pp. 172–177, 205, 221–222; II, pp. 1–10.

ክነገረረዎስሐላብ::መሰናዳዊሁም:ክንዲህ:ነው::የነ:ወደጅ:
 ወነሌ:መመሪራ:ክምላቱና:ጣቀዬ::ወደር:ሰም:ከስደችው:
 የነፍ:ጥ:መሳገር:ገዳዘብ:ሰጥች:ነበረ::ክነሀ.ደም:ገዳቀ
 ው:ሰ.መሐሱ:የሰዊ.ከ:ሹ.መ:በ.ነሐንካቸው:ጉላሊ:አመ.
 ባል:በዚ.ደ:የነበር:ቃንስም:ቃላሊ.ው:ሰጥተው:መ
 ጡ::ነሀ.ህ:በቃ.ካ:ቃንሱል:ጀነሱል:ከፕቱ:ነሀ.ደ:ሐቁ
 ንሱል:ጀልበርተ:ሰደደሐት::መመሪራ:ክምላቱ:መ:ክንደሰ
 ጣ:ሰምተው:በ.ጠይቁት:ክምላ:መጥት:ዋሉ:ነገር:ግን:
 የላገብ:ሂ:ወነ.ሉ:ክደደሐህም:ክነሳደህም:ክነቸው:በክ
 ጵ.ከ:ቆሱ:ሳት:ደልቁላም:የመገደሳዝነጂ:በር:ሰምናበ
 ኢ:መገኛል:ሳሌ:ታካት:ነገር:የላ:ቅር:ሥራት:መሐሉ:ደደ
 ረግሏቸው:ን:ክር:ሰም:የመገደው:ቁጥቸው:ነ:ሰው:የገ
 ጉሂ:ከው:ክደደሐህም:በመገለት:ነው::ካ
 ነፍ:ጡ:ህም:ለወደጅችና:ካሽነገር:ች:መ:ክደሐሰ:ክደደሐህ
 ሙ:ነብዙ:ሰምች:ሰመላቱ::የነፍ:ጡ:ሙ:ቃላሊ:ፎጠት
 ነው::

በሐሳም:ደነሩ:ክላህር:ደጠብቀም::

ገሥቶ:የክትየጆረ:ገሥቶ:ክሉፍ::



fol. 50v

they were returning after having made the purchases, they counted [the rifles] and handed them over to your consul there, called Patsē(?) and came [back]. Then Consul General Sabatier (Sepatē) sent [the rifles] from there to Consul Gilbert. When Memmirē Imnetu, having heard that they had come, asked him, he said, “Yes, they have arrived.” Nevertheless he refused to show [them] to him, saying in front of the bishop, “You are not Nigusē’s agent.” What makes me particularly sad is that he said, “You are not Nigusē’s man” about the man whom I had made my representative for the important matter of the friendly relations that exist between you and me, and whom you [also] know. I have heard from many people that he squandered the rifles by giving them to his friends and servants. The number of the rifles is 64. Remain in peace; may God protect you. I, Nigusē, king of Ethiopia, said [this].

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .

AEMD, Afrique 61, fol. 50, Gi'iz/Amharic original; fols 52–53, French translation. The date of this letter is incorrectly noted as 12 August on the document and in the translation made by Antoine d'Abbadie.

Note that there is no mention in this letter about the letters and other documents drawn up in connection with the mission of Count Russel (nos 48–50, 53–54). This raises the question whether Nigusē had even been informed about the treaty and convention which he was supposed to have concluded with the French government. Instead the letter links up with Imnete Maryam's return from Europe and what happened then. It is in the handwriting of Imnete Maryam, which probably explains why the failure of the French consul to acknowledge the priest as Nigusē's representative is singled out as his worst mistake.

Catholic clergy to Vincenzo Spaccapietra, 25 Aug. 1860

አመጽ ስካሉ፡ ተጽሏል፡ በሀላይ፡፡
ወምልደተ፡ አግቢ እኑ፡ በወገደ፡ የሃወይ፡ የመታ፡

የጭቅረዎ፡ ሰጠ፡ ስበባ፡ በሩ፡ ሳሰነ፡ ስታ
ው፡ አጅግ፡ ደስ፡ በያሰኘነ፡ ክቡር፡ አባታ፡
ገሆይ፡ ስር ስዎ፡ ሰላም፡ አንገሰን፡፡

አጅግ፡ የሚወደዎና፡ የሚ
ያመኑዎ፡ ጸድቅ፡ አባታችን፡ አቡነ፡ ያ
ዕቅብ፡ ስላ፡ ራጢ አታችን፡ በዛቅ፡ ክሾ፡
በሞቅ፡ ተሰይ፡ ስላዚህ፡ ጌታችን፡ ሆይ፡
ካንበሰና፡ ከዘንድ፡ የሚክፈ፡ ጠላቶች
ችን፡ ስላችውን፡ ከፍተው፡ ሰይው፡ ጡን፡

fol. 90r

ት፡ በጸሐ፡ ስላከ፡ ሆይ፡ እኑ፡
ልዑል፡ ሞገስኛ፡ አስገኝ፡፡
ት፡ ፊ፡፡

Reverendissimo padre mio
carissimo padre mio

በተቸሰዎ፡ እንደረዱን፡ ወደርሰ
ዎ፡ አያሰተሰነ፡ እንገራሁሰን፡ አባታ
ችንም ከሞተዎ፡ በክድስተኛ፡ ቀ
ን፡ አከቀድመው፡ መልካም፡ ስላወ
ድ፡ ሞገስኛ፡ አስገኝ፡ ፔትራን፡
ት፡ ጭቅረዎ፡ ሆይ፡ አይዘዋችኑ፡፡
አሁን፡ ከዚያ፡ በፊትም፡ የኔና፡ የ
ርሱ፡ ልብ፡ ስንድ፡ ነው፡ ስላናንተ፡
በዙ፡ ነገር፡ ያቀናል፡ አያሉ፡ ሲነግ
ሩን፡ ነበር፡፡ ስላኛ፡ አይወ
ት፡ ዕድሜና፡ ጢና፡ ይበዛልዎ፡ በ
አሁንም፡ አይርሱን፡፡
ይቤሉ፡ ካህናት፡ ሌትዮቱያ፡ ካቶሊካ
ካውያን፡ ደቲቱ፡ ክቡር፡ ጄኮቲኖ፡፡

fol. 90v

← fol. 91r

(ሮ ማ፡

Written at Halay on the 20th of Nehasē in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1852.

Though we are far away, since the scent of the rose of your love gives us great joy, we greet you, O our honoured father.

Our righteous father, Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*), who loved and trusted you very much, has departed from us because of the multitude of our sins. Therefore, O our master, since our enemies, who are worse than lions and pythons, have opened their mouths; before they devour us, we cry out in tears to you to help us as much as you can. On the sixth day before our father died he said to us, "I have left behind for you a good friend, Monsignor Spaccapietra (*Monsiññor Ispaka Pētra*), do not worry." He used to say earlier, "My heart and his are one; he will put straight many things for you." May, for our sake, long life and health be yours in great measure. Do not forget us in your prayers. [So] say the Catholic priests of Ethiopia, the sons of the honoured Giustino (*Justīno*). May it reach our master, His Eminence Monsignor Spaccapietra, Rome.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 28 Aug. 1860

From 25 August 1858 until now I have not written although it is (lit. would be) my desire more than [my] duty. All the same, the harsh circumstances of this unfortunate mission have not given me an opportune moment. I say unfortunate especially because of the loss of its saintly apostle, truly a saint with all the simplicity of a dove in all his words, wise and prudent in every aspect of his actions, so that Abyssinia cannot ever have or hope for anyone like him.

Anticipating his imminent death and unwilling to have his body buried in the land of the Muslims, Mgr. De Jacobis leaves Minkullu after midday on Sunday 29 July after celebrating Holy Mass. Monday the 30th he says that he will not reach Halay; Tuesday the 31st at noon he says, "I have three hours left."

They go on by mule, in easy conversation; he dismounts from the mule and sits down in the shade of a tree; he calls all the monks, suggests evangelical advice to them and blesses them. Shortly after he repeats and says, "And now I have two hours left. You may retire." He kneels and says his prayers.

He calls the monks once more an hour ahead of time and says, "Now administer the Last Sacrament to me." They administer it to him while he says at the very end, "Take this soul, let these others remain." Three hours after midday at the hour predicted, his hands folded as if he were already dead, while [still] alive, [and] his feet adjusted, he talks without giving the least indication of death, and then he stares at the crucifix with eyes transfixed. [It is when we are] half way to Alīgadē [that] he surrenders his soul to God.

After half an hour his teacher *Abba Seyfe Mika'el*, formerly *Wibē's* soldier, then Christ's, follows [him]. He was not ill except that he suffered a little, like the bishop and all the others, from the effects of the excessive heat. In 1841 he made the abjuration in Rome, and in '42 he returned because of illness, and also to some extent because of the studies, [which were] advanced for his age. He did immense good until the end by his good example, more than others by their learning.

The following day, the 1st of August, express messages come from Minkullu, one after the other, [demanding] that the body of the saint be sent back there. While it is discussed [whether to reply] yes or no, people, children as well as adults, arrive from Halay and Şena Deglē, all armed. The *nā'ib*, however, receives the consul's order to make them turn back. [The people] from Halay and Şena Deglē seize [the body] by force.

At the foot of Taranta the two start a quarrel; those from Halay want him to be buried at Halay and those from Şena Deglē do not want to yield. They are about to come to blows, both saying that if they have his body, they will be more prosperous in soul and body. If he accomplished much for us in life, so much more after death.

It was fortunate that, perhaps foreseeing all this, he had for a very long time often said that his grave should be at Hēbo in Şena Deglē, where all are Christians and [there is] a church founded by him and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. When they heard that this had been declared by the saint, they calmed down, and those from Halay surrendered him to Hēbo, saying, "Since he has deprived himself of so much good, we shall not disobey his wishes, as in life so also after death."

On Friday the 3rd of August, the invocation of Saint Stephen, the protomartyr, he arrives at Hēbo. The funeral is carried out with all the proper ceremonies, and he is buried the same day.

Until Your Eminence provides this orphaned mission with a worthy shepherd [as] successor of the lost father, we have the man of Providence, who has recently arrived here, the Reverend Father

Mr. D. Carlo Delmonte. If he is not [assigned] to us, there will be migivings that this mission will be abandoned. Because Mr. Delmonte has written, I have delayed.

I am the most humble subject
of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Zekkariyas the priest, student of the Propaganda Fide.

Hēbo 28 August 1860.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fols 596–597, Italian original. On the final page of this document there are some scribbled notes, but as they are quite obviously not part of the letter, they have been omitted here.

The above letter is in essence an Italian version of no. 67. Zekkariyas wrote a second letter to Cardinal Barnabò, which he dated the same day, 28 August 1860. This follows as no. 69. The opening sentence clearly indicates that the above was written first. When the priest had unburdened himself by telling the story of the death of De Jacobis also in Italian and adding his warning that something had to be done about a successor at once, he continued with an account of the events of the past two years.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 28 Aug. 1860

Most Reverend Eminence,

When I wrote on the date of 25 August 1858, I said that in my opinion I thought that I might be able to achieve more in the interior, but that I also believed it to be right to fulfill the wishes of my superior. In the said month, [some] days after I had been rebuked by the French consul because I was not willing to follow some of his whims, as my duty did not permit me [to do so], the bishop came from Halay to help me. The consul, who was not ignorant about the wrong he had done, immediately left Massawa for Egypt on a pretext invented by him.

The bishop then suggested to me to go into the interior, to my native homeland Aksum, the ancient capital with its obelisks of blue granite and Greek and Gi'iz inscriptions on white marble, and other monuments celebrated all over Abyssinia.

I leave Minkullu the 11th of October, arrive in Aksum the 1st of November, and as I appear for the first time in twenty years, I am well received among all classes of the people. The inhabitants of Aksum are more fanatic than [any others] in all Abyssinia, full of superstitions, but [even] more of pretensions. During five months, praise be to God, there is no lack of conversions in great numbers, even of (those) people prominent because of age, family, or rank, [people] of both sexes. But alas, it lasts a short time!

The enemy of good, the instigator of strife, mixes the good seed with darnel in the same manner as light with darkness. In the month of March commence the unceasing murmurings of the jealousies of the ignorant priests, the hypocritical monks and the *debtera* scribes, who liberally offer what they do not have, seven brilliant crowns of indulgence in Heaven, to whoever deprives me of my life. Unable to succeed in this because their party is not strong enough, and the other [party], together with those connected with me by relationship, is stronger, they invent another more efficient way and have recourse to a leader of a band [of soldiers], but even so it is not possible for them [to achieve their aim].

Meanwhile, day by day the hostile party multiplied. On the 10th of April, the Sunday of the Passion, two hours after midnight, the bells sound the alarm. Clergy and laity assemble; they summon me twice; I refuse. The third time I am compelled to go, and I enter the church where they all are.

When I appear and see such a crowd of people, monks in white shirts like sacks, others dressed in a cow hide like a suitcase, priests and *debtera* with a turban which looks like a tent, and the bare-headed crowd, I shiver as if I had a fever. At the same time I lift my soul (lit. mind) to Heaven, and the following passage from the Gospel presents itself: "They will flog you in the synagogues, and you will be brought before governors and kings . . . do not worry about what you are to say . . ."

With these thoughts my heart remains quite calm. And then, look, a hermit stands up and says, "From the beginning we have said that he is a heretic; he blasphemes the saints. He is sent by De Jacobis (Jacob) to spread discord. We only waited because you are to a large extent his relatives, who should advise him and have not done so. Now first, let him either declare here in the presence of everyone that he is like [one of] us, or leave our country. He shall not say Mass, nor any prayer in the church. Whoever eats and drinks (water), whoever provides food and water, fire and wood, whoever speaks with him, I excommunicate by the voice of *Abune* Selama and of all the living bishops, and by the bones of the dead."

— Let us question him. If he says that he is not of our faith, let us advise him. In the meantime, if he does not want to go away, annul the excommunication for us. — Question him now. — Are you

of our faith? — My faith is from Jesus Christ. — From whom is ours? — You yourselves know yours. — Do you not believe that our faith [is] from Alexandria [and from] [St.] Mark? — I know that of Mark, which is that of Jesus Christ; Alexandria's I do not know.

A monk dressed in a hide with an iron cross in [his] hand gets up and hurls himself at me to give me a blow in the face, so that I shall disappear like a ghost, or so that, falling half-dead on the ground, it [can] be said that I fell lifeless on seeing the cross. And behold, a beautifully performed miracle! Someone leaps, takes the cross from his hand, and people hear a whisper to him.

— Because you are my relatives, compatriots of mine, if you love me and have such zeal to assist me, help me with what concerns the body and not the spirit, which is from God. I am free to hold the faith which suits me, and you have yours. Besides I have told you that mine is that of Jesus Christ. If yours also is, why do you treat me badly, if not in order to tell me, "Leave the truth and hold to the falsehood."

They give me time until the next day to make up my mind, and two elders are released from the excommunication to advise me or rather corrupt me. In the meantime they separate [me from] my younger brother and put him in prison. The next day at 9 o'clock the bell tolls, and more people than on the previous day assemble; they call me and I am escorted by two soldiers, no longer to the church but to the square. Old and young come from the whole town, even those who know me and who kiss my hands; they crowd in on me from [all] four sides to have a look at me, what monster I am. I arrive at the square and see the governor with the soldiers, clergy and laity seated on granite steps of immense size, where the ancient emperors were crowned, and the crowd, some [seated] on the ground and some standing.

When he sees me, a monk thunders an excommunication saying, "Whoever does not throw a stone at him is the enemy of Mary." On hearing this humane statement many weep and others laugh. A fierce general boasts and says, "Permit me, who has the power to flog him; I [shall] now make him take the communion." Others say that the interrogation should first be made.

— What have you thought this night? How have you decided? — Nothing, I am [the same] as yesterday. — Why do you not embrace the faith of your fathers, who have all died faithful to it? — I do not know the faith of my fathers. I do not know any other faith than that of Jesus Christ. I was very young when I left my country. However, even if I had remained until today, I would not have known anything. Now it has cost me twenty years to acquire this faith. I have searched by lamplight through the greatest depths of the night, [and at daytime] by the light of the sun, and you grant me this much time. — First we baptize you; you keep a confessor, take the communion, and we will grant you everything you want. — Do you not know that there is one church, one faith and one baptism; and are you not the ones who have baptized me? I will not do this.

On the order of the general four soldiers leap at me, and he tells them to humiliate me. One takes the turban, the second hits me in the face, the third removes the cloth from my back, the fourth drags me [around] and stretches me a bit. A hermit dressed in the hard hides of two cows put together as a mantle leaps [forward], takes me by the hand, stands up [for me] and speaks on my behalf, saying, "What you are about to do has not been seen, nor ever heard of; he who has faith dies, he does not kill. Now if he is not willing to go [himself], send him away; the shedding of blood does not become us."

— Well then, let him go straight away, at this moment. — Give me time to bring my things; I had books and sacred things for the chapel. — Bring it now. — Give me porters. — No one handles the goods of a heretic. — Permit me to go to my house for a quarter of an hour. — It is not allowed; depart from here.

They give me an escort of soldiers, and I am well accompanied. Seeing the bad intention of the general and the wickedness of the soldiers, the monk departs [together] with me. When I leave the town a multitude of all ages and ranks and of both sexes follow me; some hold my hands, others my

feet ; some throw themselves on the ground asking me to change faith, others say, "Bind him; let us not allow him to go; he has the evil spirit; let us wash him for eight days in holy (lit. blessed) water, and let us place the Gospel on [his] shoulders, and you will see that he will be well." Finally they prevent the good monk from accompanying me, but after many requests they permit him. They forbid me to enter or even to take the road towards Adwa. The soldiers return half-way, and the monk escorts me to Adwa, as I wished.

When I arrive at Adwa, where four priests and Brother Filippini of the mission have arrived from Halay a few days earlier, I find almost the same thing happening there. They are troubled [however] by excommunication and not by violence, being less fanatic than the Aksumites. I leave for the camp in order to go to the king, who is in Serayē three days distant from Adwa, and the others go to Halay. I return from the king with a letter and a soldier, bearer of the letter. I arrive at Aksum incognito, and enter the house of my brother. As soon as it is known that I have arrived, the bell tolls. The soldier goes with the letter and finds everyone assembled, both clergy and laity. He hands over the letter. They refuse to read it; then they read it, throw it away, and insult the soldier. Next they threaten to put fire to the house where I am. My hosts make me leave in secret during the night. I set out for Halay, and the soldier goes to the camp to complain. The king is infuriated when he hears about it. The bishop writes to the king, who replies that when he will be in the neighbourhood, he will settle it. Meanwhile he tells me to wait at Adwa.

On 15 April I arrive at Adwa. The king approaches at the end of May, but does nothing imprudent, [as he is] afraid of excommunication and is expecting the assistance of an army from France. Meanwhile, with all the excommunications and machinations of the priests, I am able to stay at Adwa, teaching in secret and hearing the confessions of the few Catholics there who are less afraid of excommunication. On 12 August the bishop writes to me about the death of Don Gabriele and tells me that he has written to Rome.

At the beginning of December Tēwodros comes to Tigray. The king retreats, and on the 15th of December I leave Adwa to go to Massawa. On the 2nd of January, in spite of so many dangers, I arrive safe and sound, thank God, at Asmera in Hamasēn. There I meet Monsignor Biancheri who has come from Bogos to go down to Massawa. I learn that Mgr. De Jacobis has left Massawa for Halay. At the same time that Count Russel arrives with Mr. Sapeto, Monsignor Biancheri descends, and I remain at Asmera until I receive a reply from Monsignor [De Jacobis]. On 29 January I receive the reply from the bishop at Halay and other letters with congratulations, because they knew of my departure from Adwa, but as it was not known where I had gone, it was believed that I was probably already in the hands of Tēwodros, and [so] they wept for me and prayed.

On the 30th I leave Asmera. Wednesday the 31st they have the tribe of Deq Nazo arrest me at Igwela, on the same day that the Akkele Guzay besiege Halay in order to take Mgr. De Jacobis and Count Russel by force to Tēwodros. They bind me and want to take me to Tēwodros. After one day's journey and five days' imprisonment they let me go free after paying 6 thalers through an acquaintance. On the same day they also lifted the siege of Halay, after the bishop had given the chiefs of Halay as his guarantors, and Count Russel [had given] Mgr. De Jacobis [as his], that he would not leave before going to Tēwodros.

On the 5th I arrive at Hēbo. I write to the bishop. He replies that I shall wait because all the house is occupied by visitors. On the 8th the count withdraws with his people to Taranta. Expected there by the *nā'ib*, he takes refuge at Massawa. As the bishop is the guarantor [for the count], his guarantors tie him up and take him away, so that he too will not escape. The 2nd of March the bishop gives orders that we should all go down to Massawa, while he will hand himself over to Tēwodros. All the monks descend with Mr. Delmonte. I refuse to descend in order to see how matters proceed.

On 5 March the guarantors for the bishop, considering [the matter] among themselves and knowing the cruelty of Tēwodros, escort him against his will to Massawa. I remain for one month at

Halay, during the days outside in the woods and during the nights in the village. Then I join two priests who have remained in secret at Hēbo, where we celebrated Holy Easter, the faithful of Halay also having come in secret. We stayed until the end of May, during the nights in the house, during the days in the mountains. Then from June, with Tēwodros having gone away and Nigusē drawing near, the situation has changed in appearance, so that for the time being and by the grace of God we are in peace and safety.

The letter of 18 December 1858, in which I am told, “We wrote to you on the date of 3 June 1857, and we have sent through the student Don Antonio Nadabo the sacred vessels repaired according to your wishes”, was received by me on 26 May 1859. Up to now I have not received these things, nor do I have any news [about them]. So what can I do when I am deprived of these things? I am obliged to leave the decision to Your Eminence. For the time being I believe a vestment and a chalice are essential. The other things are accessories.

Having forgotten [my] Italian, I write badly, without style, without cohesion, satisfied with the meaning. For this I ask forgiveness. I close here, begging you to condescend to commit me to the Lord, and kissing the sacred ring, I declare myself,

the most humble servant and subject of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Zekkariyas the priest, student of the Propaganda Fide.

Hēbo, 28 August 1860.

By way of accessories, I would be very happy if it would be possible to have crowns, medals, small crosses and crucifixes, similar to the ones of the other time to distribute to the devout members of the orphan mission.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fols 598–601, Italian original. This letter, which looks very much like a copy or an abstract from a diary, is an important primary source for events in Tigray during the two years covered by the account. That Zekkariyas may have exaggerated and dramatized his experiences at Aksum has of course to be taken into account.

Unfortunately Zekkariyas's limited knowledge of the Italian language has made it impossible to know exactly what he means with some words or passages. The above is as close as we believe that it is possible to come.

**Nigusē Welde Mika'el to the Catholic community and C. Delmonte,
28 Sept. 1860**

አመ፲ ወህሐመ ከክረም ፡ ሀኅረ ማት ፡ ወእ
ምልደተ ፡ እግዚአብሮሱ ፡ በ፲ ወ፳፻፶ ወ፲፱ ፡ ምት ፡ ።

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እም ኅበ፡ገጥ፡ሠ፡ገጥ፡ሠ፡

ኅበ፡ማኅበር ፡ ወአቡኅ፡ፆልሞን፡ቴ፡ሰላም፡
ሰክሙ ።
አንደት ፡ ናት ፡ ሓ፡ እግዚር ፡ ያዋናት ፡ ሓ፡ ። ኃዘ
ኑ ፡ ገን፡የሁ፡ባችን፡ነው ። እስካሁን ፡ ያላክሁ፡ባ
ችሁ ፡ ክሩት ፡ ነበር ፡ ሓና ፡ መንገዱ ፡ ቢከፋ፡ን
ው ። እሳንተም ፡ እይዘገቡት ፡ እኔ፡ካለሁ ፡ የ
ጌተውን ፡ ፍትህ ፡ በሳንት ፡ አላጎዳልም ። እ
ባት ፡ ሲያልፍ ፡ ልጅ ፡ ሲተርፍ ፡ የውና ።

Haramat, 19 Meskerem 1853 after the birth of Our Lord.

From King Nigusē.

To the community and Father Delmonte (*Abune Dolmontē*). Peace be to you.

How are you? May God comfort you. The grief, however, is shared by all of us. The reason why I have not written to you until now is that I was far away and the road was quite difficult.

Take heart. As long as I live, I will retain undiminished the love for you which I felt for your master. The father passes away and the child remains, that is [how it is].

Seal [King Nigusē of] Ethiopia . . .



ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 627, Amharic original and Italian translation. Why Nigusē should delay his condolences to the Catholic community—and blame the road—when he had written to Napoleon more than one month earlier and expressed his grief at the loss of the bishop (see no. 66 above) is something of a mystery.

Catholic clergy to Alessandro Barnabò, 29 Sept. 1860

መስጋና፡ይግባውና፡በጌታችን፡በኢየሱስ
ክርስቲስ፡ታደሰና፡ታሰ፡ኪዳን፡ቅዱስ
ቅ፡ቤተ፡ክርስቲያን፡ከገሃነም፡ሠራ
ዊት፡የሚጠብቁና፡የሚያዳኑ፡አጅግ፡
የምንጠይቃለን፡ሆይ፡አርክም፡ሰ
ላም፡ይሁን፡አደሰና፡በልባችን፡ገራልበት፡
ሰታላቅነት፡አንሰጣዳለን።

ጌታችን፡ሆይ።

አናቅ፡ሰልጆች፡የሳያስቡ፡ሳይናገሩ፡
የሚፈልጉትን፡ገር፡ታደርጋለን።
ልጆችም፡አናታቸውን፡መውደድ፡ስ
ሰበዙ፡የልባቸውን፡ገር፡ታሉ፡ይንገር
የታሉ።አኛም፡አናታችን፡ቅዱስቅ፡ቤ
ተ፡ክርስቲያን፡ሮማዊት፡አጅግ፡አገድ
ትወደን፡አውተን፡ሐሳባችን፡አገድን
ገልግላለን፡ይህችን፡መልክት፡ሁለተኛ፡
በርሰው፡ዳኛ።
ጌታችን፡ሆይ፡አገናገራለንና፡ወደፊት
ታችን፡ያድምጡ።ክቡር፡አባታችን፡አ

fol. 666r

ማቴዎስ
መዕረግ
15

ቅዱስ
ሰባሳ
7

ቡን፡የሰቅብ፡ወደፊት፡ሆሎ፡ከመጡ፡
ጋርመጡ፡አከገሞቱ፡ድረስ፡በብዙ፡መ
ክራተ፡ሠጥተው፡ኖሩ።ይሰቁን፡መናቶ
ታገ፡ካመጡ፡በም፡መክራ፡የሚበዛ፡ክርስ
ም፡ፈታድ፡ጋራ፡የጌታው፡አቡን፡ቢያገኪ
ሪ፡ሰጠ፡ባገድ፡ባለመሆን፡ገው፡አሰኪ
ህ፡ጌታችን፡ኢየሱስ፡ክርስቲስ፡ወአመሂ፡
ተናፈቅት፡ቤት፡በበይናቲሃ፡አተው
ም፡ያለው፡ጉታሰ፡አባታችን፡አያሰቡ፡አብ
ክት፡አገዳይ፡ረርስ፡አሉት፡ሲያበዙ፡ነበ
ረ፡ሆለቱም፡አገድ፡ፈታድ፡ያላሆኑበት
ገንገር፡ሆሎ፡አሁን፡በዚህች፡ወረተት፡
ልገድ፡ቶስም፡መልካም፡አይመለስ፡
ም።ከዚያው፡ገን፡አገድ፡ነገር፡ብቻ
አገናገራለን፡ይህም፡አገዳህ፡ነው።
ትድኩ፡ሳውሎስ፡አከመጣ
አፈትድ፡ኩሎ፡ሰብክ፡ይኩን፡ከማያ
ሰውን፡ምክር፡የተተበሱን፡ሰዎች፡
በላገጉ፡አባታችን፡አጅግ፡ደከ፡አለም።

fol. 666v

Praise is due to Him. O Your Eminence (lit. Highness), whom we love, and who by the power and covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ guards and saves the Holy Church from the armies of Gehenna! In our hearts we kneel before Your Eminence, saying, "Peace be to you."

O our master!

A mother does for her children what they need without their worrying for themselves and asking her. And because children love their mother very much, they tell her all that they have in their hearts. We also know that our mother, the Holy Roman Church, loves us, and as we wish to express our feelings we have once more written this message to you. O our master! Since we have something to say, listen to our appeal. Our honoured father, Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*), lived in great anguish from the time he came to Ethiopia until he died. Even worse than the troubles brought upon him by heretics was [the fact] that the heart of the master, Bishop Biancheri (*Biyankēri*) was not in unison with the will [of De Jacobis]. Therefore our father often used to pray, remembering what Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "If a house is divided against itself, it cannot survive" (Matthew, chapter 12). He did this in order that the diocese should not fall apart. It does not seem proper for us to write to you in this letter the reason why the two were not united in purpose.

በሐለዚህ፡ በጥጥሩ፡ ቃል፡ ገደባ፡ ካህና
ት፡ ገ፡ በሾሙ፡ ጊዜ፡ ለትድ፡ ከት፡ ከብክ
ት፡ መልካም፡ ስኬት፡ መልካም፡
መገገጥ፡ ተገኘ፡ በገራች፡ ድግግግግ
ኖ፡ የሚጠብቅ፡ ሰው፡ ከገደ፡ መል
እክ፡ ይታያል፡ ስኬት፡ ያሳቸው፡
ጠባቶች፡ ይህንን፡ እይተው፡ ሃይ
ማኖታችው፡ ከፈነደ፡ ከገደ፡ ሥ
ራታችው፡ ከመልካም፡ ነው፡ እኩ።
ሌሎች፡ ግ፡ ሥራታችው፡ መልካ
ም፡ ከሆነ፡ ሃይማኖታችው፡ መል
ካም፡ ነው፡ እኩ። 667
ጌታው፡ እኩ፡ በደገኔሪ፡ ግ፡ ሃይ
ማኖት፡ ከገደብ፡ መከራም፡ ከገ
ደይበዛ፡ ምሽት፡ ከገገቡ፡ ቢተኩ፡
መልካም፡ ነበረ፡ ከገገዜ፡ ከገገ፡ በድ
ግግግ፡ ለተከ፡ ስልጠናም፡ እኩ።
የመክራ፡ ብዛት፡ ግ፡ በመጋራ፡ መሪ
ያ፡ ከብክት፡ ይልቁን፡ ሰባሰ፡ ምሽት፡
ሰባሰ፡ ልጅ፡ ከገደ፡ ሆነ፡ በየሰቱ፡ ከገደ
ሰ፡ ። 170፡ ግ፡ እኩ፡ በ
ያገኘሪ፡ ለግታችን፡ በሳክ፡ የሚያከ
ታምሩ፡ መነኮሳት፡ ከጠኛ፡ ሲሆን፡ ነ

በር። እርሱም፡ ግ፡ ወደ፡ በገኘ፡ የሥድ
ሁለት፡ ተሳውከት፡ ሙሉ፡ ጥል፡ ለ
ሎችም፡ ታመው፡ ተመልስ፡ ጥል፡
ከገገዜህ፡ እኔ፡ ሊደ፡ ብዬ፡ በገድ፡ ከገ
ዝም፡ ወደው፡ ግ፡ ቢሆን፡ እልጠግ
ም፡ እሁጥችው፡ ከሆነ፡ ከሞቱ፡ በኋ
ላ፡ ወደ፡ በሳክ፡ መሥድ፡ የማይወዱ፡
መነኮሳት፡ ከሆነ፡ ሳከጠግ፡ ነች፡ እኩ።
ደግሞም፡ ካቡን፡ ማሳያ፡ የመጣ፡ መ
ልክክት፡ እይተው፡ ሲሆን፡ የሚ
ወዱ፡ መነኮሳት፡ ቢገኙ፡ ሥልጣን፡ በ
ሰጠሩ፡ እኩ፡ ከግታችን፡ እኩ፡ የፊት
ብ፡ ግ፡ ትርፍ፡ ካህን፡ የሰኝም፡ ብሎ
ው፡ ሳኩ፡ ማሳያ፡ መልሰው፡ ነበር።
ጌታችን፡ ሆይ፡ ሳኩ፡ ካልተጋ
ጠሙ፡ ከሞቱ፡ በኋላ፡ ይልቅ፡ እኩ፡ የ
ፊት፡ የችሙት፡ ግ፡ ሥራት፡ እገደት፡
ይጠብቃሉ።
እኛ፡ ይህንን፡ ሁሉ፡ ነገር፡ ስርሰም፡ መ
ዳቶችን፡ ካባሉን፡ ሃይማኖት፡ በ
ሌላ፡ የሆነ፡ ከገድ፡ ትገኛ፡ ነው፡ ከገደ፡
እኩ፡ በደገኔሪ፡ በሽሙ፡ ይከታ፡ እኖ
ግችም፡ በማለት፡ እይደለም፡ የኛ፡ ይከ

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However, we would like to mention one thing. It is the following. Our father was happy because he found people who accepted the advice of St. Paul, who said, "I wish all people to be as I am" (1 Cor., chapter 7). When he ordained celibate ministers, a good example and a good direction was found for the holy diocese. Since in our country a man who preserves his celibacy is regarded as an angel, our enemies of inferior wisdom who observed this said, "Their religion is wicked, but their discipline is good." But others said, "If their discipline is good, their religion is also good." But the master, Bishop Biancheri, said that, in order that the faith should spread and suffering not become worse, it would be preferable if people married and were then ordained. Therefore he said that he did not want to ordain celibates. But now we see every day in the first diocese that greater suffering falls on those with wives and children. Bishop Biancheri used to ask our father to give him teachers who would teach the Bogos. He replied, however, "Because two priests who went to the Bogos have died, and others have fallen ill and returned, from now on I will not order anyone to go there. If, however, there are those who want to go there, I will not oppose it." Now after his [De Jacobis's] death, he [Biancheri] tells us that he is going to expel from the house whoever does not want to go to the Bogos. Again, after considering a message which had come from Bishop Massaja (*Abune Masaya*), he said, "If there are monks who would like to go, I will ordain them." But our father De Jacobis had already answered Bishop Massaja that he did not have any ministers to spare. O our master! If he was in disagreement with Bishop De Jacobis when he was alive, how will he keep the orders that were established by him! Our reason for writing all this to you is to make the Catholic faith have firm ground in Ethiopia. It is not because we would not be happy if Bishop Biancheri were appointed.

Our joy has been buried with Bishop De Jacobis. But, Your Excellency, we expect four things from your kindness:

ታሐ፡ ነቡ፡ ደዕቅ፡ ብ፡ ታሐ፡ ተብራሎ
 ች፡ ነገር፡ ገገ፡ ክቡር፡ ሆይ፡ ክርሰዎ፡
 በሳገት፡ አራት፡ ነገር፡ አገራዎላ፡፡
 ፩ መጋር መርደ፡ አገዳባታ ች፡ በትሕት
 ና፡ በት ስግሥት፡ በቶትር፡ የሚጠብቀ
 ገ፡ መልካም፡ ልዕክ፡ በመከደደዎ፡ ደስ፡
 አገዳደዎላኙ፡ ለጅግ፡ ተከቶ፡ አላገ፡፡
 ፪ ሁለተኛ፡ የርሰዎ፡ የቡራኪዎ፡ ወረቀ
 ት፡ መጥታ፡ የተቀበረችው፡ ደስታ
 ች፡ ነገር፡ አገዳደታ ስነሳልገ፡ ተከቶ፡ አላገ፡፡
 ፫ ስለተኛ፡ የሚጠቀሙ፡ ባይነተ
 ች፡ የሥራት፡ ማሠራደ፡ ተሳት፡ የቶት
 ር፡ ምልክት፡ አገዳደሆ፡ ብሎው፡ አባታ
 ች፡ የጋር መራት፡ የገዳም፡ ሥራት፡
 አገዳደሆሎ፡ ጽሑፍ፡ ተከቶ፡ አላገ፡፡ 66፡
 ፬ ላረተኛ፡ ለኢትዮጵያ፡ የሚያ
 ጠራ፡ አታክልት፡ አገዳደሆ፡ የሚማሩ
 ገ፡ አክክሮች፡ በታሪክ ጋገዳ፡ አገዳደ
 ገቡ፡ ልገ፡ አገላለጽ፡ አላገ፡፡ ይህ፡ ገገ፡ ባ
 ይሆንሎም፡ ለሁሉም፡ ምስክር፡ አገዳደሆ
 ገ፡ አክክሮች፡ ገም፡ በትህት፡ አገዳደሆ
 ምር፡ የታሪክ ጋገዳ፡ ጽሑፍ፡ በመጽዋ፡ ቢያ
 ገሩ፡ ልገ፡ አገላለጽ፡፡

አገዳደህ፡ ቢሆን፡ የናታችን፡ ትዳስት፡ ቢ
 ተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ድካም፡ በነገቱ፡ አይ
 ሆንም፡ ሃይማኖታችንም፡ አየሁ፡
 ተሰቅለች፡ አገዳደህ፡ አትጠቀሙ፡፡
 ነገር፡ ገገ፡ አቤቱ፡ የኛ፡ ሐሳብ፡ በጥበበ
 ምራት፡ አገዳደህ፡ አምላካ፡ ናሱና፡ አርሰ
 ም፡ ለሚወዱት፡ ነገር፡ ለውነተኛነገ፡
 አናከገዛታለን፡፡
 ስትዳስ፡ አባታችን፡ ጥዮስ፡ ዘጠነኛ፡ ስር
 ሰዎም፡ ጌታችን፡ በጸጋ፡ መገረስ፡ ችዱ
 ስ፡ የተመሳ፡ ስድሚና፡ ጤና፡ አገዳደሆዛ፡
 በአገዛኝነት፡ ማርያም፡ አመላጅነት፡ አ
 ምሳካችን፡ አገላለጽ ስን፡፡

ይቤሱ፡ ካህናት፡ ደቲታ፡ ክቡር፡
 ጁ ከቲኖ፡ ያዕቆብ፡፡
 ወተጽኦራት፡ ዛቲ፡ መልክክት፡ ደግሚ
 አመጽሁ፡ ለመከረም፡ ወአምላካ፡
 ምሥራት፡ በ፲ወጭ፡ የገገ፡ ምሳካ፡፡

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1. Firstly, we hope you will make us happy by sending us a good bishop who will look after us as our father, with humbleness, patience and love.
2. Secondly, we hope to receive your letter of blessing, which would cause our buried joy to rise.
3. Thirdly, we hope you will bring to completion the monastic order which our father had started to establish so that it may be a lasting, solid bond of discipline and a sign of great love.
4. Fourthly, we beg you to enroll young students at the "Propaganda" so that they become durable plants in Ethiopia. However, if this is impossible for you, we would like you to station a priest of the "Propaganda" at Massawa to teach young men in Latin, so that it may be a testimony to all.

If this is done, the endeavours of our mother, the Holy Church, will not be in vain and our faith will expand from day to day and never disappear. However, our master, since our thoughts are of no significance in the presence of your wisdom, we will be governed by whatever you decide (lit. want). We pray to our God to give our Holy Father Pius (Piyos) IX, and you, our master, long life and health, full of the grace of the Holy Spirit with the intercession of our Lady Mary.

[This is] said by the priests, the sons of the honoured Giustino De Jacobis (Justino Ya'iqob).

This second letter is written on 20 Meskerem in the year of grace 1853.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 5, fols 666-68, Amharic original. There is no direct reference in this letter to the contents of the earlier letter, nor any indication that the disagreements on mission policy between De Jacobis and Biancheri had been raised. The letter referred to, however, is almost certainly Imnete Maryam's letter of 7 August, which he says that he wrote in the name of his fellow priests (no. 65).

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie, 7 Oct. 1860

አመጥ ወ፲ ለመከገረም በኃላይ፡
ወ አምላጭተ፡ አግራክነ፡ በገደብ፡ ህወጥ፡ ሃመጥ፡ ሃመጥ፡

ለላም ለገ፡ እቶቀር፡ ምክዳ፡ ጥብብ፡ ወእክ
ምሮ፡ ሊቀ፡ ጠቢባን፡ አግራክ፡ እንምንጥ፡ ስ፡ ዘእከ
ድ፡ ።

ለመቤቲቱ፡ ለወግድ ግ፡ ት፡ ለተዎ፡ ስላምታ፡ ይንገ
ሩልኝ፡ ብዙውን፡ ።

አምና፡ በመከገረም፡ ወረቀት፡ ሰድጂ፡ ነበረ፡ መጀረሱን፡
አላውቅም፡ እከገዡን፡ ምላሽ፡ እሳመጣልኝም፡ ት
ግራ፡ መጮሹ፡ በላይ፡ ያለው፡ ተራራ፡ ስሙን፡ ጽፎለዎ
ነበረ፡ እሁንም፡ መልሹ፡ እጽፋለሁ፡ ስላሁ፡ አጠናቅር
ነው፡ ምላሽ፡ ።

Amélie

የርሰዎ፡ ወዳጅ፡ የኢትዮጵያ፡ ብርሃን፡ አቡነ፡ ደዕቅብ፡
ግ፡ ት፡ በሃምሌ፡ በ፳፭ ቀን፡ በግድም ለወግድ ግ፡ ት፡ ለተዎ፡ ስላምታ፡ ይንገ ሩልኝ፡ ብዙውን፡ ።
የወደህ፡ ወራ፡ ንጉሠ፡ ንጉሤ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ወደህ፡ ይዘዋል፡
ቋረጅ ገሰም፡ ደጃች፡ ውጤን፡ ፈትዎ፡ ልጃችውን፡ ምስት፡
አድርጎ፡ ደብረ፡ ታቦር፡ አለ፡ ክንፍ፡ ጋረድ፡ አርማጭሆ፡ አ
ለ፡ አጅግ፡ በርትትዋል፡ ተድላ፡ ጊሉ፡ ገፊምን፡ አገው፡ ም
ድርን፡ ይዘዋል፡ እራስ፡ አለ፡ ይጃች፡ ይዘዋል፡ ወሎን፡ ወረ
ሂመኖን፡ አመጽ፡ በሽር፡ ይዘዋል፡ አኒህ፡ ሁሉ፡ ንጉሥ፡
ንጉሤ፡ አንድ፡ ናቸው፡ ።

ሁላደንን፡ ለክንፍ፡ ጋረድ፡ ነግሮ፡ ያከደዘው፡ በፊት፡ በ
ድሎት፡ የነበረ፡ የርሱ፡ ሎሎ፡ ነው፡ ሲያም፡ ተወግ
ቶ፡ ነበረና፡ በዘጠነኛው፡ ቀን፡ ሞተ፡ ።
ያገራችሁ፡ ወራ፡ ጠፍቶኛል፡ ተሎ፡ ልንሰማ፡ በግድም

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ነ፡፡ ስለ ድዋ፡ ያሉ፡ የጌታ፡ ሚኒሊክ፡ ለሰላሳት፡ ምግብ
 ተቸ፡ ማረፊያ፡ አባባላ፡ ላክል፡ አሉኝ፡፡
 የብርሃኑ፡ ልክ፡ ሁኖ፡ እንደሆነ፡ እንደሰደዱ፡ ስትሰጡ
 ትኖ፡ እለምናዋለሁ፡፡

ሠደጅሙ፡ አምናተ፡ ማሪያም፡ ዘአባ፡ ገረማ፡

fol. 171v

(At) Halay, on 28 Meskerem in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1853.

Greetings to you, O my beloved, full of wisdom and knowledge, the head of the wise men (*līqe tebī-ban*), Master Antoine d'Abbadie (*Igzī'i Inṭoniyos Ze'abedye*). Pass on (lit. tell) many greetings for me to madame and to your brothers and your sister.

I sent a letter last September. I do not know if it arrived. Until now no reply has reached me. I wrote you the name of the mountain which is situated above Tigrē Meḫohiya. And now I will write it again. It is called Aṭṭenaqir.

Your friend, the light of Ethiopia, Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*), died on the 25th day of Hamlē. The news here: King Nigusē has seized from Gonder to here. Qwareñña Kasa is at Debre Tabor, having released *Dejjach* Wibē and married his daughter. Kīnfu Gared is in Armachiho. He has become very strong. Tedla Gwalu has seized Gojjam and Agew Midir; *Ras* Alī has seized Yejju; Amedē Beshir has seized Wello and Werre Hīmeno. All these are allied (lit. one) with King Nigusē.

The one who informed Gared and had Plowden captured is a former servant of his, whom he had wronged. He was wounded when he was captured, and died on the ninth day. We have no news about your country; we would like to hear it at once. Mr. Michel's (*Gēta Mīka'ēl's*) servants (who are) at Adwa have said to me, "We are in need of food. Please send [something] to us."

I beg you respectfully to write to me if the flasks (*birillē*) were of the right size.

Your friend, Imnete Maryam of Abba Gerīma.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 171, Gi'iz/Amharic original. Though written in Gi'iz and Amharic, this is one letter which illustrates the growing influence of European customs: place and date at the top of the letter and the name of the writer at the bottom, in this case preceded by "Your friend", instead of the traditional "May this letter sent by . . . reach . . ." at the top and a date at the bottom, if at all. The letter was answered on 27 January 1861, according to Antoine d'Abbadie's note on the document. The French text inserted by him in the middle of page 1 of the document runs as follows: "According to Mr. Henry Henricy it was on 31 July 1860 [that De Jacobis died]. By his personal wealth he supported 2 to 300 persons, and has made the post impossible for his successors. Without him Mr. de Russell (*sic*) would not have returned to Europe." The September letter referred to is missing in the d'Abbadie collection.

Chief of Alitēna Bo'a to Théodore Gilbert, 8 Oct. 1860

Greetings to you!

Although the death of our father Mgr. De Jacobis has thrown us into the most profound grief, the pure and living faith which he has brought us continues, as always, unquenchable in us.

You are not ignorant of the fact that, because of our fidelity to the Catholic faith, they have flogged us, burnt our houses, carried away our cattle and destroyed our fields three times in a row. Always remain our father and remember us in our state of misery. If you come to Abyssinia, do us the great favour to visit also our country, which is situated on the road to Adwa.

Cover us, we beg and implore you, with the powerful protection of France.

Done at Alitēna, 8 October 1853 (1860).

(Signed) In the name of the Catholic population,
Atou (*sic*), chief of Alitēna Bo'a.

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 75, French translation. Whether the original was dated 8 October or 8 Ṭiqimt is impossible to know. On fol. 76 there is a note stating: "Translation certified confirming to the original. The vice-consul of France, Théod. Gilbert." The letter was transmitted with Gilbert's dispatch 20 Oct. 1860. The alleged signature "Atou" is more likely the title *Ato*, and the name is missing.

Aregawī Subagadis to Théodore Gilbert, 12 Oct. 1860

Greetings to you!

Today I find myself in the place of the governors who, because they maltreated the Catholic mission, have almost all died a violent death. I, who am aware of this and informed about the friendship which exists between the French government and *Dejjazmach* Nigusē, in fact make it my duty to inform you that I am determined to render you all the services which you might be in a position to require of me. I will protect without distinction all those who find themselves placed under your supervision; I will restore to the Catholic priests their old residence of Gwela; and I will favour, as far as it depends on me, the communications of your countrymen with my country.

Such are my intentions, which I am prepared to carry out the day you let me know that you indeed desire to accept my friendship.

Done at Gwela, 12 October 1853 (1860).

Aregawī, governor general and lord of the province of Agamē and the neighbouring districts.

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 77–78, French translation, certified by Consul Gilbert. This letter and no. 73 are obviously connected.

Aregawī Subagadis had originally opposed the Catholic missionaries (when his rival Wibē was favourable to them), but had later become a Catholic himself. He died in 1860. See O'Mahoney, I, pp. 64–65.

ሥርዓተ ክብር ማዕቀብ ለላክ ስጦታ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ

አሁን ግን የሞተውን ወራሪ
ሰሞተው ወደ ምንኩሱ መጥቶ
ተው ተተምጠዋል።

አባታችን ለአቡነ ደልባሎች ምሥጢን
ግግቸውን አንተ አከብራቸው ስለሆነ
ለሰላም ስርዓተ ክብር አንድም ስጥረት
የሌለው ወደ ሌሎች ስላይ ለሁሉም
አባታችን ወደ ሌሎች ስላይ ለሁሉም
አባታችን ወደ ሌሎች ስላይ ለሁሉም

ክርስቲያን ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ልማት ስለሌለው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ወራሪው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ ስላልተሰጠ
ወራሪው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ ስላልተሰጠ
ወራሪው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ ስላልተሰጠ
ወራሪው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ ስላልተሰጠ
ወራሪው ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ ስላልተሰጠ

ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ

ከዚህ በፊት ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ
ደብዳቤ ለሰብአዊ ሕይወት ለሁሉ

ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ
ለእኔ ስለሌሎች ስላልተሰጠ ሰዓት ስላልተሰጠ

ቶጥ ለቡነ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ያገቡት፡ ነው፡
 አገጅ፡ ከግብ፡ በኋላ፡ ዕለገኒ፡ አላ
 ገባነሙ፡፡ በከግብ፡ ማለት፡ ለ
 አባታችን፡ ለቡነ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ለቦገስ፡
 የሚሆኑ፡ ሩ መነኮሳት፡ ለጠኛ፡ ቢ
 ሉ፡ በከግብ፡ ይህን፡ ይህል፡ ሰው፡ ለ
 ምን፡ ሰበሰቡ፡ ሲለኛ፡ የነበረ፡ አሁን፡
 ተሙ፡ ነገር፡ ሁኖ፡ ተገኘ፡ ይህ፡ ገን፡
 ለኒ፡ ተሳት፡ ምስክር፡ ነው፡ ብለዋ
 ል፡፡

ፈርዲናንድ፡ ለሌገስ፡ ወደ፡
 ገንጾ፡ ገንጫ፡ የሚደርስን፡ ወረተ
 ት፡ ለምጥጥ፡ ተገኝሎ፡ ሰደደ፡፡ ለ
 ርሱም፡ ተተብሎ፡ ወደ፡ ገንጾ፡
 ገንጫ፡ አደረሰ፡፡ ኦርሳቸውም፡
 በአማርኛ፡ ቋንቋ፡ አንዲገለብጡ
 ላቸው፡ ወደ፡ ለቡነ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ሰደደ፡
 ወረተቱ፡ ሳይደርስ፡ ግብ፡ ከመል
 ከተኛው፡ ተተብሎ፡ አንዲገለብ
 ጡ፡ ለአቡነ፡ ቢያንኒረ፡ ብንሰሚቸ
 ው፡ ይህን፡ ወረተት፡ መነኮሳት ፡
 ማሳተሙን፡ ከፍተው፡ ያለደረሰ
 ውን፡ በሐሰት፡ ደረሰ፡ ብለው፡ ለኒ፡
 ገልብጥልን፡ ብለው፡ ሰጡኝ፡ አሁ
 ንም፡ እነሆ፡ አገኛ፡ ብለው፡ ለተገሰ
 ል፡ ሰጡት፡፡ ኦርሱም፡ ከኢጲስ፡
 ቶጶስ፡ ልፍ፡ ይህንን፡ በሰማ፡ ጊዜ፡ አጅ

V. Ho. prima che si era inteso...
 ...

In due...
 ...

Il sig. Conte...
 ...

ግ ስዘነብን፡ አውነተኛ፡ ሐሰት፡ መ
 ሆኑን፡ ሊያውቅ፡ ወራተቱን፡ ወደ፡ ገገ
 ሥ፡ መልሰ፡ ሰደደ፡፡ በግዚር፡ ቸሪ ነ
 ተ፡ እንዳሉት፡ አሳደረግነሥ፡ እንደ
 አድርገን፡ ቢሆን፡ በዚህ ምክንያት፡
 የሚመጣብንን ትግት፡ አሳንተ፡ ታ
 ውቱ ታላችሁ፡፡ አድርገን፡ ስንዲቢ
 ሆን፡ አሳልፎ፡ መስጠት፡ ይገባ፡ እን
 ደሆን፡ አሳንተ፡ ታው ታላችሁ፡፡

አንግዲህ፡ ክቡር፡ ጌታችን

ሆይ፡ ብዙ፡ ጊዜ፡ እርሰሥ፡ የጣሩበት
 ክቡር፡ የዕቅብሥ፡ የደክመውበት፡ የሌ
 ተየቶደ፡ ክብክት፡ እንዳይፈርስ፡
 አኛሥ፡ በጎችሥ፡ እንዳያጠቀ፡ ጠባ
 ቴ ለንዲሰዱልን፡ ከአግረሥ፡ በታች
 ወደተን፡ እንሰሥናለን፡፡

አንተ፡ አስብላችው፡ ያልሞቸው፡ ክቡ
 ነ፡ ደልሞንቴ፡ ክኛ፡ ጋራ፡ እንዳይቀ
 መው፡ ከክቡን፡ ቢያንኪሪ፡ ጋራ፡ ተተ
 መው፡፡ ምግባችንን፡ ከደዱልን፡
 ብለን፡ ብንልክ፡ እስክ፡ ምላሽ፡ ነቡን፡፡

አከተደመን፡ በራብዮ

ሥናልቅ፡ ሆነ፡፡ ከለዚህ ልጆች፡ ጭ
 ገተታችውን፡ ለአኖታችው፡ እንዲነ
 ግሩ፡ እንደታሰብላችው፡ እኛሥ፡
 ለኖንተ፡ እንነግራለን፡፡
 ሃይማኖታችንን፡ እንዲያስቀልን፡

*Questo è lo stesso caso
 abbiamo fatto, scrivendo di bene
 in un'istituzione comune tal'altro
 la via si trova che che si potrebbe
 copiare e usare, si carica la legge
 bene conosciuta, e che si conosce, e
 dato il caso che si presenta comune
 lo si utilizza tale, e si fanno sempre
 questi come talo, e si tratta sempre
 bene, e si può essere che si conosca*

*È un solo documento, e si trova
 nella quale opera, e si tratta sempre
 e alle le copie e talo, e si tratta
 in talo, e si tratta, e si tratta
 per questa via, e si tratta, e si tratta
 come, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 per chi, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta*

*Il X. febbraio, e con il 18. per
 tale, per loro, e si tratta, e si tratta
 talo, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e con, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta*

*Prima di tutto, e si tratta, e si tratta
 per questo, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta*

*Il 18. febbraio, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta
 e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta, e si tratta*

ሐዳቅኑ፣ እንደደጠና ልን፡ ከግዜር
 ጸጋ፡ ይህ መተላለፍ፡ ጸግመኛም፣ በል
 ባቅን፡ ጉልበት፡ ተምበርክክን፡ የተ
 ባረክ፡ ይጀምን፡ ቀለበት፡ እንደሚሉ
 ና።

ለልዕልናክ፡

ተሐታን፡ ወትደን፡

ተጽሕፈ፡ በሥራ፡ አማኝ በር፡ ደቲ
 ተ፡ ደዕቅብ፡ ክቡር።
 አመ፡ ፲ወራ ለዋቅምት። ወአም
 ልደተ፡ አግዚእነ፡ በ፲ወ፤ ያሃው
 ር፡ ዓመት * * *

ገንጾ፡ ገንጾ፡ የሐጻኙት፡ ወረቀት፡ ይህ፡ ሰው፡
 አቡ፡ ደላግግ፡ ግን፡ ለልቀበልም፡ አኩ፡ ለፍ
 ቅር፡ የሚያገባ፡ ወረቀት፡ እንደሆነ፡ ለፍ፡ ምክ
 ር፡ ሰው፡ ለለዚህ፡ ባይ፡ ም፡ አንዲያዩት፡ ክትር
 ጸሐፊው፡ ሰው፡ ለሐ፡ ቀላ፡ ። በ፡
 በታባት፡ ትጋር፡ አላለ፡ የግጽ፡ ቢሆን፡ ባን፡ የሴተ
 ዘርሰቲያን፡ ምግግ፡ ም፡ ለግብም፡ እያከያዝ
 ነ፡ ምበደር፡ ደምረናል፡ ግን፡ ባን፡ ደ
 ምሰላል፡ ግለግ፡ ምናልባት፡ አምተውት፡ ቢ
 ግ፡ ምልክም፡ ። * * *

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*P. f. ...
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 divertimento, per ciò siamo
 unitiamo colla traduzione
 affinché la veda.*

*...
 gito...
 ...
 nel...
 ...
 le preveniamo.*

Peace be to you, O our highly esteemed master, who brings the believers close to our master, the head of the church.

As children reveal what is in their hearts to their fathers, we reveal [it] to you, our father.

It is like this: Everyone knows—and you know—that Bishop Biancheri's (*Abune Biyankēri*) ideas about preaching in Ethiopia did not agree with those of Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*). Therefore he declared, "I cannot stay with you and your disciples (lit. children)", and went to Bogos. Everyone knows—and you know—that all his concern [was directed] only to Bogos, and that he did not care for us.

Finally in Yekkatit this year, when he was at Minkullu and Bishop De Jacobis was imprisoned at Tehonda, he wrote like this, "If death comes, look for someone else, since I cannot succeed you, carry out your rule and look after your monks in your place." He told us, "Therefore, when [De Jacobis] dies, His Holiness Pope Pius (*Kibur Liqe Pappasat* Piyos) is your father; do not disperse until he sends you a guardian." But now that he has heard the news of his death, he has come to Minkullu and settled there.

Our father had said to Father Delmonte (*Abune Delmontē*), "Take care of their maintenance." When we wrote to him to send us our stipends, Bishop Biancheri sent us this kind of letter. We have sent the letter so that you will see it with your own eyes.

Concerning "a debt which exceeds 300 has been left to me", first of all, it has not been left to him; secondly, the debt is 283; thirdly, his having borrowed was in order not to touch the money of the mission. The reason was to free Rizzo (*Rīzo*) and two others who were with him, because they were imprisoned.

Concerning "who gave permission for this number of people to join without [valid] reason", it is our father Bishop De Jacobis who has brought them in; but since he died we have not accepted a single one. Concerning "without [valid] reason", when he asked our father Bishop De Jacobis to give him five monks for Bogos, [De Jacobis] said, "Now the one who used to ask me why I had gathered so many people without [valid] reason found that this was a useful undertaking; to me this is, however, an important testimony."

Ferdinand de Lesseps (*Ferdīnando Lesēps*) sent a letter to the consul at Massawa to be delivered to King Nigusē. He received it and transmitted it to King Nigusē. The latter sent it to Bishop De Jacobis so that he would translate it into Amharic for him.

Before the letter arrived, [the bishop] died. We received it from the messenger, and gave it to Bishop Biancheri to translate it into Amharic for him. He gave it to the consul and said, "The monks broke the seal, gave it to me to translate it for you and stated falsely that what had [actually] not been delivered had been delivered. And now, here it is, take it."

When he heard this from the mouth of the bishop, [the consul] was very unhappy with us. In order to find out what was truth and falsehood he returned the letter to the king. By the mercy of God we have not done what he said, but if we had done it, you know what punishment would come upon us. You know that [even] if we had done it, it would not have been right to betray us.

Now, O our honoured master, we prostrate ourselves and beg you to send us a guardian, so that the evangelization of Ethiopia for which you have toiled and for which Bishop De Jacobis has laboured will not be destroyed and we, your sheep, will not be lost. In order not to live with us Father Delmonte, whom you told to care for us, is staying with Bishop Biancheri. When we sent and told him, "Send us our stipends," he even denied us a reply.

Really (lit. above all) we are about to die from starvation. Therefore we are telling you, as children tell their mother about their troubles, so that she will care for them. Pray for grace for us from God so that our faith spreads widely and our hearts become steadfast. And again, kneeling (with the knees of our hearts) we kiss the blessed ring of your hand.

Written by the disciples of the honoured De Jacobis at Hēbo, the humble subjects of Your Eminence, on the 15th of Ṭiqimt in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1853.

The letter sent by King Nigusē is this. Father Delmonte, however, said, "I will not receive it." If it is not a letter that merits friendship, [this] is a lesson to us. Therefore we have sent it together with the translation in order that you see it with your own eyes.

As it has become necessary for us, since we are in great distress, we have started to pawn the carpets and vestments of the church intending to return them when there is money. Perhaps it would have been better (lit. it is good) if you had been (lit. are) informed beforehand.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fols 615–619, Amharic/Italian original. The letter by Biancheri referred to and enclosed was dated 8 October and addressed to Zekkariyas, then at Hēbo. Biancheri stressed that he simply had no funds to use for the priests. In all probability at least the Italian text in the above letter was penned by Zekkariyas, but the fact that the letter was written in Amharic as well indicates that the priests and monks who did not know Italian wanted to be fully aware of what was written in their name.

In the two and a half months that had passed since the death of Bishop De Jacobis the crisis in the mission had apparently escalated to the level of open personal animosity between Biancheri and the Ethiopian clergy. Cf nos 65 and 71 above.

The letter from Nigusē mentioned in the postscript is no doubt the short letter of condolence on the death of De Jacobis addressed to the Catholic community—the *mahbir*—and Father Delmonte on 28 September (no. 70). Apparently the Ethiopian clergy expected Delmonte to send a reply and passed the letter on to Rome when he refused.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 24 Oct. 1860

Most Reverend Eminence,

I hope that my letter of the 18th of August of this year has arrived by now. I said nothing in it about the present situation of the mission, not because I would not have had anything to say, but for fear that I might perhaps stumble into what I ought not to speak of. Hence it would happen to me: He answers what no one asks about; he resolves what no one proposes; he speaks when no one listens.

On the other hand I cannot keep silent about what is very urgent, believing in my mind that I fail my duties, since there are those who have given witness to the Catholic faith with courage, those who have exerted themselves tirelessly in indescribable misery with the work of the Lord.

A student would not believe [it], if he were told about everything here, in particular what [kind of] life a native worker for the Gospel lives in this mission. Among other things, however, this much is true, that [provided] with simple water, together with a handful of roasted barley on a [heated] iron [plate], you do not lose hope, you are not discouraged, you do not pay attention to gossip, you are not blown away by every gust of wind, you do not for a moment give up the work undertaken, having placed your hopes, after God, in the hands of Your Eminence.

I repeat once more what I said in my earlier letter, namely that I have not received the sacred objects dispatched to me through *Don Antonio Nadabo*. I repeat again that the crucifixes, the small crosses, the medals and the crowns for the catechists, children and adults, and for the faithful orphans of the mission, inconsolable at the loss of the peerless bishop and loving father.

I close here kissing the sacred ring and requesting your sacred blessing, and sign,
the most humble and devote servant of Your Most Reverend Excellency,
Zekkariyas the priest, student of the Propaganda [Fide].

Hëbo 24 October 1860.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 625, Italian original. Aug. 18 is most probably a mistake for Aug. 28 (nos 68, 69).

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò [Oct.? 1860]

Most Reverend Eminence,

I am sending Your Eminence the manuscript of Mgr. De Jacobis by the hand of Mr. Henricy, since you told me to send it to you without anyone knowing. Before this letter we already wrote three letters: one which announced the death of the bishop; we sent another which described all about the death in detail, so that you would know; finally two others, all being within our duty, in order to reveal our sentiments towards Your Eminence. I hope that Your Eminence will not forget what I have said about the boys to be admitted to the college since it is very useful for the preaching in Abyssinia.

[So] says the most humble subject of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Abba Imnetu.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 626, Italian original. This letter is written in Zekkariyas's handwriting, almost certainly at the same time as no. 76. The letters mentioned are nos 65, 67 (the report), 71 and 75.

Gebre Maryam to Théodore Gilbert, 12 Dec. 1860

To the consul of France.

I greet you cordially; and once again blessing[s] in the name of the Holy Spirit for your humane actions towards us, the evil-doers. The Church, mother of all the faithful, as well as Pius IX, the father of all, rejoice because of your good deeds.

It is in the name of all the Catholics of Agamē that we come and ask you to please forward to (the feet of) the imperial throne our most humble thanks for the acts of kindness which the government of His Imperial Majesty Napoleon III has heaped upon us since your arrival at Massawa, and for the good which he in his benevolence does not cease to do to all Ethiopia.

The monks who called for your intercession with *Dejjazmach* Aregawī in favour of the persecuted Catholics have come home. Thanks to your energetic request, the prince governor of our province has not only handed back to us our church, usurped by the priests of the heretic bishop, and had all our possessions restored, but to please you he has also distributed food to the most needy.

We beg you to believe that our first duty henceforth shall be to invoke heavenly blessings morning and evening upon our powerful protector, and we shall teach our children also to bless His Majesty the emperor of the French, their benefactor, as well as his august family.

Written in the land of the Gwela /Agamē/ in the name of the Catholics of the province by *Abba* Gebre Maryam.

Gwela, 12 December 1860.

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 87–88, French translation certified by Consul Gilbert, Massawa 10 January 1861.

Abba Gebre Maryam from Gwela was one of the first group of Ethiopian Orthodox monks ordained by Massaja in 1847. He served in various places and suffered persecution more than once for his Catholic faith.

Aregawī Subagadis to Théodore Gilbert, 30 Dec. 1860

Alitēna, 30 December 1860.

Greetings to the consul of France, and may the blessings of the good Lord be with him. Amen.

Occupied in maintaining order and protecting the interests of my country because of the anarchy which again reigns in all Tigray, I have not been able until today to answer your letter and thank you for the gifts which you sent me through the monks as a sign of your friendship.

As you advised me, I have restored to the repatriated Catholics as well as to your missionaries their possessions and everything that people had robbed from them. If the Almighty protects me and condescends to grant my vows, I promise you always to take care of them and protect them. On my part, I claim the support of the French government, as well as your assistance and your good advice.

In closing, I shall let you know that I possess one more district called Raya, a district which has always belonged to Subagadis, my ancestor, and which is therefore my property; it is the most beautiful and most fertile part of my country. Water is plentiful there. This district, which is not accessible except from one side only, could also with advantage serve as a refuge for the Catholics in case of danger. If, after visiting this district, which borders on the sea, or having it visited [by someone], you should judge it worthy of being offered to His Majesty the emperor, I shall hasten to offer it to him as a token of esteem.

Your affectionate /signed/ Aregawī.

AACP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 89–90, French translation certified by Gilbert, Massouah 10 January 1861.

Welette Rufa'el to Wibītu d'Abbadie [1860]

ታይኔሱንጠጠ፡ ሙቢቱ፡ ስሉ፡ ሙይዘሮ፡
ወስተ፡ ጥፋጌል፡ ስጥይቱ፡ ስላሽ፡ ጸሐ
ማዲግ፡ ጸጋዎቹ፡ ጥ፡ ጸሐ፡ ጸጋ፡ ጸጋ፡
ጸጋሰታ፡ ገደቶ፡ ስጸላግ፡ ወረቀት፡
ስላጅ፡ ጸ፡ ጠተ፡ ገጸጸ፡ ገደቶ፡ ስሙት
ገ፡ ወረሽ፡ ስጸ፡ ጠፋ፡ ጸ፡ ጸ፡ ጸ፡
ቀጥግ፡ ስጸ፡ ጸ፡ ጸ፡ ጸ፡ ስጸ፡ ጸ፡ ጸ፡
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May [this letter] reach Wibītu, says *Weyzero* Welette Rufa'el. How are you, to the extent of heaven and earth?

Why, are you (lit. is she) not the one I have given birth to? [Nevertheless] you have not written a letter to me. It is seven years since we parted. Because news about you is not arriving (lit. is lost to me), I weep day and night.

Your brother Hayle Mika'el says, "How are you, really?" All the household say, "How are you?"

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol 164, Amharic original. The writer of this letter, *Weyzero* Welette Rufa'el, was the wife of Michel d'Abbadie (see ACTA I, no. 174) and the addressee their daughter Wibītu, who had accompanied her father when he left Ethiopia after his last visit, i.e. 1853. Accepting Welette Rufa'el's statement that she parted from her daughter seven years earlier, it can be dated 1860.

Innete Maryam Gibretu to Theodore Gilbert, 13 Jan. [1861]

(At) Halay, 5 Tīrr

አመራሪ ሰጥር፡ በሀሳይ፡

ሰላም፡ ኢሳባ ተ፡

ወ ደር ሰላም፡ ከሳክጥ፡ በጊሳ፡ ትሳገራት፡ ርገጥ፡ ወፈ፡
 ሰላም ጥ፡ ይህም፡ ከገደህ፡ ነው፡፡ ቲም ድሮ ከ፡ ወደ፡ ት፡
 ገራ፡ መጥ፡ ከገጥሁ፡ ጋራ፡ ሁሉ፡ ተቃርበው፡ ሁሉ
 ት፡ ቀገ፡ ከተሰሰ፡ በጊሳ፡ ፈረ፡ ተሰፈ፡ በሰላም፡ ገጥሁ፡
 አጥፍ፡ ነገሩ፡፡ ስለዚህ፡ የፈረ፡ ሁሉ፡ በተሰየ፡ ጊዜ፡ የታ
 መነ፡ ጦራቸው፡ ገ፡ ይዘው፡ በተመጡ፡ ገ፡ ከደርገው፡ ወ
 ደግሞ፡ ሌሎች፡ ተገደዱ፡ ከሰላም፡ ተከትለው፡ ሌሎች
 ጥገ፡ አዘርፈው፡፡
 ደህነገ፡ ወፈ፡ የሰደዱ ሁሉም፡ በሁሉ ት፡ መክገ፡ ነው፡፡ አ
 ገደ፡ መክገ፡ ይህነገ፡ ወፈ፡ ሳይሰሙ፡ ወደዚህ፡ አገደደ
 ነሱ፡ ነው፡፡ ሁለተኛው፡ መክገ፡ በሳገሮች፡ ገምናው፡ ጥስ
 ነት፡ አጅግ፡ ፈርተዋል፡ ነገሩ ነው፡ ያገም፡ ሁሉ፡ አገገደህ
 ስኛ፡ ተሳታ፡ መክረ፡ ሊሆን፡ ብገ፡ ነው፡፡ በሰላም፡ በታላቅ፡
 ጥበብና፡ ችርግተው፡ አምና፡ አገደ፡ ሰደዱ ጥት፡ ያሰኙ፡ ወ
 ረቀቅ፡ ወደ፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ አገደሰዱ ሳቸው፡ ይሰሙ ጥል፡፡
 ገጥሙ፡ ገጥሁ፡ የሳክጥ፡ ብገ፡ በርሰም፡ የመነገረም፡
 ታል፡ አለኝ፡ ነገር፡ ገገ፡ በመላክ ት፡ አይሆንልኝም፡፡
 እነገደህም፡ ሌላ፡ ወፈ፡ ሳገኝ፡ ከድፍሰ ጥለጥ፡ ይህች፡ ወረቀት፡
 ለመጣለም፡ ጥጋው፡ አገደ፡ አው፡ ተተው፡ ይከጡ፡ ት፡ በሁለተኛ፡ ቀ
 ገ፡ አገደግባለም፡ አገር ጥለጥ፡፡
 በሰላም፡ ይኮሩ፡ ከባ፡ አምነቅ፡ ዘገረማ፡ አልጥ፡፡



Greetings.

Yesterday, after I had written to you, I heard [some] definite news; this is it. When Tēwodros had come to Tigray [and] he and Nigusē had approached each other, and after they had lined up [their men] for two days, Nigusē issued a proclamation saying, "Cowards, leave us!" So, when all those who were afraid had left, he took his loyal troops and crossed over to the other side by way of Tembēn. Tēwodros followed him, after pillaging Adwa.

It is for two reasons that I have sent you this news. The first reason is that you should not set out to [come] here without having heard this news. The second reason is that the peasants are very afraid because of the guarantees [given] last year. And all the Catholics are saying that now there will be great trouble for us, and so they beg you in your great wisdom and kindness to send Tēwodros a letter like the one you sent last year.

I have a message which King Nigusē sent me to tell you, but it is impossible for me [to do so] by letter. Now, if I hear other news, I will write to you.

Give the one who brings this letter to you payment according to your judgement, as I have ordered him to reach you in two days.

I, *Abba Imnetu* of Gerīma, say, "Live in peace."

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 35, Amharic original. The content of this letter indicates that it was written to Consul Gilbert when Tēwodros had returned to Tigray for his second attempt to eliminate Nigusē's rebellion in northern Ethiopia. There was apparently as little support for Nigusē at Adwa as there had been in 1859 (see doc. 45 above), and so Nigusē took with him his most faithful followers and fled to Tembēn, where Tēwodros captured and executed him and his brother. See Fusella, *Yaṣē Tēwodros Tarik*, pp. 24–26. Innete Maryam seems to have feared serious consequences for the Catholics and turned once more to the French for help. The reference to "guarantees" indicates that some undertaking not to receive Nigusē and support him had been given to Tēwodros the previous year. This letter was published with a French translation by J. Perruchon in *Revue sémitique*, VII (1899), pp. 257–259. Instead of "he took his loyal troops" Perruchon translated "the faithful took their arms".

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 15 Jan 1861

Your Most Reverend Eminence,

The vicissitudes of the times cannot in the least diminish the sentiments which a son has for his mother; therefore he resorts [to her] in all his needs and shares all his thoughts [with her] in order to be strengthened with regard to what is good and right, examining carefully what seems wrong—not in the [current] situation alone, even if it were different—in spite of how we here perceive the news from over there, because “where Peter [is], there Rome [is] (*ubi Petrus ibi Roma*).”

As I said in my earlier letter, my way of doing things, according to the principles received in my education, is not to say anything bad about anyone, not to pay attention to gossip—because words never make facts—nor to tell everything that others do and what is meant by it. At present, however, I can only anticipate—in case [something] has arrived or will arrive over there—what I might be accused of here by Father Delmonte, who has been staying with Mgr. Biancheri at Minkullu for three months without writing a note to us, nor sending us a penny—let alone [by] Mgr. Biancheri. He comes here invested with authority over life and death, and says to several of the monks, “Get out of here, since you do not want to go to Bogos,” [and] to the young students, “Thus do I will, thus do I command; [let my] will be [sufficient] reason (*sic volo sic jubeo pro ratione voluntas*).”

Finally he tells me to get out because of two ideas, imagined and invented by him. The first is that I should have written against him to the Propaganda; secondly, having found an anonymous letter at Minkullu which criticizes some of his ways of acting, he attributes it to me entirely without foundation. First he admits that my name is not there, then he brings as evidence that he has recognized it by my handwriting, and instead [of showing it] he shows me his copy, saying that he has sent the original to Europe, and tells me, “Go away; it is impossible for us to live together; if [you do] not go, you will [anyhow] not be given anything to eat.” All this, he tells me, is on the orders of Mgr. Biancheri.

In the first place, to impute to me the statement that I do not want to live together [with him] by the assertion made against me without evidence, this is downright calumny. Secondly, I believe that he does not have the authority to condemn me so completely with a false accusation, without any evidence, even the slightest. “It [happened] after, so it [happened] because of (*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*).”

Finally, it is true that Mgr. Biancheri made his daily assertions, to which Mgr. De Jacobis did not want to listen. Father Delmonte has now joined him, and they threaten us all the time by saying, “If you want us to give you to eat, go to Bogos and do not write to Rome. Here we are your superiors; the money comes from Paris, not from Rome. It is sent to the Lazarist missionaries, not to the mission.” That is to say [it is] not for the native missionaries who labour in the vineyard of the Lord.

First of all, this does no credit to the mission among the Bogos: to extol to the third Heaven the progress of having built a huge church at great cost; on the other hand having no clergy for ten years, not even a deacon, much less a priest; always begging for a monk to teach the catechism, and a priest only to keep Father Stella company and to hear his confession. If they preach [to you] from a distance, we who are nearby know it all; it is different.

Finally, “man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” So why do they suspect [that] we should fail in our duty to write, and deprive us of bread in order to [have us] abandon our faith and our mission, where there is so much harvest? So great is the difference between these [men] and Monsignor De Jacobis, who always said, “Those who labour

with us are like one with us; we cannot do anything without them, and they achieve more than we." I often heard these words told to Mgr. Biancheri, but it was of no use. The tongue always moves to where the tooth aches.

They accuse us of having sold a cope. This is not true. Now that the money has arrived, it is a pretext not to provide for us in order to make us leave and be scattered. On the other hand it is true that after two months of great distress we gave [it] as security [for a loan], as we had already forewarned.

Mgr. De Jacobis often said to me, "Write, write to your superiors about everything that you observe." And I wrote very rarely. Now that it displeases them, I write frequently, not because of disrespect, but from duty.

Kissing the sacred ring, and asking for your holy blessing, I declare myself,
the most humble subject of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Zekkariyas the priest.

Hēbo the 15th of January 1861.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fols 8–9, Italian original. This letter reveals how desperate the situation for the Ethiopian clergy had become within a few months after the death of De Jacobis, mainly, it seems, because Biancheri gave priority to the building of the churches at Keren and Massawa at the expense of the Ethiopian clergy who had received their salaries or stipends from De Jacobis for many years. See nos 71 and 75 above and, for the situation as reflected in other sources, Crummey, pp. 111–112; O'Mahoney, II, pp. 4–9.

Tēwodros to Raffaele Baroni [Jan. 1861]

በሰሙ ክብ፡ ወ ወ ልዩ፡ ወ መገረሱ ተደሰ፡ ፊክም ለክ፡
 ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ይድረሱ፡ ከአት፡ በረኒ
 ፡፡ እንደተ፡ ሠነበት ህ፡ እኒ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይሠራ
 ገን፡ ደሳኖ፡ ነገ፡ ፡፡ የምሥራቅ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይ
 ል፡ ቋና ጽፎ፡ ወደ ጆቶ፡ ቱላይ ገን፡ ፡፡ ፍጹም ስን፡ የገደ
 ሱን፡ ሠዎች፡ ልጅኋቸው፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል
 ፡፡ ከሚተ፡ በቀር፡ ከሠልፍ፡ ያገኘሁትን፡ ሁሉ፡ ልጅሁት
 አንድ፡ አልተውሁም፡ ወደያው፡ ተከታተቱ፡ ተሸገ
 ራ፡ ሊባ፡ ንጉሤን፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ ከነሠራዊ
 ቱ፡ ልጅሁት፡ አኩሰም፡ ከሚዳው፡ ላይ፡ እገተም፡ ቶ
 ሎ፡ ናልኝ፡ ፡፡ ከዕንግሊዝ፡ ንግሥት፡ ከወደጅ፡ እግዚ
 አብሔር፡ ያደረገልኝን፡ የደሥቷደን፡ ወራ፡ የምልክ፡
 ሠው፡ የምሠድ፡ ነገ፡ ቶሎ፡ ናልኝ፡ ይዘህልኝ፡ የም
 ተላድ፡ ነህኖ፡ የሊቀ፡ መኪሰ፡ ሆሐንሰን፡ የኦቶ፡ ቡላዲን
 ን፡ ሠዎች፡ እስተሁን፡ ያቆዩኋቸው፡ ከኒ፡ ሠው፡ ካንተ፡
 ራ፡ ይላድ፡ ብዩ፡ ነው፡



Translation
 In the name of the Almighty God, King of the Kings, Theodoros
 Wrazem. I have the pleasure to inform you that those who murdered (whom
 chief was the Abbatin Garret) our friend Plowden, and Kithed Bili
 (Kraus), have been exterminated by me not one escaped. I also
 entered into Tregray, where in the plain of Sixcom, I have seized the
 rebel Lujac-Angouler, defeated and exterminated all his army. You
 must come to Adowah as soon as possible, being anxious to dispatch
 to our beloved and gracious Majesty the Queen of England, some of
 my servants to inform Her Majesty of all that has been occurred here.
 The servants appointed for this purpose will come with you on your
 return to Madhourah, and you will be dispatched hence to England.
 Faithful translation by R. Baroni

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Baroni (Borenī). How are you? I am well, thank God.

Good news: By the power of God, I have succeeded. I have destroyed those people who killed our friends Plowden (Buladīn) and John (Yohannis). By the power of God, with the exception of the women I have destroyed every one I found on the battlefield. I did not spare a single one. Then I pursued [my enemies], crossed [the Tekkezē] and, by the power of God, I destroyed the thief Nigusē together with his army on the plain at Aksum.

As for you, come quickly to me. Since I am going to send the news of my joy for what God did for me to my friend the queen of England, and since you are the one who will take it for me, come quickly to me.

The reason why I have delayed *Līqe Mekwas* John's and Mr. Plowden's men until now is that I wanted someone from myself to go with you.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

FO 1/11, fol. 226, Amharic original and English translation by R. Baroni. The English translation is printed in *Correspondence 1846–68*, p. 200, with a covering letter from Baroni to the British consul general in Egypt dated 23 January 1861, reporting that he had received Tēwodros's letter the same day and that the king was now at Debarq in Simēn. Baroni has taken considerable liberties in translating the letter. The greetings and the phrase "by the power of God", so frequent in Tēwodros's letters, have been omitted, while his simple "my friend the queen" has been elaborated into "our beloved and gracious Majesty the Queen". "The thief (*lēba*) Nigusē" has become "Dejac Negoosee" and *teshagirē* (crossed) has been misread as Tigray.

This letter seems to be the first one from Tēwodros to Consul Plowden's Italian agent Raffaele Baroni (sometimes spelled Barroni) after the death of Plowden (see nos 57 and 60 above). John Bell was killed in battle in October 1860, when he accompanied Tēwodros to avenge the death of the British consul, as was the rebel and nephew of the king, Gared Kinfu (not the cousin, as stated in Girma-Selassie Asfaw, David L. Appleyard and Edward Ullendorff, *The Amharic Letters of Emperor Theodore of Ethiopia to Queen Victoria and Her Special Envoy*, Oxford, 1979, p. 2b). See AACP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 83–84; also Rubenson, *Tēwodros*, p. 26; Henry A. Stern, *Wanderings among the Falashas in Abyssinia together with a description of the country and its various inhabitants*, London, 1862, p. 128. The final defeat of Nigusē took place in early January 1861, and his death on the 12th. In a letter to Tēwodros 5 November 1861 (BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 65) Baroni refers to letters from the king, including one which he states that he has passed on to Aden. In all probability it is the above. The others have presumably been lost.

Tēwodros was apparently worried about the possible consequences of Plowden's death for his relations with Great Britain, but instead the British government, through the the vice-roy of India, formally acknowledged "the very liberal and friendly conduct of His Majesty in connection with the late Mr. Plowden" (IOL, R/20/AIA/319, p. 15, Playfair to Baroni, 3 April 1861), and in July Baroni acknowledged the receipt of two boxes of gifts for Tēwodros in recognition of what the king had done to revenge the death of the consul.

For John Bell, see no. 63 above.

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò, 14 Febr. 1861

Most Reverend Eminence,

Prostrate at the feet of Your Eminence I greet [you] and pray. Now that the Lord in his mercy has given [you] to this mission in Ethiopia as protector and father, I communicate to you all my sufferings. And this is how it is. I came to Rome with the permission of Mgr. De Jacobis, and in order that the Catholic religion establish itself in Ethiopia, Your Eminence received us well and arranged so that we could reach H. M. Emperor Napoleon.

When Mgr. De Jacobis died, Mgr. Biancheri gave us permission, telling us to continue with what we had begun. To confirm this Consul Gilbert had [a letter] written by the hand of Mgr. Biancheri and forwarded to me. And look here [is] the letter; I send it to you enclosed in this.

Now as we see our enemy Tēwodros triumph and our friend[s] become weaker, he tells me to leave the community, and tells the community that he will not give maintenance, and will not receive anyone in person who is not willing to separate himself from *Abba* Imnetu. For that reason, since a monk who has left the community and a fish [who has left] the water are in the same situation, I prostrate myself at your feet and and beg Your Eminence not to be separated from the community; and I have nothing else to do and to consider all my life than obedience to the bishop who will be appointed by Your Eminence.

From the the most humble and devote subject of
Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Abba Imnetu the priest
Abba Imnetu.

Written in the forest of Halay the 14th of February 1860 (sic).

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 6, fol. 508, Italian original, signed in both Ethiopic and Latin letters. The year 1860 in the date is definitely wrong; the letter was written after the death of De Jacobis and at the height of the crisis between the Ethiopian clergy, *Abba* Imnete Maryam in particular, and Bishop Biancheri.

The letter was accompanied by one short letter in Amharic written by Biancheri on behalf of Consul Gilbert and signed by the latter (fol. 509) and another, also in Amharic, signed by the recently arrived Lazarist Father C. Delmonte (fol. 510). Both refer to Biancheri's decision to take action against Imnetu. The first (in extremely poor handwriting) states that the consul had earlier given Imnetu (Abnetu!) authority to conclude his business with Nigusē but that he would not pay the expenses involved: "Let it be at Nigusē's expense." The second, from Delmonte, is brief and clear: "Bishop Biancheri's answer is this. I cannot accept [anyone] who does not separate himself from *Abba* Imnetu [or anyone] who has taken an oath to someone else, if he does not recant, if he does not carry out my orders. This is my answer. [Even] if the cope and the carpet are sent to me, I cannot give any money [for them]."

Hayle Mīka'ēl to Guglielmo Massaja [1861]

My Father in Jesus Christ!

I ask for forgiveness if I come and disturb you by this letter, but when the son finds himself in distress he can do nothing but turn to his father to find the comfort and relief which he is looking for. After the doubt regarding the validity of my baptism had manifested itself in Kefa, I was calmed by your words, and my heart remained sufficiently in peace.

But then one night when I was going to sleep here, my old master, *Debtera* Asseggaheñ, a fervent Catholic, well known to you, appeared to me in a vision and addressed the following words to me, "How dare you celebrate mass, when you have not been baptized?" From that moment the uncertainty about my ecclesiastical condition has so increased in my mind, that I resolved a few weeks ago to cease celebrating mass and listening to confessions, not believing that I was able to exercise the ministry in good conscience in such matters as refer to the powers of the ordination. I have not ceased to preach and to teach; but the converts who do not see me say mass, and who do not know the motives which have made me abstain, begin to be concerned and to suspect I do not know what. I therefore ask Your Excellency to send a priest to replace me and to permit me to return to Kefa, because it is only by you that this matter can be corrected.

Guglielmo Massaja, *I miei trentacinque anni di missione nell'Alta Etiopia*, Rome, 1885–1895, V, p. 139, Italian translation. Though Cardinal Massaja's autobiography is somewhat confused with regard to dates, it can be assumed from the contexts in which Hayle Mīka'ēl is mentioned that the above letter was written not too long before no. 86, which is dated 26 February 1861. There Hayle Mīka'ēl follows up the matter as a formal request to Massaja for rebaptism.

The Catholic priest Hayle Mīka'ēl, or Haylu, as he is often called, was a native of Gonder, known before his ordination as *Debtera* Ababayyehu (*ibid.*, II, p. 117). He was one of the Ethiopian scholars who had assisted Antoine d'Abbadie in the search for and copying of manuscripts in the late 1840s, and had converted to the Catholic faith as early as 1848. See ACTA I, nos 105–107 and 116. Since he states himself that he was ordained by Massaja and the letters of 1848 reveal that he was at that time very well acquainted with the missionaries, it can be assumed that he was one of those ordained in February 1847, listed as Haylu by O'Mahoney (I, pp. 59, 230). They had been taught by De Jacobis and welcomed into the Catholic community without necessarily being rebaptized. For some the question of the validity of their baptism by an Orthodox priest instead of a Catholic later caused doubts and problems. See no. 17 for an earlier case.

Hayle Mīka'ēl to Guglielmo Massaja, 23 Feb. 1861

Doubts presented to His Serene Highness Bishop Massaja.

Shap, Kefa, 23 February 1861.

I, Hayle Mīka'ēl, of the city of Gonder, was baptized forty days after my birth in the church of a place which in the tongue of the Ethiopians is called Abora Gīyorgīs. Although I have been educated in schools, I am ignorant of what priest baptized me, since in the Ethiopian Church the entries (lit. formulae) in the books that must be kept with the parish priests are not written according to the precepts of the Roman Church (lit. ritual).

When I had left my homeland I came to Gwela in Tigray, to His Eminence Don Giustino De Jacobis, the apostolic vicar. Having listened there to the good Catholic doctrine, and experienced the deeds of perfect charity, I embraced the Catholic faith that I had earlier persecuted, and into the hands of His Eminence Don G. Massaja I renounced my errors, through the grace of God. Praise be to God.

From the time that I came to faith I spent one year at my own discretion. [Then], after spending four years, for the love of God, under the discipline of Father Felicissimo from Cortemilia, following the mandate of the above-mentioned prelate, I was confirmed (still ignorant of theology) by the above-mentioned Most Reverend Bishop De Jacobis, and ordained according to the rite of the Holy Roman Church, with the promise of remaining under the discipline of the apostolic vicar, the above-mentioned Massaja, and his legitimate successors at the will of the Church of Christ.

After my initiation into priesthood I came after a few months, together with the above-mentioned Father Felicissimo to Gudru, and found in the above-mentioned bishop a teacher for my faith. Sated by him with spiritual milk I myself requested to be admitted to the rule of Saint Francis, and longed to embrace the vows—the three common vows, with the addition of the fourth about the instruction of the heathen and the heretics—subject to the approval of the Holy See. After the promises for the first year had been fulfilled, he told me to wait.

As I progressed in this discipline, after one year had passed from the time when I began to study theology, in particular the rite of distributing the sacraments, doubt and anxiety came over me regarding my baptism, and depress me day after day.

The reason for my doubt is this:

Since there is no theology in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian priests do not perform the sacraments [correctly] when they administer them. They administer them—so it seems to themselves—according to custom; they lack a teacher to teach them to make sure that the act, the formula, and the intention are simultaneous. But—so that it be known—in Ethiopia whoever can read, and whatever ignorant person who cannot, is ordained at least nominally, but the learned man is not ordained. It is known how from custom and ignorance is derived a baptism, a sprinkling of water, of any kind. When they sprinkle water they baptize, saying, “I baptize you.” This is known.

Since the priests of Ethiopia are ignorant of how the sacraments are administered, they make sure of the act and pronounce the correct formula, [but] they do not make sure that the act and the formula are simultaneous; they finish the act itself (pouring the water), before a part or the whole of formula [is completed]. As the correct formula is found in books, I do not know whether [the carelessness] is

because they do not understand it, or not. Of the priests, some are [indeed] found who say, "I baptize you in the name of the Father; I baptize you in the name of the Son; I baptize you in [the name of the] the Holy Spirit. But I cannot give the names and competence (lit. persons) of the priests that say this; since it happened in my youth, it remains in my memory only like a shadow.

Keeping all this in a confused state in my mind I spoke, as doubt, perplexity and fear together grew in my heart, to the vicar of the Roman Church, Don Guglielmo Massaja, bishop of Cassia and apostolic vicar in the regions of Galla.

Given at Shap in Kefa on the 23rd of February 1861.

Father Hayle Mīka'ēl, in the world Ababayehu Fentarē.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fols 28–29, Latin original. Fentarē appears to be a nickname, probably having to do with a placename.

This document was produced by Hayle Mīka'ēl (no. 85), presumably at the request of Massaja, who forwarded it to Rome with a covering letter dated 12 March 1861 (fols 27 and 30; G. Massaja, *Lettere e scritti minore*, Rome, 1978, II, pp. 245–247). Hayle Mīka'ēl had not been educated in Rome, and his Latin is very poor. Since the language is quite confused and the punctuation of several sentences rather idiosyncratic, the translation of some passages must be regarded as tentative.

Massaja wrote that Hayle Mīka'ēl had harassed him on the issue of Baptism more than anyone else. The outcome was that Massaja felt obliged to rebaptize and reordain him and another priest named *Abba Ya'iqob sub conditione*. This was done secretly to avoid discussion (Massaja, V, pp. 151–152).

(At) the monastery of Halay, the 8th of Yekkatit, in the year 1853 after the birth of Our Lord.

We greet our master, His Eminence Cardinal Barnabò, the guardian of our souls.

O our Lord! We cry out to you strongly because of the death of our father Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*); secondly, because we lack a guardian like him; thirdly, because we are in need of provisions; and fourthly, because we are exceedingly troubled since we have not been able to get an answer from you.

When the enemy of the Catholics, Tēwodros, became strong and we abandoned our homes and sought refuge in the desert, we begged the master, Bishop Biancheri (Bīyankērī), that we [be allowed to] go down to Massawa and that he supply us with lodging and food. He wrote to us, saying, "I cannot accept anyone who has given his words of allegiance to someone else unless he repudiates [this], and unless he obeys my orders and separates himself from *Abba Imnetu*." We would never deny the oath we have given by the grace of God to obey the bishop sent by the Catholic church (lit. religion) from the seat of St. Peter. But because he ordered us [to do] what is impossible, we said, "Let it wait until a letter comes to you from Rome stating that you have been appointed over us." We have not, however, refused to obey his other orders.

Abba Imnetu was sent to you by the permission of Bishop De Jacobis. Regarding this as an offence, [Biancheri] told us to disown him which we refused. If it had been for [any] other offence, we would have disowned him.

And Father Delmonte (*Abune Delmontē*) has agreed with him and said, "Unless you send the cloak (*kappa*) and the carpet, I am not going to give you [your] stipends." And [in order for you to understand] that this is the real truth, here it is: read the letter which they worded and wrote in agreement and sent to us. We have already written to you saying, "As they refused us maintenance, we have pawned church property and borrowed money." We have told him to pay back what we had borrowed and retrieve the property, but he refused. Mr. Consul Gilbert (*Gēta Konsul Jilbert*), heard about this suffering of ours and told them, "If you don't give them, I will give them lodging and provisions." But they prevented him.

O our Lord, prostrating ourselves (lit. kneeling at your feet with the knees of our hearts), we beg you out of your great generosity and wisdom to send us a true guardian.

This is written by your servants, the Catholic priests who are subjects of Your Eminence, sons of the honourable Bishop De Jacobis: *Abba Tekle Giyorgīs* and *Abba Zekkariyas* of Aksum, *Abba Gebre Aga'izt*, *Abba Welde Sillasē*, *Abba Welde Abuyē*, *Abba Tekle Haymanot*, *Abba Gebre İyyesus*, *Abba Kīdanu*, *Abba Yohannis*, *Abba Aregawī*, *Abba Yosēf*, *Abba Gebre Şadiq*, *Abba Zekkariyas* of Seglī, *Abba Fissiha Şiyon*, and [the] other Ethiopian deacons and monks.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 166. Amharic and Italian original. See nos 75 and 82 with references, and other letters from members of the Catholic clergy, for the crisis in the mission. The Amharic word used in this letter for the pawned cope is clearly *kabba* (though written *kappa*) and therefore translated "cloak".

Of the twenty-five priests ordained by Massaja, six—Tekle Giyorgīs, Gebre Aga'izt, Welde Sillasē, Welde Abuyē, Tekle Haymanot, and Gebre Şadiq—signed this letter; of the ten ordained by De Jacobis, five—Gebre İyyesus, Kīdanu, Yohannis, Aregawī, and Zekkariyas of Seglī—signed. Three names do not appear in O'Mahoney's lists (*The Ebullient Phoenix*, I, pp. 230–231).

The letter shows quite clearly that Biancheri and Delmonte wanted to isolate *Abba Imnetu* from his colleagues for some reason connected with his mission to Rome and Paris (nos 36–37). Since Imnetu had undertaken the mission to Rome with the permission of De Jacobis (to say the least), the authors of the letter would not accept this.

Catholic priests of Akkele Guzay to Théodore Gilbert, 13 March 1861

We know all that you have done for us with the chiefs of the country during these very critical times, and we thank you from the depth of our heart. It is thanks to your competence that we and all the Catholics are out of danger today. We hope, moreover, that the wise measures taken by you will save your poor co-religionists from all persecution and all misfortune in the future. Would you, Mr. Consul, [please] convey the avowal of our humble gratitude for the protection which your august master confers on us undeserving to (the ears of) His Excellency the minister of foreign affairs.

(At) Halay, 13 March 1861, in the name of the Catholics of Akkele Guzay, the native priests of the Catholic mission. (The signatures follow.)

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 89–90, French translation certified by Consul Gilbert, 20 March 1861.

Tēwodros to Théodore Gilbert [April? 1861]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

May the letter of King of Kings Tēwodros reach the consul of France, M. Gilbert. How are you? As for me, thank God, I am well. The letter which you wrote to me reached me quickly, and I was pleased with it.

Brothers in the Gospel, in the Cross, in Baptism, in the Unity and Trinity of God, are the sons of Jesus and therefore our brothers. I can therefore give you assurance that neither your people nor those of our [people] who profess your faith will ever be molested or tormented in the lands of which Divine Providence has made me the master; for not only the Christians, our brothers, but also the Muslims and the Jews can live in our lands on condition that they act in accordance with the laws of the land and obey the will of the sovereign.

But if there are people who want to teach us another faith, I want you to note that we have a bishop and a clergy, and that we cannot renounce the faith of our fathers, even if there are those who claim that the Catholic doctrine is the best of all. I agree. But let the patriarchs of Alexandria, of Antioch and of Constantinople, and the Anglican patriarch join together in council; let them declare that the faith of Rome is preferable, and the one pleasing to God. We will embrace it; and we shall make the Divine Oneness and Trinity our anchor of salvation. If, by the will of God, you could manage to have me acknowledged by the emperor of the French, I would be grateful to you.

Seal.

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 111–112, French translation certified by Consul Gilbert, annexed to a dispatch from Massawa dated 2 May 1861 (*ibid.*, fol. 110). Though the original is missing, there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the letter. Both the content (an early suggestion to form a World Council of Churches!) and the style, which comes through also in the French translation, are genuine. In his account of these events (*Vicende*, p. 534), *Abba* Tekle Haymanot has included an abridged version of this letter. See also Crummey, p. 110.

Tēwodros to Ḥasan Salāma, 17 May 1861



من باودروس ملك الحبشة الى حرمه اخنا العزيز حسن بك بدر حرمه مملكة السودان ١٨٦١

بعد اهدا جليل السلام عليكم والسوا من صحة سلامتكم قد ورد لنا حملاتكم وبخبرها ومن جهة كلامهم
 ان الملك عمر صار معلوما عندنا ولكن نحن ما البرناه من من الساء جلة كافية لانكم تعلمون انه
 قد صار المراسلة بالحقه بينا وبين سعادة اخنا ومجبا العزيز سعيد باشا قد زمر وسفير
 عبد الرحمن افندي جالسنا عندنا وبفر ما احوالنا اننا لم نرض بالعداء والخلاف على الرعية وسيرت
 اليه الخبير كوننا في هذا العام ما ارتختنا كل طاردين وسائر من على ضد المعاهد وقطع كلية من ملكنا
 لاجل راحة البلاد وانشا الله تعالى نصر الراحه في سائر ملكنا وتنتصر على هولاء المعاهد المنقلب
 واذ حصلنا فرصة زسله قبل الاين اذ كان باحاف عليه واذ كان تخاف من الورد في هذه السنه
 حصله بالسلامه بعد الخوف وهو يحكم جمع احوالنا ونسجحه هذا الظلم والتعدي الذي كثره
 فكنت نحن ناسر في مثل هذا ونحن ربنا قد اعطانا من كرمه السلطنه وشرفا على غنا من خلافة وكرمنا
 بالعدل والانصاف مما شاسته ذلك ونحن دائما راجبت دوام الحثه بينا وبين سعادة اخنا
 وعزنا عز زمر لاجل راحة الرعيه حتى تكون في خير وطمانه وعن الالانم كنا سقمنا بجمع هذا الذي صار
 ولكن من حيث اننا قد سمعنا ذلك بحواياكم وصار معلوما عندنا ونحن يصدمنا اصدرا امرنا
 السامي بدو جميع ما يجب وسلب عرجت وتخلص المظلوم من الظالم حكمه ما يلحق بحكمنا العادل
 كذلك من جهة الفري المراج اننا لم ارسلت ولا امرت ان يحضر في خراج ولا طلبه من الفريان
 واما اذا كان من جهة بلاد الفريان في من قدم الايمان اتم تغلبت وتسلمت الخجالات قد حيا
 بكموها ابحاثنا وجدودنا ولما كتبه ذنوبنا لده سبحانه وتعالى نزع الملك من ابايا واعماه
 للملكه حين ملكت القاه سعادة المحرم محمد علي ايضا تملك بالنسج على مملكة السودان
 - الفريان واخذها بسيفه وذلك معلوما عندنا ومحققا ولكن الان الله رحمننا ورجع لنا ملكنا
 ونصنا عليه وغلبناهم وطردناهم من بلادنا وملكنا على بلادهم ولم نرسل الي الان طاردين لم يكرهنا
 لاجل ثبات ملكنا وقبلما انشا ورع حصص اخي وعزينا عمر زمر واقبله هذا ذلك وهذا الج
 كني اني ارسل الرقه واقول للفريان اعطوني خراج او خلافه حاشانا من ذلك ولكن انشا
 انه يصير ارسال سنينا عبد الرحمن افندي من سنين ~~الملك~~ ولخدمنا طرونا ونسج سعادتنا
 الكرم سعادتنا جميع ما في قلبنا وقبل ما يجر هذا الاجري منا اولى نسا من الخلاف
 ويصير اصدرا امرنا الكريم الي عمر ابن النمر برد ما كلفه وحتر لا يصدر منه ا في نسا من الخلاف

١١٦٦
٥٤ القده

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

From Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia, to our dear brother, Mr. Ḥasan *Bīk*, the governor general of the Sudan kingdom. May his life last forever.

After presenting many greetings to you and asking about your health [and] well-being—your letter arrived to us and we understood it. As for the words of ‘Umar, the son of *Mek Nimr*, they have become known to us. We, however, did not order him [to do] anything offensive. Enough is said [about this], because you know that there has long been a friendly correspondence between us and His Highness, our brother and beloved friend, Sa‘īd *Pasha*, the sovereign of Egypt. His ambassador, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān *Effendi*, is staying with us. He knows all our circumstances, that we do not condone crimes and disagreement among the subjects. The reason for his remaining until now is that we have had no rest this year. Rather, we were chasing and raiding to drive out the rebels and expel them completely from our kingdom in order to relieve the faithful. If it is the will of God Almighty, there will be peace in all our kingdom and we shall defeat these stubborn rebels. If we get a chance, we will send him before the rainy season, that is if he is not worried, but if he is worried that he will not arrive safely this year, we shall send him in safety after the rainy season. He will tell you about all our circumstances. With regard to the iniquity and the injustice that you mentioned, how could we have ordered such things, we whom God by His grace has given the royal power and honoured above others among His creatures and ordered to uphold justice and equity? Far be it from us!

We always count on the continued friendship between us and His Highness, our brother and friend, the sovereign of Egypt, in order to relieve the subjects so that they can live in prosperity and peace. Until now we were not informed about all that has happened. As, however, we have learned this from your letter and it has become known to us, we are making public our supreme order to restore all that has been unjustly robbed and stolen, and to rid those who have been wronged from the evil-doers in accordance with what befits our just rule.

Likewise, with regard to the land tax (*al-qibrā’i al-kharāj*), I have not sent for or ordered land tax to be brought to me from the Bedouins, not even asked for it. As for the lands of the Bedouins, however, they were in earlier times—you should know and understand that from long ago—ruled by our fathers and grandfathers. When our sins increased before Him who is praised and exalted, He took the royal power from our fathers and gave it to the Galla. While the Galla ruled, His Highness, the late Muḥammad ‘Alī *Pasha*, became king over the kingdom of the Sudan and the Bedouins by force, conquering them by his sword. That is well-known and recognized by us. But now God has had mercy on us and has returned to us our royal power and our domination over them, and we have conquered them and expelled them from our land, and we took over their land. To this day we are still expelling them with all our force in order to establish our rule. Before I consult with His Highness, my brother and friend, the sovereign of Egypt, and say to him: this is for you and this is for me, how could I send [an order] to steal, and ask the Bedouins to give me land tax or anything else? Far be it from us! God willing, however, we shall send our ambassador ‘Abd al-Raḥmān *Effendi*, and send with him someone from our side, and he shall speak with His Highness, our gracious brother, Sa‘īd *Pasha*, about everything that is in our heart. Before this takes place, not the slightest dispute will be caused by us. Our noble order will be issued to ‘Umar, the son of Nimr, to restore what he took and not to cause the slightest dispute. May you live long!

7 [Dhū] al-Qa‘da, 1276 (*sic*).

ENA, Carton 19 Bahr Barra, no. 110, Arabic original. Style and content indicate that this letter was written at about the same time as no. 91 to Muḥammad Sa‘īd, and since ‘Abd al-Raḥmān left only in 1861, it must be assumed that the correct year for the above is also 1277. ‘Umar Wad Nimr had invaded Egyptian territory the year before, carried off some booty, and apparently claimed the right to levy taxes there on behalf of his new overlord Tēwodros. For information on these events, see Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 209–212, and sources referred to there.

Tēwodros to Muhammad Sa'id, 21 May 1861

من الابرار طهور تاودر ^{سید} سلفا مالک لجهته الي حضرت اجتا الاكرم المحترم مجنا واحنا الترت
 محمد سعيد باشا ^{لا} لاجل لدار المرية حفظه البرية وسفته بالقر والسور وجاه من كل شئ
 بعد هذا جليل السلام الوافر والمجد التاكز والسوال عن حضرت ^{العاظم} الفاضل علم حضرتكم انه وصلنا
 الخاوي اجار صلاتكم الموعود في ^{٧٧} شهر ^٩ شهر ^٩ وحمدناه تعالى الذي اتم عهده وفاقه وما ذكرتموه ابي رواش الذي
 صار يخاله بمديرية بربر ومن جهة عم ولد النمر وما فعلوه من التعدي علي الرقية وطمعهم من الناس
 وقتلهم الانفس الركية الذي امر بقتلهم البرية صار ذلك معلوما ونحن الرلات كنا فارين عن
 العصاه من بلادنا والان بارادة ربنا اهلكناهم واجنا ذكرهم فلابد ان نأدي هولاء العصاه المذكورين
 ارسلوا ناس من طرف جنابكم وانا الحكم بينهم واربع ما خصوه واقصاهم على عديم كذلك علم
 المذكور لغيرنا ان بلاده هتت وجماعته قتلت ونحن كنا ساكنين اى معنا ^{١٧} ولتحتنا اسما بعد
 افندي نرسل لجنابكم كل شئ وانما حيث انكم ارسلتم ان نفيدهم سر ^{١٧} واولاكم فكلما ذكرنا
 تحفر ناس من طرفكم يتحاكون عندنا وترد كل شئ كما استخاف حكو مننا والعويدهم لئلا
 تاخر عبد الرحمن افندي هو بسبب فزونا على العصاه وتشييد مملكتنا حين شاهد عياله
 راحتنا ويخرج بفرحنا ويرجع لجنابكم بالسلامه حاملا لاشيا عظيمكم حين تزوجن وترون ما نجدكم
 به من راحتنا وتشيد مملكتنا وانشا الله تعالي بعد الخريف نرسله بالسلامه لحضرتكم
 وجميع اشغالنا نرسلها معه ودايما ارسلونا باجار صلاتكم ودمتم مشمولين بالقر والسور ح

١٧٧
١١١ سنة



From Emperor Tēwodros, the ruler of the kingdoms of Abyssinia, to His Highness, the most noble and respected, our beloved and dear brother Muḥammad Sa'īd *Pasha*, Protector of the land of Egypt. May the Lord of Creation keep him, grant him fame and joy, and protect him from all evil.

After presenting abundant and profuse greetings and praise, [of which] you [deserve] more, and inquiries about Your Highness, the most fragrant and triumphant, we inform Your Highness that your letter dated 9 Shawwal 1277 with the news of your well-being has reached us. We praise the Almighty that you are well and healthy. You did not mention Abū Rawāsh, whose uncle Maryē was in the province of Berber. And as for 'Umar, the son of al-Nimr, and the aggression committed against the people, seizing the property of the people and killing innocent souls, the protection of whom is commanded by the Lord of Creation, this has already become known to us.

Until now we have been on a campaign to expel the rebels from our country; now by the will of Our Lord we shall exterminate them and wipe out their memory. And to punish those above-mentioned rebels, send us people from Your Highness, and I will judge between them and return what they seized and [impose proper] retaliation on them for their aggression. Moreover, the above-mentioned 'Umar, the son of al-Nimr, has informed us that his country has been pillaged and his people killed.

We have kept quiet until this moment, until the moment of sending 'Abd al-Raḥmān *Effendi*. We write everything at once to Your Highness, since you wrote that we should notify you promptly by answering your letter. As we have said, people from your side who have become settled will be judged by us, and we will restore everything according to the law and valid customs of our kingdom.

'Abd al-Raḥmān *Effendi* has been delayed until now—the reason is our campaign against the rebels and the establishment of our royal power—so that his eyes might witness our peace, and rejoice in our happiness, and [so that he will] return to Your Highness in peace, carrying the good news to Your Highness in order that you may rejoice and be pleased with what he will tell you about the peace we have and the establishment of our royal power. If it is the will of God Almighty, we will send him safely to Your Highness after the rainy season. And all our concerns we will send with him. Please always send us news about your well-being. May you live long and enjoy power and happiness.

11 [Dhū] al-Qa'da [1]277.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is made victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, King of Abyssinia.

ENA, Carton 19 Bahr Barra, document 111, Arabic original.

This letter seems to have been the last one before Ethio-Egyptian relations deteriorated in 1862.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III, 10 June 1861

بسمه تعالى

116

سلام الله احياكم وعين المهين يرعكم فان غبتم عن الابصار حاشا القلب بسلام محمد بكم
اصيلاً تخص بذكره الى رفيع القدر والشان وينبع الجود والاحسان عمدة الافاضل والاطيب
المشار اليه في اعلآء الكتاب عين الوجود معدن الكرم والجود السلطان العميد الذي لا يحتاج الشهاد
الملك المظفر بتأييد الرحمان خليفة الله في ارضه الذي ان طامس الفسوق والعصيان ماحق الظلم
والظعيان فاشرجناح العدل والايان جامع شتات الفضل والاحسان جت دالله ملكه مادام الي
يدان بحق سورة الرحمان السلطان المجيد والملك السعيد والامام الحميم والملك المديين ذي الفضل
العديد والنصر التليد والامراة الكريمة والبطش الجويد صاحب الفضل والاستقامة
المحفوظ بعين العناية المتفوض بالعدالة القاير بالانصاف الفاضل الكامل الاجل
الواجد عالي الرتب كثر المصا در حميد الشيم المآب الا فخم من عاليت عليه الامور
وفتحت له ابواب السور ومن له الفضل علينا والكرز لدنيا الملكة المعظم الاعتر العزيز قد
الامام احمد الكرام الحامي اطرافه العاصرة السلطان نبلا ابو الفريسي اعزم الله ونصره وادام اجلاله
امامه فلام الله الاسنى ونجته المباركة الحسنى عليك وعلامن حضرة مقامك الشريف ومملك الرفيع
اللينف ان سالت عن افن في خير وعافية ونعم من الرب الكرم وافيه لانزلت في نعم القانين والباقيه ان سالت عن
حوال واخبار نجنا كنه شيف بلسنة كفايه وبعه الذي نفكر ترى واصل اليك اخينا ديني احمد مع كنه
لبعض اشغالنا الى طرفكم نتصور حالنا وذكرا المطلب جنابكم ان نكون نحن واهلى ابوبكر احمد ودينى احمد
شعهم في حمايتكم طالبين من الله وسكر هذه الحث نحن لما قمنا معكم قام علينا احمد بابك بالعداوا لاجلكم
كنا خمسة سنين منتظرين من اليمن لاجل خد منكم واليوم ارسلنا اخينا دينى احمد الى طرفكم لتجعلوا لنا طريق
في جميع الاحوال ونحن ما نعرف طول السفر وسفرنا في البحر اذا طال امره ايام او خمسة ايام ودينى احمد
ارسلنا اليكم والى ابواب مطلقه معكم وان لكم حاجه من طرفنا خذناكم تحت الطاعة علا الراس والعين والله
الولد دينى احمد لا يتخير يحيى الناباوا لان القلب متعلق به وانتم لا

الشيخ محمد والشيخ حيت دينى
والشيخ مغذير كويل عثمان والشيخ زوق
كلهم في الطاعة مرادهم ان يكونوا في حمايتكم

الشيخ
الشيخ
اول

تحتاج الوصية
ودمتم في حفظ الله
والسلام

وهذا المشايخ من دسى الى تجرد السلام

In the name of the Almighty.

May the peace of God revive you and may the eyes of the Protector guard you. Even if you are concealed from vision, God forbid that [our] heart forgets you. May [this] greeting be renewed morning and evening. This refers to

the glorious in power and rank,
the peerless in charity and bounty,
the pillar among notables and nobles,
foreshadowed in the Book Sublime;

the fountain of all being,
the well of largesse and of lavishness,
the chief *sulṭān* who needs no testimony,
the king, victorious through Him who is Compassionate;

the *khālifa* of God in the land of the Judge,
who quells iniquity and disobedience,
who topples tyranny and vile injustice,
who spreads the wings of justice and of faith,
who embodies divers loyalties and virtues—
may God revive his royal power as long as faith is professed,
as it is written in the Chapter of the Compassionate;

glorious *sulṭān* and triumphant king,
valiant commander, king exalted,
gifted with virtues untold and ageless victories,
with power firm and courage flawless,
endowed with lenience and fairness,
guided by the eye of Providence, invested with justice;

steadfast in his integrity,
virtuous, perfect, sublime, most opulent,
noble, high-born, laudable of nature,
the refuge most exemplary,
with whom are placed our matters of concern,
for whom are open the gates of happiness,
in whom we meet with favour and with graciousness;

honoured, glorified, most powerful and mighty,
model of the eminent and most illustrious,
protector of his prosperous lands,
Sulṭān Napoleon (Nabulāyū) the Frenchman.

May God make him strong and victorious;
may He sustain his glory. Amen.

Now, [may] the peace of God the Sublime and His blessed and excellent grace be upon you and upon those who attend your noble presence and exalted and lofty residence. If you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. The grace of our Lord the Beneficent is enough to keep me in the felicity of the passing and the everlasting [world].

If you ask about conditions and news, our dear friend, the commander-in-chief (*kumandir shif*) can tell you enough. Next, what we inform you about is that you will see our brother, Dīnī Aḥmad,

coming to you with the commander-in-chief for some business of ours, which you will conclude for us. And what we request from Your Honour is that we and the family of Abū Bakr Aḥmad and Dīnī Aḥmad and Šālih Shaḥīm, be under your protection. We ask this from God and from you, because when we sided with you, Aḥmad *Pasha* attacked us because of you and (one word illegible) to you. For five years we were separated from Yemen because of [our] service to you. Today we have sent our brother Dīnī Aḥmad to your country so that you will find a solution for us in all matters. We do not know the length of the journey—it is by sea we travel—if it takes more than four or five days, so we have sent Dīnī Aḥmad. The desired reply [to] the main issue is with him. If you need anything from us, we are your servants and of our own free will (lit. willingly) obedient to you.

May God (one word illegible) son Dīnī Aḥmad so that he does not become confused and (so that he) will come [back] to us as soon as possible because [our] heart is affectionately attached to him, and you do not need to be reminded of this. May you live in the care [of God].

Verified.

Seal: Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm.

The *shaykh* of Tajura, Muḥammad; the *shaykh* of Rahīta, Dīnī; the *shaykh* of Mi'dhir(?), Kūlu 'Uthmān; and the *shaykh* of(?) Rūfa are all in agreement (lit. obedience), and their wish is to be under your protection. These *shaykhs* govern from Desē (Disī) to Tajura and (one word illegible).

Dated Monday, the 1st of the sacred [month of Dhū] al-Ḥijja, 1277 A. H.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 144, Arabic original. This letter introduced Abū Bakr's relative Dīnī Aḥmad who, on behalf of Abū Bakr and the four *shaykhs* listed after the seal, was sent to Paris with the French captain Fleuriot de Langle to follow up the planned sale to the French government of a port on the Afar coast. See nos 31 and 98.

There seems to have been some confusion about the names or identities of some of the people involved. In the treaty signed the following year (no. 98) the *shaykh* of Tajura appears as Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (or Ḥumad) and the *shaykh* of Rahīta as Dīnī ibn Muḥammad, both with the title of *sulṭān*. We have not been able to identify the place or district called Mi'dhir. Kūlu 'Uthmān appears as Kulū 'Uthmān in the preamble and in article V of the treaty, but not among the signatures under the text. The *shaykh* of Rūfa (or possibly *Shaykh* Rūfa) is only mentioned in this letter. Instead a *Sulṭān* La'īta appears in the preamble of the treaty and in its article V, where he is identified as the chief of the tribe of the Debene; he did not, however, countersign the treaty nor did the *shaykh* of Rūfa do so. But in the treaty-making with the French about further territories in 1884–85 a *Sulṭān* Aḥmad La'īta of Tajura and/or Gobad emerges as an important person (AOM.CFS, Traités 7, nos 871, 874–875) For the background of the mission of Dīnī Aḥmad and the treaty see George Malécot, "Les voyageurs français et les relations entre la France et l'Abyssinie de 1835 à 1870", *Revue française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, LVIII, pp. 313–320.

Though clearly outside the territories of the listed chiefs, "Disī" is almost certainly the island of Desē in the Gulf of Zula, rendered "Dessi, Dessei, Dissei, Disseh" in the European literature.

The words indicated as illegible are more or less hidden by the binding of the volume.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Alessandro Barnabò, 12 Dec. 1861

Most Reverend Eminence,

What Mr. Biancheri, like the others, has held back until the 1st of November, the day of his departure, had already been written and handed over to him on the date of 15 September of this year in reply to the paper of 26 April of the current year, in which he accuses me of schism and hopes that I will admit [this] with docility and return to the sound path, so that, having invited also the others who were led astray by me, calm will be re-established in this mission. Although the accusations of this are false and such as to incite, rather than calm the souls, nevertheless, all that Your Eminence wanted me and the other monks to do is being done immediately, because God speaks to us through his vicar in Rome.

I would have spoken at length about the situation of the mission and about those who compose it, from the one side or the other, but, besides it being merely imagined that I am the first and for ever the last, I know well—and it is really as clear as sunshine—that, if told and documented, the conduct of some is such that it would be impossible to believe it.

I only say that if others love Abyssinia with a true love, no one [does so] more than I. So, when I saw evil multiply and increase, virtue diminish and vanish, hatred and vengeance rather than love, management of money rather than duty, absence of knowledge, prudence and faith—to have resorted to the Propaganda Fide, believing it to be my duty, so that it would be put right at an early stage, this is the crime, this is the schism, of which I should be accused.

Ancient history speaks of great imprudence exercised by Alfonso, the bishop of Abyssinia. History speaks of the great wisdom of the immortal priest Paez, the very image of Monsignor De Jacobis. Yet I believe, Your Eminence, that in our times there will be more substance, and there will come a time when he who is not present on the stage and does not see [things] today as I do will listen, and he who loves Abyssinia as I do will regret.

I stop here, begging you to try to condescend to recommend me to the Pope, kissing the sacred ring of his and requesting his blessing, [and] I declare myself to be for ever,

the most humble servant and subject of Your Most Reverend Eminence,
Zekkariyas the priest, priest and student of the Propaganda.

Hēbo the 12th of December 1861.

P.S. The letter which was sent by the Supreme Pope to Nigusē, having been handed over and returned by him to Monsignor De Jacobis to be translated, remains in my hands, because he died before it was translated. This has been written already before, and I repeat it.

So says *Abba* Imnetu.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fols 257–258, Italian original. The letter from the Pope to Nigusē referred to here is no doubt the reply to Nigusē's letter of October 1858 (no. 36 above).

May [this letter] reach Antoine d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyos Debadī), who sends answers to the literary scholars of the whole world, and loves the Holy Church. Peace be with you, and may the peace of God be with you.

I am sad and distressed because you stayed away so long and did not come to Ethiopia. I remember your love for me earlier, and now you ignore me. Does a mother forget the children who have emerged from her womb? It is not only you, however, who have forgotten us, but all the people of Europe, and we have become like sheep without a shepherd. As Our Lord says in the Gospel, "I shall kill the shepherd and his flock will be scattered." For Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) is dead, and we are living until now enduring hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, exile, and all [kinds of] privations that fall upon us.

Debtera Gētahun, *Qēs Aše* Gebre Medhin [and] *Aleqa* Welde Rufa'el have died of illness. In Shewa fifteen biblical scholars (lit. learned men of the Book) died when King Tēwodros cut off their hands and feet. And all the monasteries of Aksum, Waldibba, Lalibela, Zhemedo, Debre Libanos and all [other] Ethiopian monasteries were looted.

Written on the 4th of Tahsas in the year 1854 after the birth of Our Lord.

(From) Asseggaheñ, the Catholic.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 178, Gi'iz original. For *Debtera* Asseggaheñ, see ACTA I, no. 146. In spite of the important historical information provided in this letter, it was not included by Carlo Conti Rossini in his "Epistolario del Debterà Aseggachègn di Uadlà", *RRAL*, 6, I (1925).

Asseggaheñ had reportedly renounced his Catholic faith in 1855 (O'Mahoney, I, pp. 139–140, 143), but had apparently recanted once more and makes a point of signing himself "the Catholic". No letters of his from the intervening years exist in the BN collections; it seems to be only in 1864 that Asseggaheñ begins to write more regularly to Antoine d'Abbadie. Of the three persons mentioned as deceased in the last paragraph, *Debtera* Gētahun was one of Antoine's early teachers and collaborators in Ethiopia (ACTA I, nos 71, 108, 139, 168); his son Gebre Hiywet announced the death of his father in a letter written in April 1863 (no. 124; see also no. 132). *Qēs Aše* Gebre Medhin and *Aleqa* Welde Rufa'el were also clerics from Gonder, not members of the Catholic clergy of Agamē and Akkele Guzay.

Treaty between Afar chiefs and France, 11 Feb.-11 March 1862

بين المقام الاقبح حضرة وزير الامور الخارجية دولة فرانس العلية وجناب الشيخ
دين احمد اب بكر وكيل حضرات السلطان محمد ابن محمد والسلطان دين وكلو
عثمان والشيخ علي ابراهيم اب بكر شمر والسلطان لعينه رؤساء قبائل الدناقل
العدالية والذبنة وغيرهم وهم خصمهم قرت وثبتت المواد الآتية الذكر والتفصيل

المادة الاولى

سيكون بين الحضرة السلطانية الامبراطور نابوليون الثالث واخلاق حضرة
وبين القبائل والعشائر الساكنة في الساحل المسمى ساحل عدل مصالحة و
مالملة ومودة وخذلة الى ماشاء الله تعالى

المادة الثانية

رؤساء القبائل المذكورة ومنفرداً حضرة السلطان دين يبعوا الحضرة الامبراطور
نابوليون الثالث المينا والمرسى ومحط السفائر الكائنة في قرب رأس بير المسمية
بابوخ والسهل المحيط من رأس على في الطرف الجنوبي الى رأس ضميرة في الطرف الشمالي

المادة الثالثة

صار هذا البيع بثمن معين ومقرر عشرة الاف ريال يعني خمسون الف و
خمسة

فزان بحساب هذه الدولة العلية

المادة الرابعة

يدفع ويؤدى هذا المبلغ على تقسيطين او نصفين التقسيط الاول والنصف الاول يدفع بعد تصديق هذه المعاهدة للروما المرقومة والآية المذكور النصف الثاني ثلاثة اشهر بعد تملك الارض المذكورة باسم حضرة اليمبرطور

المادة الخامسة

يكون هذا البيع ملزم كفالة عمومية ومنفردة لجميع رؤسا قبائل الدناقل وغيرهم وخصوصاً حضرات السلطان محمد بن محمد والسلطان ديني وكلو عثمان والشيخ على ابراهيم اب بكر شحم والسلطان لعنة رئيس قبيلة الدنبه وهم ارضيون وقابون وبوساطة وكيلهم ومخلصهم ديني احمد اب بكر

المادة السادسة

جميع رؤسا المذكورين يتعهدوا جميعاً ومنفرداً كل واحد بحسب قدرته على تسهيل مواصلات الفرانساوية القاطنين بابوخ مع داخل البلاد امربرام بحراً بتساعد جريان نهر عينغزو ونهر حواش ويكون للفرانساوية رخصة كاملة لقطع الاخشاب الموجودة في الآجام واللازمة لاستعمالهم والفرانساوية يتعمروا كذلك محلات الاستقاء والامياه الجارية الكائنة في قرب ابوخ وتبنى بالاتفاق موارد في المواقع المناسبة من غير طلب تضييق لبناء هذه الموارد

المادة السابعة

الفرانساوية القاطنون بابوخ يرعوا اسراهم يعني طروشهم وانعامهم

في ارض عين باو وفي جبل مجوره وفي حصاصه زلو و 2 عاو 2 قرب
رامس جاوتيل وما يكون لهذا الخصوص مناعته او طلب تضمين

المادة الثامنة

الفراساوية ياخذوا مملعا من بحيرة عسال وسانر المواقع الذين
الملح موجود فيهم من غير معارضه و ايقاع اذية

المادة التاسعة

رؤما قبائل الد ناقل وغيرهم يتعهدوا بشرط مخصوص وصريح ان
لا يعطوا سمع تكليف لبيع ارض من اراضيهم لدولة خارجة قبل
مشاورة حكام دولة فرانسه المقيمين في البوخ ويتعهدوا جميعا و
منفردا على وتلك التكليفات بعد ما ظهر عدم القبول من
جانب دولة فرانسه

محريرا في دار السلطنة بباريز اليوم الحادي عشر من شهر شباط
سنة الف وثمانماية اثنين وستون المطابق لا واسطه هفان
سنة الف ومايتين وثمان وسبعون محريتا

صحیح حمد ابن
السلطان محمد اللوحوم
ابن السلطان حمد

دين احمد الويكر
صحیح

Handwritten signature

صحیح الويكر
محمد ابن السلطان
صحیح

دين ابن السلطان محمد
صحیح

صحیح الويكر
محمد ابن السلطان
صحیح



ملحق

بعد المعاينة والكشف اذا منيا' ومرسى ابوخ لا تائب لدخول واقامة سفن كبار
تقيية المحل جناب الشيخ دين احمد تعهد باسم جناب الشيخ علي ابراهيم اب بكر شحم
وباسم روسا' القبائل محرق الذكرة المعاهدة على بيع بالثن المعين بالمادة الثالثة
بيننا ومرسى قبة الحرب وتوابعها او محل آخر تحت الشروط المقررة بهذه المعاهدة
تحريرا في اليوم الحادي عشر من شهر اذار سنة الف وثمانماية واثنين وستون المطابق
لاواسط شهر رمضان سنة الف ومانتين وسبعون هجرية ما

دين احمد الوبعك



ع



The articles which are cited and detailed in the following have been decided and agreed upon between His Most High-ranking Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Sublime government of France and the Right Honourable *Shaykh Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr*, representative of Their Highnesses *Sulṭān Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad*, *Sulṭān Dīnī*, *Kulū 'Uthmān*, *Shaykh 'Alī Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm*, and *Sulṭān La'īta*, chiefs of the tribes of the Adalite Danakil and the Debene and others, by whom he is authorized.

Article I

There will be conciliation and peace, and intimacy and friendship between His Majesty Emperor Napoleon III and the successors of His Majesty, and the tribes and clans who live on the coast called the coast of Adal, as long as it is the will of God Almighty.

Article II

The chiefs of the tribes mentioned above, and His Highness *Sulṭān Dīnī* on his own behalf, sell to His Majesty Emperor Napoleon III the port, anchorage and harbour located near Ras Bīr, which is called Obok, and the surrounding plains from Ras Alī at the southern end to Ras Dumara (Dumayrah) at the northern end.

Article III

This sale has been made at the fixed and settled price of ten thousand *riyāls* which means fifty thousand and five hundred francs according to the rate of this sublime government.

Article IV

This sum will be paid and settled in two installments or in two halves. The first installment or the first half will be paid after the ratification of this treaty by the chiefs enumerated and mentioned below; the second half three months after taking possession (lit. the transfer of ownership) of the above-mentioned land in the name of His Majesty the Emperor.

Article V

The sale imposes collective and individual commitment on all the chiefs of the tribes of the Danakil and others, and especially Their Highnesses *Sulṭān* Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad, *Sulṭān* Dīnī, Kulū 'Uthmān, *Shaykh* 'Alī Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm, and *Sulṭān* La'ita, chief of the tribe of the Debene, who approve and accept [this] through their representative and envoy, Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr.

Article VI

All the above-mentioned chiefs pledge collectively and separately, everyone according to his power, to facilitate the contacts of the French who reside in Obok with the interior of the country, whether by land or by sea, following the course of the river Aynazu ('Ayn'azū) and the river Hawash. The French will have unrestricted permission to cut the wood found in the forest and necessary for their use. The French will also use the watering-places and streams located near Obok. And by agreement reservoirs will be built in suitable places without compensation being demanded for the construction of the reservoirs.

Article VII

The French who reside in Obok will graze their herds, that is (lit. which means) sheep and goats, in the land of Ayn Babu ('Ayn Bābū) and in the mountains of Tajura and in the Hasasa Zalu (Haṣāsa Zalū) and in the hills near Ras Djibouti (Ra's Jābūtīl). And there will be no dispute or demand for compensation concerning this matter.

Article VIII

The French will take salt from Lake Assal ('Assāl) and from other places where salt is found without any objection and [without] being exposed to any harm.

Article IX

The chiefs of the tribes of the Danakil and others pledge, as a special and unequivocal stipulation, not to consider (lit. give an ear to) the authorization of the sale of any of their land to a foreign government before consulting with the officials of the French government residing in Obok, and they pledge collectively and separately to reject such authorizations after it has become known that the French government does not accept them.

Written in the capital of Paris, on this day, the 11th of the month of February (Shubāt) in the year of 1862, corresponding to the middle of Ramaḍān in the year of 1278 Hijra.

Thouvenel
Seal: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Verified: Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr
Seal: Trusting in the only God. Dīnī Aḥmad. 1273

Verified: Ḥumad, son of the late
Sulṭān Muḥammad, son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad

Verified: *Amīr al-Hājj* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm
Shaḥīm. Seal (illegible)

Verified: Dīnī, son of *Sulṭān* Muḥammad

Verified: *Wazīr* Muḥammad, son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad

Addendum

In case the port and harbour of Obok after examination and investigation is [found] inconvenient for the entry and anchoring of big ships which carry heavy loads, the Right Honourable *Shaykh* Dīnī Aḥmad pledges, in the name of the Right Honourable *Shaykh* ‘Alī Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm and in the name of the chiefs of the tribes mentioned in the treaty above, to sell at the price fixed in Article III, the port and harbour of Qubbat al-Kharāb and its vicinity or another place, under the terms established in this treaty.

Written on the 11th day of the month of March (Adhār) 1862, corresponding to the middle of the month of Ramaḍān in the year of 1270 (sic) Hijra.

Thouvenel
Seal: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Verified: Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr
Seal: Trusting in the only God. Dīnī Aḥmad. 1273

AED, Traités, Ethiopie, Convention avec les tribus Danakils, etc., Arabic and French originals; AOM, OI 19/104 and AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 159–162, French copies. Since both Shubāt and Adhār (February and March) are said to correspond to the middle of Ramaḍān, one of the two is obviously wrong. The middle of Ramaḍān coincides with mid-March, and it can therefore be assumed that the whole convention (including the addendum) was signed on 11 March.

Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr, introduced by Abū Bakr as his brother in the letter of introduction dated 10 June 1861 (no. 92), signed in Paris as the representative of the chiefs, who countersigned later (see nos 104–107 and AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 184–186). Note that the seal of Abū Bakr, which is unfortunately illegible, does not resemble the seal on the letter of introduction. Instead it seems to be the one Abū Bakr used on his letter to Hamelin 4 July 1858 (no. 31).

A comparison between the letter of introduction, the preamble, and the signatures under the treaty indicates that there was some confusion concerning the identity or at least the names of the chiefs, on whose behalf Dīnī Aḥmad had negotiated. Abū Bakr and *Shaykh* or *Sulṭān* Dīnī Muḥammad of Rahīta appear in all three places. Ḥumad Muḥammad's name has replaced the name of his deceased father *Sulṭān* Muḥammad Muḥammad of Tajura, who died 9 March. Note that the son of *Sulṭān* Muḥammad Muḥammad identifies himself as the son of Muḥammad, the son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad (see no. 107). Whether the name of the *wazīr* is also Muḥammad, the son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad, or he simply identifies himself by the name of the *sulṭān* whose deputy he is must be left open. Kūlu (or Kulū) ‘Uthmān of Mi’dhir(?), mentioned in both Abū Bakr's letter and the preamble, the *shaykh* of(?) Rūfa of the letter, and *Sulṭān* La‘īta of the preamble did not countersign. There are also a number of differences between the several drafts and copies of this treaty in the French archives (one of which contains no less than 15 articles).

The French text was published in De Clercq, *Recueil des Traités de la France 1713–1906*, Paris, 1861–1919, XIV, p. 513. Hertslet, II, pp. 628–629, has an English translation with “Sultan Diny-Koullon” and “Sultan Loheita” in the preamble and article V but neither of the two among the signatories. For further information on these negotiations, see Douin, II, pp. 192–240.

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Michel d'Abbadie, 12 March 1862

መጀመርያ፡፡



በሃካይ፡ 18/4 = 1862

በግሌ ለማ፡ ወደ ለኛ፡ አ፡ ትሆ፡ ጽፎ፡ የሚከተለው፡ ብርሃን፡ እንደ ትገባ፡ ለማ፡ ል፡
 ልጉ፡ ክብር፡ ታካቅ፡ ጌታ፡ በትሐትና፡ ቀርቤ፡ እጅ፡ እንሳለሁ፡፡
 ወደ፡ ፓሪስ፡ መጥቼ፡ ሳለሁ፡ ክርክም፡ ጋራ፡ ብዙ፡ ነገር፡ ልማክር፡ ነበር፡ ወ
 ደ፡ ስላንደ፡ ልጄ፡ ወረቀት፡ ስደ፡ ጂ፡ ለም፡ ነበር፡ ለንገና ጃ፡
 መጣሁ፡፡ አሁን፡ ግን፡ እርከም፡ የህዝብ ምቹው፡ አባ፡ ታክሱ፡ ካባ፡ እምነቱ፡
 ወንድሜ፡ የሰደደሁ ሳቸው፡ አንድ፡ ነገር፡ እነሆ፡ ብለው፡ አሳዩ ጃ፡ ስካም
 ታ፡ ንገር ልጄ፡ ብለው ጅል፡ ብለው፡ ቢነገሩ ጃ፡ ወረቀት፡ በመስማቱ፡
 እጅ፡ ግ፡ ደከ፡ እላጃ፡፡ ስለዚህ፡ ይህችን፡ ታናሽ፡ የሰካም ታ፡ ወረቀት፡ ጭቀ
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እኔ፡ ወደ፡ ፓሪስ፡ መጥቼ በት፡ የነበረን፡ ነገር፡ ለሌሊት ለሆነ፡ መንግሥት፡ እ
 ጅ፡ ግ፡ ደከ፡ የሚያሰኝ፡ ሁኖ፡ ሳለ፡ ወደዚህ፡ የተሳኩ ቴሰው፡ ቋንቋና፡ ኃገር፡
 ልማድ፡ የማይውቁ፡ አለሆኑ፡ አልሆነም፡፡ ይህም፡ እርከም፡ መጥተው፡
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ከኔ፡ የሚሰጡ ልጅ ት፡ ነገር፡ ቢኖር፡ ለምትለው፡ ሁሉ ለማይረገ፡ በ
 ታካቅ፡ ጌታ ለሁሉ፡፡

ተጽሕፈት፡ አመ፡ በለመጋቢት፡ ወር ለመልደት፡ እንደሆነ፡ በወያኔ ጊዜ
 ላይ ስም፡፡

ለክብር ምስጋና፡ እባ፡ እምነት፡ ማርያም፡ ለልባ፡ ገህ፡፡
 ወደ፡ ጌታ፡ ሚካኤል፡፡

The first [letter].

(At) Halay

I bow, humbly approaching the great and honoured master, who desires that the light of wisdom should shine upon (lit. enter into) Ethiopia, which is in darkness.

When I came to Paris, it was to discuss various matters with you. As I was told that you had left for London, I sent you a letter. I came back without our meeting. But now *Abba* Teklu, whom you sent, showed me a letter which said, "Here is something which my brother has sent to *Abba* Imnetu." When he told me that you sent your greetings to me and gave me news about you, I was happy. Therefore I wrote you this little letter of greetings.

I hope that you will come to Massawa sometime, and [then] we shall meet and discuss everything. If, however, [this] is impossible, and you might perhaps [decide to] write to me, I would like you to send [the letter] to the consul at Massawa.

While the matter for which I came to Paris was [something] that greatly pleased the French (*ferensa*) government, it failed because the person who was sent here is [someone] who did not know the language and the customs of the country. If you had come, it would not have turned out like this. For this reason the important people of our country asked me about you, saying, "Why did not those who are experienced come?" Even now all the members of the royal house and the nobility have not lost hope in the French government.

Even though our honoured father Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune* Ya'iqob) died, the [number of] Catholics has increased and not decreased. But after him, owing to the lack of a good shepherd, no one has been found to build on the place which he had consecrated for the building of a church. If there is anything you want from me, I will obey [your orders] with great love, doing everything I can.

Written on the 4th of Meggabī, 1854 after the birth of Our Lord.

The obedient [servant] of Your Honour,

Abba Imnete Maryam of *Abba* Gerīma.

To Master Michel (*Gēta* Mīka'ēl).

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 173, Amharic original. *Chewa lij* is here translated "nobility", following the translation of *weyazir* as "the royal house". The meaning is normally closer to "gentry", *mesafint* and *mekwannint* corresponding to "aristocracy" or "nobility".

Imnete Maryam refers in this letter to his visit to Paris in April 1859 together with *Lij* Taqayē and Father La-péreuse (see nos 37, 44, 46). The person who reportedly failed in his mission because he was ignorant of "the language and customs" of Ethiopia is no doubt Count Russel. It has been impossible to locate the letter Imnete Maryam says that he wrote to Michel d'Abbadie when he was in Paris.

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Antoine d'Abbadie, 12 March 1862

ፎቶ

በሐላይ።

179
cop. 24 March 1862

በታላቅ፣ ትሐትና፣ ቀርቤ፣ ለታላቅ፣ ወደጅ፣ የገለጸህ ትኩረት፣
 ሁሉ፣ እለቃ፣ ክቡር፣ ጌታ፣ ስላም፣ ክላለጡ፣ ክጅም፣ ክነሳ
 ለኑ።
 ከፓሪስ፣ ወደአገሪ፣ ከመጣኩ፣ በጊሳ፣ ጸፍልኝ፣ ደሉኝ፣ የተ
 ራራውን፣ ስም፣ አጠናቅር፣ ይገላል፣ ብዬሁ ለተገዢ፣ ጽሑፍ
 ለም፣ ነበር፣ ክከገሁን፣ የርሰሎን፣ ወረቀት፣ አሳየሁምና፣ የ
 ደረሰለም፣ አይመስለኝም። አሁን፣ ገንጌታው፣ አቶ፣
 ሚካኤል፣ ተልከው፣ የመው፣ ወደርሳቸውም፣ የሚመለሱ፣
 ሽህገቱ፣ ተክሉ፣ የርሰሎን፣ ደህንነት፣ ስም፣ ክጅግ፣ ደክ
 አለኝ። ክርሳቸውም፣ ክገደህ፣ አሉኝ፣ ጌታው፣ አቶ፣ ሚካ
 ኤል፣ ወንድሜ፣ ወደ፣ አባ፣ ክምነቱ፣ የሰደዱት፣ በዚህ፣ አገ
 ድ፣ ነገር፣ አለና፣ ነገረው፣ እሉኝ፣ ብለው፣ ነገሩኝ። ምንም፣
 ገደደር፣ ስለኝ፣ ማሰብም፣ ደክ፣ አለኝ።
 አኔ፣ ወደ፣ ፓሪስ፣ የመጣሁበት፣ ነገር፣ ለፍራንሳ፣ መንግሥት፣
 ደክ፣ የሚደለኝ፣ ሁሉ፣ ሳለ፣ ተልከው፣ ወደኢትዮጵያ፣ የመ
 ጡ፣ ሰው፣ ቷንቷና፣ ደገር፣ ልማድ፣ የማደውቁ፣ አለሆነ፣ አ
 ልሆነም። ወይ፣ ክርሰሎን፣ ወይም፣ ወንድመሆኝ፣ ስቅና፣ ነበ
 ር። ከሐዚህ፣ ደገራችን፣ እይነተኞች፣ ክነዚያ፣ የኢትዮጵያ፣
 ልማድ፣ ደውቁ፣ ምነው፣ ያልመሉ፣ ብለው፣ ክንገተን፣ ጠየ
 ቁኝ። አሁንም፣ ወይካዘርና፣ የሚቀፍ፣ ልጅ፣ ሁሉ፣ ከፍራን
 ሳ፣ መንግሥት፣ ተከፋ፣ አልቀረሙም።
 ክቡር፣ አባታችን፣ እቡን፣ ያዕቆብ፣ ምንም፣ በግብ፣ ምክር
 ጥ፣ በዙ፣ ክገጂ፣ አላነሱም፣ ካቶሊካዊት፣ ሃይማኖት፣ ካገራ
 ችን፣ ክግደት፣ ጠፋ፣ ተከፋ፣ አለኝ። ቢሆንም፣ በዚህ፣ ደሉተ
 ምስራቅ፣ መንግሥት፣ ነገር፣ እያሉሉምና፣ መልካም፣ በ



fol. 179r

The third [letter]

(At) Halay

Approaching with great humility I greet and bow [to you], my great and honoured friend, master of all the wise.

You asked me to write you the name of the mountain after I returned from Paris to my country. I have written to you twice that it is called Atṭēnaqir. Since I have not so far received any letter from you (lit. your letter), I do not think [mine] reached you. But now I am very happy, after hearing of your well-being from *Abbatē Teklu*, who was sent by the master Mr. Michel (*Mika'ēl*) and who is going to return to him. He told me that the master Mr. Michel had told him the following: "There is something here which my brother has sent to *Abba Imnetu*, so tell him." Although it did not reach me, I am glad that you thought of me.

ባረኛ፡ በመጣት፡ ተጨካኝናል፡፡ ጅተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ የሚሉ
ራ በትጥ፡ ብዙ፡ በታ፡ እባታችን፡ ባርነው፡ ነበር፡ የሚያሰራው፡
ታጣ፡ ለመነገሳችሁ፡ ቀለብ፡ የሚይዘው፡ ሆኑ፡ ይህንኑም፡ ለሙ-
ሴ፡ አቲን፡ የሚነግረው፡ የለም፡፡ መልካም፡ ጠባቂ፡ ይመጣል
ናል፡ ብለን፡ አገጥሞቻላን፡፡
በሳንተ፡ እንዲችሁ፡ ክፍራንሳ፡ መገገሚያት፡ ተልኩ፡ ቢመጣ፡
አማክራለኩ፡ ሌላው፡ ሰው፡ ገን፡ ቢመጣ፡ ለውጥ፡ ሁሉ፡ ታዘሌ
የለሁና፡ እላማክርም፡፡

ክፍ፡ የሚረዱት፡ ነገር፡ ቢኖር፡ በታላቅ፡ ደክታ፡ በምትለው፡
ነገር፡ እታዘዛለኩ፡፡
ተጽሕፈት፡ እመጪ ለመጋቢት፡ እምልደተ፡ አጣዚክኒ፡ በ፲፬፻፲፱
፶፬፻፱፡ ዓመት፡፡
ኅብ፡ አጣዚክ፡ አገጥሞቻላን፡ ዘአበድየ፡ ክቡር፡

ለክብረት፡ የተገዛሁ፡ አባ፡ አምላ፡ ማርያም
ዘእግ፡ ገረማ፡ ነጂ

fol. 179v

Though the business that made me come to Paris should have pleased the French government, yet it failed because the person who came to Ethiopia did not know the language and culture of the country. If either you or your brother had come, it would have been successful. For this reason the important people of our country asked me about you, saying, "Why didn't those who know the customs of Ethiopia come?" Even now all the members of the royal house and the nobility have not lost hope in the French government.

Even though our honoured father Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) died, the believers have increased and not decreased. We hope that the Catholic faith will not vanish from our country. However, since those missionaries who are here do not think of spiritual things, we are concerned about the lack of a good guardian. Our father had consecrated many places where churches could be built. No one has been found to build. Moreover, they do not give the monks their provisions, and there is no one who tells Mr. Etienne (*Itēn*) about this. We are waiting for a good shepherd to come.

If one of you comes, sent by the French (*fransa*) government, I will advise [him]; but if another person comes, I will not advise [him], since I have become disappointed in many people. If there is anything you want from me, I will obey with great pleasure as far as I can.

Written on the 4th of Meggabit 1854 after the birth of Our Lord.

To the honourable Master Antoine d'Abbadie (*Intōniyos Ze'abadiye*).

I am *Abba* Imnete Maryam of *Abba Gerīma*, the obedient [servant] of Your Honour (lit. who is obedient to Your Honour).

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 179, Amharic original. This letter was written the same day and on the same size and quality of light blue paper as no. 99, which Imnete Maryam has numbered "the first". We have failed to establish whether he numbered the above "the 3rd" by mistake or wrote three letters the same day, of which one in that case has disappeared. A letter written almost two years later is numbered "the 4th" (no. 142).

Tēwodros to Jima [May 1862]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God only.

To my son *Shaykh* Jima of Qallabat, [from] the king of kings of Ethiopia, Tēwodros. How have you been? Thank God, I am well. I have destroyed all Beshīr's people and carried off the captives and cattle . . . , and I will come to Metemma after the rains. Therefore take care to prohibit the exportation of durra and honey, which I need for my army.

G. Lejean, "Gallabat and Gadabhi", *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages, de la Géographie, de l'Histoire et de l'Archéologie*, 1864, I, p. 19, French translation. The omission in this letter deals with the numbers of people and cattle captured.

The French consul, Guillaume Lejean, was on his way through the Sudan to Ethiopia in August 1862 and was apparently given the opportunity to copy the letter or a translation of it. He writes from Khartoum on 15 August that Tēwodros had written to the *shaykh* in May and that he was making preparations to march on Khartoum (*Nouvelles Annales*, 1862, IV, pp. 123–124). *Shaykh* Jima was the vassal of Tēwodros. Whether he nevertheless revealed the contents of this letter to the governor of the Sudan, or this was done by Lejean, is uncertain. The Beshīr whose people had been defeated by Tēwodros was *Dejjazmach* Beshīr Līben of Werre Hīmeno in Wello, a centre of Muslim Oromo resistance against Tēwodros's rule.

Felasha community at Jenda to the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews [1862]

In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, Amen. May this letter reach the Society in England, who sent Bibles and teachers to the dispersed children of Israel in Ethiopia. It is sent from the Falashas at Genda, who believe in Jesus Christ. Oh! our dear fathers! How are you? Very much how are you? We have been without understanding—in great darkness; but now since you sent us teachers, we have disputed very much; but we arrived at the truth, as Isaiah says: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them has the light shined." And now, our dear fathers, take us into your care, and pray for us, that we may receive the grace of our Lord, and be established in it; for we are like tender plants, who have not yet been sufficiently rooted. You have done us good, as David said: "I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." And as Isaiah says: "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." These words we apply to ourselves, because we were, without knowing Him, His enemies. This we write to you, that you may wrestle with the Lord for our sakes. Glory be to the Father, glory be to the Son, glory be to the Holy Ghost, Amen.

Jewish Intelligence, and Monthly Account of the Proceedings of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, vol. 29 (March 1863), pp. 68–69, English translation. Though the initiative and content of this letter may be due to missionary influence, the text is quite clearly a translation of an Amharic text, as indicated by the phrases "May this letter reach . . ." and "It is sent from . . ." as well as the repetition of "How are you? Very much, how are you?" Information from missionaries indicates that this letter was written in the first half of 1862. It is reproduced with the orthography and punctuation of the original.

Dīnī Muḥammad Burhān to Napoleon III [9 May? 1862]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
وَدَاخِعِ الْبِلْيَانِ
لِبِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ كَمَا فِي الْمَهَامَاتِ

الى جناب اكرم الماجد المكرم المجدد المبعجل ذى الراي
الرشيد والذهن السليم العامل الفاضل بعقله وذهنه
والدولة العلية المعروف في امانه وفي بلاده المشهور
في احكامه المصالح الناصف في بين المكين والقوي اللسان
نبيل يوت الثالث ادام الله دولته وسروره حماه من
كل فعل قبيح تجاه امين فان سالم عنافتي في خير وعافيه
جعلكم الله كذلك بل احسن من ذلك وبعد الذي نعرفه
وحصل سلامتكم الكريمة وهديتكم الجسيمه قبلنا منكم وحمدنا
الله تعالى على عافيتكم التي هي لنا غاية العصد والمراد
والمركب الينا الى ابع وفيها مسميه شفيرو الامير ابوبكر ودين
احمد قبلنا هم واتمنا لهم مرادهم ومطلوبهم على ما يشاؤون
في طيبة الخاطر بنصاحه من غير خيانه ولا كرهية بالرضى
والخير ومن قبلناكم ولقنناكم تقفوننا والسدم ختمنا
وبسلي عليكم الوزير برهان محمد رازي



Handwritten signature or notes in Arabic script, possibly including the name 'برهان محمد رازي'.

In the name of God, the benevolent and merciful. Praise be to God who meets needs and does away with affliction.

To His Noble Majesty Emperor Napoleon (*Sulṭān* Nanbul Yūn) III, the most illustrious, the honoured, the praised, the respected, who has the rightly guided judgement and sound understanding, who acts decisively with his mind, intellect, and supreme power, [who is] well-known in his time and in his country, who is famous for his just rule, serving equitably the poor and the mighty. May God perpetuate his reign and his happiness. May God protect him from all abominable deeds. May He save him. Amen.

If you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise, even more so.

Now, what we want to inform you about is that your noble greeting and your magnificent gift have arrived. We have received them. We praised God Almighty for your health, which is our ultimate aim and desire. The ship has arrived (to us) at Obok; aboard were Mr. Schefer (*Misyuh* Shafir) and *Amīr* Abū Bakr and Dīnī Aḥmad. We have received them and fulfilled their wishes and requests with sincerity, as befits a well-disposed mind, devoid of deceit and aversion, with favour and good will.

Assist us just as we have received and assisted you. Greetings. Concluded. *Wazīr* Burhān Muḥammad sends you many greetings.

Verified.

Sulṭān Dīnī, the son of *Sulṭān* Muḥammad, the son of *Sulṭān* Burhān.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 202, Arabic original; fols 194 and 201, French translation. The translation omits the introductory paragraph; some other abbreviations have been made as well, but the substance of the letter is not affected.

This letter was obviously written soon after the return of Dīnī Aḥmad from Paris, where he had concluded the treaty concerning Obok (no. 98). The earliest possible date is when the French envoy Schefer and Dīnī Aḥmad met with *Sulṭān* Dīnī Muḥammad and his *wazīr* on board the *Curieux* at Dumera near Rahīta on 29 April (possibly 24 April; see fol. 173). In his letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs dated 23 May (AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 184–186), Schefer reported that the treaty was ratified by them on this occasion. In the above letter there is, however, no specific reference to the treaty or the sale of the port.

The fact that *Amīr* Abū Bakr was reportedly present with Dīnī Aḥmad on board the *Curieux*, however, indicates a later date; his presence is not mentioned in Schefer's report until after the arrival of the ship at Zeyla on 6 May. Most probably it was only then, in connection with the proceedings on board the *Curieux* on 9 May, that this and the following letter from Abū Bakr were written. For a brief account of these events, see Douin, II, pp. 198–202.

In the name of God, the benevolent and merciful. Praise be to God. May good deeds be accomplished by His grace.

Praise be to the Benefactor, the unique in permanence and immortality, whom age and slumber do not overcome, whom months and years do not diminish. He is great; He is blessed; He is exalted; He is glorious [and] gracious. I praise Him as one ought to praise Him who confers benefits on all His creation. He did not forget His servant—blessing and peace be upon the best of the prophets, upon the best of all creatures—who ascended to the heavens. The stars escorted him as a company of helpers; he was guided by that which is more radiant than the sun, brighter and more aromatic than musk, more fragrant and sweet than exquisite nectar and ambergris guided him; and the abundant morning breeze permeated him.

By this I refer to His Majesty Emperor Napoleon (*Sulṭān* Nabul Yūn) III, the most illustrious sovereign, the most venerable among the venerable, the wise, preponderant and intelligent, he who penetrates [the affairs of] the great kingdom, he who is famous for [his] government. May God guide, keep, sustain, watch over and guard him from all that is evil and abominable. May He preserve and protect him. Amen.

If you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise, and even more so. What we inform you about is that your esteemed letter has reached us with the ship of Mr. Schefer (*Misyuh* Shafīr) and Dīnī Aḥmad. We read it and comprehended what you explained to us; we appreciated and understood it. We praised God Almighty for your health, which is our ultimate aim and [our] desire from the Lord of the faithful. And with regard to your request concerning Obok, which you made known to us, we struggled to the utmost, and we accomplished your wishes and [solved] all your concerns. We are unflinchingly at your service night and day. You will find out all the facts sufficiently from the mouth of Mr. Schefer.

Something humble, not worth mentioning, has been sent for you with Mr. Schefer: an Abyssinian cloak and four *feresula* of coffee. Please accept it. Greet the minister (*wazīr*) from us; what has been sent for him is two *feresula* of coffee and an Abyssinian cloak. May he be pleased to accept it and the greetings. Greet all your sons from us; and on our side [our] brother Ḥājj Šālīḥ Shaḥīm and [our] brother Abū Bakr Aḥmad Dīnī send you many greetings. We have also sent twenty feathers each to the children of the emperor and fourteen feathers each to the children of the minister. Greetings.

Seal: Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 204, Arabic original; fols 195 and 203, French translation. This translation also omits the introductory paragraph and some other less important passages.

After visiting Damera the *Curieux* had proceeded to Zeyla, where it arrived on 6 May. According to Schefer's report (AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 184–186), the matter of the convention was settled in Abū Bakr's presence three days later, when the first 3,000 thalers of the sum to be paid for Obok were handed over to the son or sons of *Sulṭān* Dīnī Muḥammad. According to a report by Captain Rousseau of the *Curieux*, dated 14 August (AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 225–232), two sons of the *sulṭān* came on board at Damera and received 5,000 thalers at Zeyla. It was most probably in this connection that the above letter was written. Then Abū Bakr joined the others on board the *Curieux* and sailed to Tajura and Obok.

The word translated "feather" could also mean "grain of agate". The sentence about the gifts for the children raises the question whether Abū Bakr actually knew the number of children in the two households and allotted twenty, respectively fourteen, for each child, or sent what he had available, twenty for the emperor's household and fourteen for the minister's, hoping that they would be sufficient for one each for the children involved.

Praise be to God alone. Praise be to God who has made the pen a substitute for the tongue. I worship and bless him after whom there will never [again] be a prophet.

To His Majesty, the most exalted, the most venerable among the venerable, the dear and beloved, the mighty ruler, by this I mean Napoleon (*Nanbul Yūn*) III. May he be supplied with the qualities of a just ruler in the administration of his subjects. May God in His justice make him unshakable, and may He support him through it. Amen.

What we want to inform you about is that Mr. Schefer (*Mithyuh* Shafīr) came to us from you. We befriended him and greatly rejoiced over his coming to us. From you he brought us with his [own] hands what you had sent us, and we received it from him. We were exceedingly happy for it. And he also made known to us what you had said to him, namely that you would protect us and feel compassion for us and we likewise. We have agreed to what you had told him, and we have notified him that we have accepted your protection and your compassion for us, in the same manner as we have felt compassion for your [countryman] who died. We reported the true facts and the place of his death, for such was the understanding which existed between us and him. It does not befit us to keep his death secret, as the enemies kept it secret from us and from him. They did not keep his death secret for any other reason than enmity towards us and him. As for the establishment of the French government at Obok, by the power of God Almighty we shall supply them with what they need: sheep, butter, and everything else that is available to us. As for what you have stated to us, [namely] that you want us to sell the anchorages that you need, we are not going to sell them to anyone except you before consulting you. This we have accepted. If it becomes our wish to do so, we will let you know. We shall not sell to anyone except you before consulting you about it. This we have accepted.

When he whom you sent reached us, *Sultān* Muḥammad had already been received into the mercy of God Almighty. And now, if it is the will of God Almighty, the government will, in accordance with our custom, fall upon us. According to our custom, however, we shall have to wait one year, after which the government will be ours; and you will send us that with which we will establish ourselves, gifts, *et cetera*. A sovereign needs a great deal of revenue; this you know better than we. And he who knows does not need to be told. This is bad manners on our part, but you are indulgent, since you are a king. Please forgive us, because you have ruled [for some time]. If the government becomes ours, let what you want from us, and what we want from you, then be arranged, and let our thoughts and deliberations be one by the power of God Almighty. Do not deprive us of your esteemed letters, neither by day nor by night. Greetings. Concluded.

The (message of the) letter comes from *Wazīr* [Muḥammad] son of *Sultān* Ḥumad, the deceased. May God Almighty give him peace. Amen.

Dated Thursday the 15th of the sacred month of Dhū-l-Qa'da 1287(sic).

Dīnī Aḥmad greets the *wazīr*. You will see [that] I sent you a small thing, not worth mentioning, [that is] two *feresula* coffee. Please accept them. Greetings.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 199, Arabic original; fols 196 and 197–198, French translation. Also in this case the translation is abridged. "The one from your side who died" refers to Lambert, whose name appears in the translation. The year is 1278, not 1287. Since the treaty (no. 98) was countersigned by a *Wazīr* Muḥammad ibn *Sultān* Ḥumad, and the French translations of this letter, moreover, indicate that it was written by "Le Vizier Mohamad ben Sultan Humad" it must be assumed that the author is Muḥammad Ḥumad although he identifies himself only as the son of *Sultān* Ḥumad. As the person supposed to succeed the deceased, the *wazīr* was deeply concerned in the sale of Obok. He and the son of the *sultān* are reported to have signed the convention on board the *Curieux* on 13 May (Schefer, 23 May, AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 184–186); note, however, that 15 Dhū-l-Qa'da 1278 is 14 May.

Humad Muhammad Humad to Napoleon III, 15 May 1862

الحمد لله

الحمد الذي جعل القلعة نياحة على عن اللسان واصلي واسم على من لا نبي بعده ابدا
 الاحضرة الجناب العالي الاكبر المكرم المحترم المحب العزيز اعفني عن نبل يون
 الحاكم الثالث هو داه الله تعالى امري فان سالت عن حالنا واحوالنا فله الحمد والثناء
 ولا نسأل الا منك جعلك اسم كذلك بل ان يه من ذلك وما نفعك من الامر الذي اسأل
 اليان من عندك تشفير هذا اسم وصل اليك على جناح الامل واصل اليك ما امر
 بيده من الهدية وقبلنا واسم سبحانه وتعالى اثبت سلطانك وعد التكرار العداوة
 العادل الحاكم العارضا واشتت اسم عدالتك وادام سلطنتك وقبلنا هديتك ولا
 قلنا بعد يتك الاخيرا ولما وصل اليك من شريف كان السلطان محمد قد صلا الى حمة
 اسم محمد اسم حمة الابرار واسكنه جنة القدر بحمة اشرف الاكوان وكان
 وقت صوته الحادي عشر من شهر رمضان وقت المغرب وهو صائم والآن
 ذكرتم انكم تحبنا ونحبكم وان سكتتم في الخ فوصل اليكم مطلوبكم بقدر طاقتنا
 وقبلنا حاميكم ونحبيكم بقدر طاقتنا والحال واحد بلا خيانة وكان نريد
 ان نقرأ صدقة للسلطان محمد وفضلوا علينا بمعاونة الصدقة ما تيسر لكم
 والسلام ختام

من محمد دعا البرالة
 محمد بن السيد محمد بن السلطان
 تقال امري
 بتاريخ ١٥ من شهر ذي القعدة الحرام
 ١٢٧٨

Praise be to God alone. Praise be to God who has made the pen a substitute for the tongue. I worship and bless him after whom there will never [again] be a prophet.

To His Majesty the emperor, the most venerable among the venerable, the respected, the dear and beloved, by this I mean Napoleon III (*Nanbul Yūn* the third ruler). May he be supplied with the qualities of a just ruler. May God Almighty lead him. Amen.

If you inquire about our situation and circumstances, praise and (one word illegible) be to God. We do not inquire except about you; may God make you likewise, and even more so.

What we would like to inform you about with regard to the matter you raised with us on your part is that Mr. Schefer (*Mithyuh* Shafīr), may God guide him, came to us in the interest of peace, and he brought us the gifts you had sent by his hand, and we accepted [them]. May God, the praised and exalted, sustain your power and justice; because justice is fair, righteous, wise and knowledgeable. May God sustain your justice and make your power last. We have received your gift, and have expressed nothing but satisfaction (lit. not said anything except good) about it.

When Mr. Schefer came to us, *Sulṭān* Muḥammad had already been received into the mercy of God. May God have mercy upon him—the mercy [granted to] the righteous—and have him dwell in Paradise (lit. the Garden of Rest), in the sanctity of the noblest of the universe. The date of his death was the 11th day of the month of Ramaḍān at sunset, while he was fasting.

Now you have stated that you will protect us, and we will protect you, and if you settle at Obok, we will, within the limits of our capacity, bring you what you request. We have accepted your protection, and we shall protect you within the limits of our capacity. The treatment (lit. position) should be mutual and without deception. So now we want you to affirm the friendship [granted] to *Sulṭān* Muḥammad, and to confer upon us to the extent possible for you the support of your friendship. Greetings. Concluded.

The (message of the) of the letter comes from Ḥumad, the son of *Sulṭān* Muḥammad, the son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad. May God Almighty give him peace. Amen.

Dated Friday the 16th of the sacred month of Dhū-l-Qa'da 1278.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 193, Arabic original; fols 191 and 192, French abridged translation. The writer signs himself Ḥumad, the son of *Sulṭān* Muḥammad, the son of *Sulṭān* Ḥumad—here as on the convention. He was the son of the late *sulṭān* mentioned in the preamble of the treaty as Muḥammad Muḥammad. We must assume either that Muḥammad and Ḥumad are used interchangeably or that he prefers to be known as a descendent of his father's grandfather, rather than his own. According to the custom among the Afar he was not necessarily entitled to become the successor of his father (see no. 106). Nevertheless his signature on the convention was apparently regarded as important.

Tēwodros to the European community at Gefat [1862]

In the name of God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

May the letter of King of Kings Tēwodros reach Messrs Kienzlen, Waldmeier, Saalmüller, Moritz, Bender, and Bourgaud. How have you spent the time? I am well, thank God.

My friends and my children! God, who can do everything, and does it, has not allowed us to be shamed in our work. Many people who hate us, in [this] country as well as abroad, have derided and mocked us, but now they have been disgraced, since God is moved in all things by the prayers of those who believe in Him, and He helps them in time of need. Do not fear, my friends, for God has given me my kingdom; ask from me what you want, short of my throne and my kingdom, and by the help of God I will give it to you. Do not fear, for I am your father, mother, brother, friend, and protector. Earlier I quarrelled with you, not because of you, however, but because of Lieutenant Speedy, since he wanted to run away together with Waldmeier and Kienzlen. For so my governors told me, and I believed them. I have forgotten and forgiven everything; I hope the same from you.

The good God has made us very happy, and blessed us in material matters so that we do not lack any gift. If, therefore, you perhaps think, "What business have we in Europe? We will spend our lives here in Abyssinia," then the crown prince, Duke Meshesha, shall protect your children—yes, he will sacrifice himself for them. As for yourselves, however, I am willing to die for you, as Mr. John Bell, the Prime Minister, has died for me. But if you say you are homesick for Europe, would like to see your relatives, want to visit them and return, or if you say you want to leave Abyssinia and not return, then I call upon the Holy Trinity as witness that I will put no obstacle in your way.

In ancient times, when the Ethiopians were still Jews and pagans, a bishop named Kesate Birhan was sent [to us], who taught us the Christian faith and baptized [us]. You, too, have taught us many things, but in particular you have opened the eyes of us Abyssinians, whom they have abused as blind donkeys; and you started to civilize Abyssinia in every aspect. Who will now dare to touch you, the teachers of Ethiopia, the children of Tēwodros? Do not be afraid, but trust me. God has not allowed you, his servants, and me, his slave, to be disgraced, but has allowed our work to succeed, and blessed [it]; praise be to Him forever for this.

Now, my friends, we know that civilization, culture, art, science, power, dominion, and honour cannot save anyone from death. Since, however, God said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," it would be a sin to lie down like a sluggard and not care about a country like this, which still lies there in such disarray. Napoleon Bonaparte, the emperor of the French, who defeated other kings with many guns and mortars, at last fell from his high position and died. Although he was a strong ruler, Nikolai, the emperor of the Russians, was defeated by the English, the French and the Turks, and died soon after, without being able to carry out the plans of his heart. Sennacherib of Assyria was proud of his power and relied on himself. In the pride of his heart he abandoned the Lord and died. The pharaoh of Egypt was proud of his power, hardened his heart against God, and perished in the Red Sea. But what more shall I say to you? You yourselves are learned and well versed in the Bible. "Do not cut meat for a lion and do not teach a learned man." Now that you have made me happy with your work, I want to give you a small reward of 2,000 thalers, and when I have the pleasure of being together with you, I will give you even more.

Finally, I have to note that people in Ethiopia have slandered me, saying that I am not the right heir to the throne, but only the son of poor parents. It is possible to prove my ancestry and my right to the throne from Abraham to David and Solomon, [and] from there to Fasil and from Fasil to myself.

And if anyone comes and says that I am in possession of the throne without rightful ancestry, let him wager a field full of gold, and he will lose the bet. This I say not for my sake but for yours, so that you need not be ashamed as if you had held a rebel for a king. Otherwise I know full well that God elevates whomever He likes, and humbles whomever He likes.

Theophil Waldmeier, *Erlebnisse in Abessinien in den Jahren 1858–1868*, Basel, 1869, 2nd edition, pp. 21–24, German translation. Waldmeier had apparently saved the original of this letter. He writes that it was sealed with the royal seal “as on the copy of the Amharic letter at page 35” (no. 121 below). We have, however, failed to locate it. The exact date of the letter cannot be established, but it was most probably written in mid-1862. The alleged attempt by Charles Speedy and others to escape took place in January that year (Waldmeier, p. 10). Before entering the letter in his narrative, Waldmeier describes the ultimately successful attempts to cast mortars; it is immediately followed by the account of Consul Cameron’s arrival in August 1862.

Consul Lejean published a French translation of what he called “extraits d’une proclamation de lui aux Européens d’Abyssinie” both in his article “Notes d’un voyage en Abyssinie”, *Le Tour du Monde*, 1864, I, p. 74, and in his book *Théodore II*, pp. 187–190. Apparently he had a copy of the entire document, for he also writes, “Si je publie quelque jour cette lettre *in extenso*, je le ferai suivre d’un commentaire.” It is not, however, included among his papers, BN, Ethiop. 184. Charles T. Beke presents an English translation of Lejean’s document in his *The British Captives in Abyssinia*, London, 1867, pp. 125–127.

The similarities with Waldmeier’s letter—God’s words to Adam, the fate of Napoleon and Nikolai I, the Abraham–David–(Solomon)–Fasil ancestry, the proverb about cutting meat to a lion—are sufficiently striking to establish a connection between the two documents. On the other hand there are very significant differences as well. It is Waldmeier’s letter, especially the first half (missing in Lejean’s text), that deals with the actual situation and has clearly defined addressees. Lejean’s text sounds more like a public address, probably an adaptation for that very purpose of the letter preserved by Waldmeier. In this situation Waldmeier’s text takes precedence. Lejean’s, however, is of sufficient interest to be included as well:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God only.

King of Kings Tēwodros, created by the Trinity, servant installed and made a prince by Him, to his God-given children, all the Franks. By your God and the God of your friend Tēwodros, He who appeared to Moses on Sinai and on the Red Sea; who appeared to Joshua at Jericho; who with the sign of Samuel anointed Saul, when he was looking for his lost asses; who, when Saul abandoned his creator, ordered Samuel to anoint David. Just as Solomon became king through David, according to the word of the prophet and of his father, although Adonijah, against the will of God, had the favour of the people and was proclaimed God by them; [so] Solomon by the queen of Sheba (the south-east) begot Minilik, who became the king of Ethiopia. From Minilik to the dynasty of the Galla all the kings have been charlatans, who have asked God neither for genius nor for the means to revive the kingdom with His help. When God chose me, me His servant, as king, my compatriots said, “The river is dry, there is no longer anything in its bed.” And they insulted me because my mother was poor, and they called me “son of a beggar”. The greatness of my father is, however, known by the Turks, whom he made tributary as far as the frontiers of Egypt, as far as the gates of their cities. My father and my mother descend from David and Solomon, and they are even of the line of Abraham, the servant of God, my father and my mother! Now, those who insulted me with the name “son of a beggar” themselves beg for bread every day. . . .

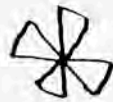
Except by the will of God, neither force nor wisdom saves from destruction. However, as God said to Adam, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” one must keep oneself at a distance from degradation (the idleness which degrades). But I do not need to give you this advice, since the proverb says: “Do not recommend wisdom to a wise man, and do not cut meat for a lion.” . . .

Although the powerful of the world have had bombs and cannon in abundance, they have succumbed. Napoleon had thousands of them, and he died defeated. Nikolai, the king of the Muscovites, had plenty of them and he was defeated by the French and the Turks, dying without having fulfilled the desire of his heart. . . .

If you meet in your areas any follower of Nigusē, the brigand, who has said, like the learned of this country, that Ethiopia is governed by the son of a beggar, wager a plain covered with gold with him that I, the present emperor, am on the throne of my fathers, from Abraham to David and from David to Fasil, and bring him here so that he may be confronted with me. It is God who brings down the powerful and elevates the humble.

The dots indicate omissions marked so by Lejean.

Mekonnin to Michel and Antoine d'Abbadie [1862?]



Handwritten Amharic text, likely a signature or address, partially obscured by the symbol.

Handwritten Amharic text, the main body of the letter, written in a cursive style.

May the letter sent by Mekonnin the Gonderē—my house is [at] Qīrqos—reach Michel (Mika'ēl) and Antoine (Intōniyos), the scholars who know Abyssinia. How are you, to the extent of heaven and earth, Master Antoine, Master Michel?

Atē Tēwodros has slaughtered and destroyed his enemies in Abyssinia; he has spared no one. Gonder is prospering. There is everything in abundance; 10 *madiga* white *tēff* are purchased for a thaler; of dark *tēff* 12 are purchased [for a thaler]. In Tigray there is also great abundance. At the time when (lit. after) Atē Tēwodros killed Nigusē, after Nigusē had fled during the night without fighting, abandoning his tents and his army, the king followed him and captured him. He left Aksum Šiyon and reached Tembēn in one night. He captured him in Tembēn and executed him by firing squad. He was captured in a shameful situation. He was found in the woods, dressed as a woman, in a gown.

But now, all the way from Massawa to Shewa, to the land (lit. house) of the Galla, everyone is saying, "Tēwodros, Tēwodros". From the four corners all have submitted (lit. prostrated themselves). They have come to Gonder carrying tribute on their backs (lit. feet). He aspires to conquer Jerusalem. There is a prophecy about him that he will triumph (lit. enter). *Lij Tesemma*, the son of *Dejjazmach* Goshu, has died after being imprisoned on an *amba*. It is two years since he died.

I am living in Beirut.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 356, Amharic original. It is difficult to assign a date to this letter. The only information we have about the author is what he tells about himself here, and it has been impossible to establish the date of the death of *Lij Tesemma*. But it was obviously written when Tēwodros was at the height of his power—after he had defeated Nigusē in early 1861 and before the setbacks in Shewa and Gojjam and the destruction of Gonder in 1863–64.

As a Gonderē, Mekonnin may have received his information from someone who actually knew the situation there at the time. His information about the events connected with the fall of Nigusē is less reliable.

Gebre Mika'el to Michel d'Abbadie, 3 June 1862

ዛቴ፡መልእክት፡ዘአባ፡ገብረ፡ሚካኤል፡
 ሩይሱ፡ዘገደመ፡ኢትዮጵያ፡ትብጻክ፡
 ኅበ፡ፈእስ፡ሚካኤል፡ፈረንሳይ፡ብዙው
 ን፡እንዴት፡አሉ፡ከተሰደዮነ፡እሸክ፡ዛሬ፡
 ደረሰ፡ወረቀት፡ሰድዴልዎ፡ነበር፡ምሳ
 ሹ፡ምነው፡ቀረ፡ብዙ፡ነገር፡ተጨውትን፡
 ነበረ፡እኔ፡ግዴሆንልኝ፡ቀረሁ፡እርሶዎ፡
 ምነው፡እመጣሰሁ፡ብሰው፡ቀረ፡አባቴ፡ገ
 ብረ፡ሕይወትዎ፡መጥተው፡እርሶዎን
 ዩጠብቃሉ፡ዩመጡም፡እንደሆን፡ዩቀረ
 ም፡እንደሆን፡ምሳሹን፡ዩሳኩብኝ፡አ
 ተክሉ፡ደህና፡መጣባቸው፡መጣልኝ፡
 ወረቀት፡አሁንም፡ከንግግሩ፡ሄደዋል፡አ
 ሉ፡ወንድሞቻዎ፡ጌታ፡እንጦንሰ፡ጌታ፡
 ቄርሶሰ፡እንዴት፡አሉ፡ሰላሰ፡እግዚ
 አብሔር፡ዩጠብቀዎ፡አሜን፡፡በጊ፡ሸህ፡
 ገዮ፡ከሃፀ፡ዘመን፡በዘመነ፡ፀፃርቅሰ፡በግን፡
 ት፡በሸ፡ጊ፡ቀን፡ተጸፈ፡፡



May this letter from *Abba* Gebre Mika'el, head of the Ethiopian monastery, reach *Ras* Michel (Mika'el), the Frenchman. How are you really, from [the day] we parted until today?

I have been sending you letters. Why have no answers come? We have discussed many things. I did not come, because it was difficult for me. Why did you stay away after you had said you would come? *Abbatē* Gebre Hiywet has come. He is waiting for you. Send me an answer, whether you are coming, [or] not coming. A letter has come to me that *Abba* Teklu arrived safely. They say that he has now gone to the king. How are your brothers, Master Antoine (Inṭonis) [and] Master Charles (Qērilos)? May the peace of God protect you. Amen.

Written in the year 7354, in the year of Mark, on the 27th day of Ginbot.

Seal: Mika'el of Ethiopia.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 168, Gi'iz/Amharic original. The date 27 Ginbot 7354 (from the creation of the world) corresponds to 3 June 1862. This letter was folded together to form a sealed "envelope" with Arnauld d'Abbadie's address, stamped "Marseille 17 Juin" and "Paris 19 Juin". A note informs us that a reply to the letter was written on 24 July 1862. Of the earlier letters mentioned only one (no. 101 above) seems to have been preserved.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to J. Juvénal, 2 July 1862

After usual compliments.

If you ask for news about us and our family, we are all, thank Heaven, in good health. We entreat Heaven to do you the same favour. From the day when you left us our country is enjoying the most complete peace. We give thanks to the Almighty for this. *Sulṭān* Dīnī has received the carpets which you sent him from Aden. Šāliḥ too, has received the cloth which you arranged to be sent to him. May God reward you for what you have done. An English man-of-war has called at Obok and stayed there a whole day. We do not know what caused the voyage of this ship; we have not heard anything about this. From Obok it proceeded to Tajura, where it asked for water, with which it was provided. Then it left without a word having been said. *Sulṭān* Dīnī remains the faithful observer of the convention which you made with him. I beseech you also to be faithful to it, since the *sulṭān* observes it in the most scrupulous manner. Hasten the conclusion of the business and give us often news about you. Agree to take care of our business as we take care of yours, we who are constituted your agent here.

Dīnī Aḥmad, Abū Bakr bin Aḥmad and *Hājj* Šāliḥ Shaḥīm present their respects.

Written the 4th of Muḥarram 1279.

Seal: Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 222, French translation. The originals of this and the following four letters do not seem to have been preserved. For the author—Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr or Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm—see no. 113. The addressee was a Catholic missionary, who was apparently in touch with the chiefs at Zeyla.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel, 4 July 1862

To His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French empire in the city of Paris. May God protect you. Amen.

These lines are written by the chief of the port of Zeyla. May all news which reaches you report good tidings. If you want news about us and ours, we tell you that, thanks to the good effects of your wishes in our favour, all is well, and if you want to have news about these regions, we inform you that all is safe and peaceful here, and that everything is all right. Next, we inform Your Excellency that after Mr. Schefer's departure from us everything has been as usual, and that we always remain your servants. After Mr. Schefer's departure we have heard reports that an English ship entered Obok, that it stayed one day, and that it has departed from there. We do not know what its intentions were. The *sulṭān* of Deire and his *wazīr* are faithful to the treaty; his reply and all the business will take place with good will and very promptly, very promptly. Greetings.

The 6th of Muḥarram 1279 (1 July 1862). For your servant *Amīr* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm.

Seal.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 219, French translation. The conversion of the date to 1 July is an error. "De la part de" is almost certainly a misleading translation of the Arabic *min jiha*, thus "from (the side of)", not "for, on behalf of"; this means that the author of the letter was Abū Bakr himself. See no. 113.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III, 13 Aug. 1862

Praise be to God, the prime dispenser of all blessings. He alone is eternal. Fatigue and sleep do not affect him. He is above the changes of months and years. May He be blessed; may His name be exalted. We glorify Him as the splendour of His glory demands. He extends His blessings to all His creatures, and He does not forget (anyone who is) His servant. May blessing and salvation rest upon our lord Muḥammad, the most perfect of the prophets, and upon his family and his followers.

To His Imperial Majesty, the very noble and glorious emperor, Napoleon III. May He deem him worthy of being guided and grant him a long reign, happiness, health and prosperity without end.

If Your Majesty condescends to inform yourself about us, we are, praise be to God, in good health. We disclose to Your Majesty that we have seen the *Curieux* arrive here safely under the command of Mr. Rousseau, who gave us the 5,000 thalers. We have received them and sent them to *Sulṭan Dīnī* and his *wazīr*. Your Majesty should know that after the departure of Mr. Schefer two British ships, one a steamship, the other a sailing ship, arrived hereabout, one after the other. They cast anchor off *Rahīta*, but *Sulṭan Dīnī* refused to see their officers and no exchange of communications or courtesies took place between them. Then they proceeded to *Tajura*, where they were given the same reception, and they departed completely embarrassed. They did not come to *Zeyla*.

After the departure of these two ships *Aḥmad*, the son of the governor of *Massawa*, arrived at *Rahīta*. He suggested to *Sulṭan Dīnī* to hoist the Ottoman flag. This he peremptorily refused, and he rejected all the suggestions made to him. He contented himself with answering that the whole country belonged to France. *Aḥmad* set out again, intensely annoyed about the resistance which he had come up against.

Written Tuesday 16 Ṣafar 1279.

Signed: 'Alī Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm.

Seal.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 233–234, French translation. The two preceding letters, as well as this one and the two following, almost certainly all came from *Sulṭān* Abū Bakr himself. The captain of the *Curieux*, L. Rousseau, actually reported in a covering letter dated 14 Aug. (fols 225–232) to his minister, Justin N.S.P. Chasseloup-Laubat, that this letter and the two following came from Abū Bakr and were addressed to the emperor, the ministers of foreign affairs, and the minister of the marine and the colonies. The most probable explanation is that “Abū Bakr” was turning into a surname to fit the European practice of addressing people by their surnames. “Shaḥīm” (the fat fellow) appears in Abū Bakr's seal and is in all probability a kind of nickname; why ‘Alī appears as an additional “first name” is more difficult to explain. It might simply be a misreading of the Arabic original. The probability that three different persons from *Zeyla*—Abū Bakr, his son Ibrāhīm(?) and his grandson ‘Alī(!) were all corresponding with the French government can certainly be discounted.

The 5,000 thalers referred to in the letter constituted the second half of the payment for the territory of *Obok* (see no. 98, articles III and IV, and no.105).

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel [13 Aug. 1862]

(After the usual compliments).

If Your Excellency condescends to ask for news about us, we are, praise be to God, in perfect health. We inform Your Excellency that we have seen the *Curieux* arrive here safely under the command of Mr. Rousseau, who has given us the sum agreed upon. May God be praised, the country is enjoying the most complete peace, and everyone is satisfied and content. *Sulṭān* Dīnī and his tribe are enjoying all blessings. The *Sulṭān* and his family, the *wazīr* and his family send you their respectful greetings, as does our brother *Hājj* Ṣāliḥ Shaḥīm. *Sulṭān* Dīnī and his *wazīr* are faithful to the treaty and determined to carry it out scrupulously.

We make known to Your Excellency that after the departure of Mr. Schefer two British ships, one a steamship, the other a sailing boat, arrived hereabout. They appeared off Rahīta, but *Sulṭān* Dīnī did not want to have any communication with them. Then they proceeded to Obok and to Tajura, where they were given no reception. They departed very humiliated. Next Aḥmad, the son of the governor of Massawa, arrived at Rahīta and suggested to *Sulṭān* Dīnī to hoist the Ottoman flag. The latter rejected all the proposals made to him and contented himself with answering that the country belonged to France.

Aḥmad left in disgrace. I have sold Shirmarkī's boats. One went to Sa'īd Ḥusayn Shumbulī for 110 thalers, the other to Sa'īd from Mokha for 140 thalers. The houses have also been sold. The small one went for 80 thalers to 'Alī Adam, the other for 110 thalers to Muḥammad 'Alī. The account is enclosed with this letter.

Next I made a search of Muḥammad Ḥasan's belongings, and in one of his coffers I found 150 thalers belonging to Mr. Lambert. I have confiscated them. People have assured me that Shirmarkī appropriated 500 thalers, which he spent.

Signed: 'Alī Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr Shaḥīm.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 235–236, French translation. See the note of document no. 113 for the addressee and the date of this document, as well as for the actual identity of the author.

For the events connected with the assassination, or alleged assassination, of Mr. Lambert by 'Alī Shirmarkī, see Douin, II, pp. 192–197.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to J.N.S.P. Chasseloup-Laubat [13 Aug. 1862]

(After the usual compliments).

These lines are written in the maritime town of Zeyla. We are all in good health and perfect peace. We do not for the moment suffer any hardship from which we should ask relief. We inform Your Excellency that we have seen the *Curieux* arrive here safely under the command of Mr. Rousseau, who has completed the mission with which he was charged. We have received the sum of which he was the bearer. You have kept your word, and you have heaped acts of kindness on us. On our part we are at your service. *Sulṭān* Dīnī and his *wazīr* Burhān are faithful to the treaty, and in no way do they infringe upon it.

After the departure of Mr. Schefer two British ships, one a steamship, the other a sailing ship, arrived hereabout. They anchored off Rahīta, but *Sulṭān* Dīnī did not want to have any communication with the officers. Then they proceeded to Obok and to Tajura, where they were given no reception. They moved on without having succeeded.

After them Aḥmad, the son of the governor of Massawa, arrived at Rahīta. He suggested to *Sulṭān* Dīnī to hoist the Ottoman flag, but the latter rejected this proposal and contented himself with answering that the country belonged to France. Aḥmad left without having succeeded. We hope that you would, however, soon give us news about you. Please, give our regards to Mr. Schefer.

Hājj Ṣāliḥ Shaḥīm, Dīnī Aḥmad, *Sulṭān* Dīnī and his *wazīr* Burhān, and Abū Bakr Dīnī Aḥmad send their greetings.

Signed: 'Alī Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fols 237–238, French translation. See the note of document no. 113 for the addressee and the date of this document, as well as for the actual identity of the author. Here the name Abū Bakr has apparently been omitted from the signature by mistake.

Tēwodros to Victoria, 29 Oct. 1862

በሰመ፡አብ፡ወ ወልድ፡ወመ ገፈ.ከ.ቀዳ.ከ.ፊኦሎካ
 ባንድነት፡በሰከትነት፡እግዚአብሔር፡መርጠ፡ያነ
 ገሰው፡ንጉሠ፡ነገሥት፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ዘኢትዮጵ
 ያ፡ደድረከ፡፡ከዕሳግሊዝ፡ንግሥት፡ቢክቶሪያ፡፡
 እንዲት፡አሉ፡እኔ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ይመሰገን፡ደሳ
 ና፡ነጻ፡፡እስተ፡ዛሬ፡ድረከ፡አባቶቻ፡ነገሥታቱ፡ፈጣሪ
 አቶነን፡ቢበድሉት፡መንግሥታቸውን፡ሰጋሳኖ፡ሰቱር
 ክ፡አሣልፎ፡ሰጥቶባቸው፡ነበረ፡ዘሬ፡ግን፡እኔ፡ከተወ
 ሰድሁ፡ፈጣሪዮ፡ካመድ፡አንስቶ፡ኃይል፡ሰጥቶ፡ባባ
 ቶቻ፡መንግሥት፡አቆመኝ፡በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል
 ፡ጋሉቸን፡አስለቀቀኋቸው፡ቱርኮቻ፡ግን፡ያባቴን፡
 መረት፡ልቀቁ፡ብሳቸው፡እምቢ፡ብለዉኝ፡በእግዚ
 አብሔር፡ኃይል፡ይኸው፡ልታገል፡ነጻ፡፡እነአቶ፡ቡ
 ሳዲን፡እነሲቀመኳስ፡ዮሐንስ፡ዮክርስቲያን፡ንጉሥ
 ፡ታሳቀ፡ሰው፡ክርስቲያን፡የሚወዱ፡እሉ፡እናስተዋ
 ወቀህ፡አስን፡እያሉኝ፡እጅግ፡አወዳቸው፡ነበረ፡የር
 ሰዎን፡ወዳጅነት፡ያገኘሁ፡አየመሰሰኝ፡፡ሞት፡አደቀ
 ርሞኖ፡የጠሉኝ፡ሰዎቻ፡እኔን፡ይክፋው፡ሲሉ፡ገደሉ
 አቸው፡እኔም፡በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል፡ይመኛቸን፡
 ፊሳልተው፡ፈጅኋቸው፡የገዛ፡ዘመዶቻን፡በእግዚ
 አብሔር፡ኃይል፡የርስዎን፡ዝሞድኖ፡ሥፈልግ፡፡
 ቱርኮቻ፡ከባህር፡ሳይሁኑ፡መልክተኛዎን፡እናሳል
 ፍም፡ብለው፡ቸግሮኝ፡ሳሰ፡ቁንስል፡ኪሞሮን፡
 መጣልኝ፡ወረቀትኖ፡የፍቀር፡በረክት፡ይዘ፡

በእኛ ዘክብራ ሲደረግ ስንታገላ፡ ጸሐ፡ አሰኝ፡
 ደህንነት ወንፍ፡ ፍቅር ወን፡ ብሰማ፡፡ የሠደ
 ድልኝንም፡ የፍቅር፡ በረከት፡ ተቀበልሁ፡ እኛ
 ዘክብራ ሲደረግ ፡፡ አሁንም፡ መልክተኛ
 የን፡ ከቁጥሰል፡ ኪሚሮን፡ ጋራ፡ የፍቅር፡ በረከት
 ደዘ፡ እንደሰደው፡ ቱርኮች፡ በባህር፡ ለይ፡ የማ
 ደስተላል፡ ሆኑ፡ አሁንም፡ እንዲህ፡ ባለ፡ ከፍ
 ሬ፡ እክሱ፡ ይቀበላው፡ ብለው፡ ደሰኩ ብኝ፡ ፡፡ ም
 ላሹን፡ ነጥሰል፡ ኪሚሮን፡ ደዘልኝ፡ ደምጣ፡፡

እናንተም፡ ተገፍልኝ፡ ከርስቴዎችን፡ እስከላም፡ አጠቃህ
 ሲሰኝ፡፡ ተጸፈ ስንታገላ፡ ተገኝ ለሰላም፡ በሉቃስ ስወርኃ፡ ጥቅምት
 ፡፡ ጸቀኝ፡ ጉጂም፡ በደባባ፡ ከተማ፡፡

*In the name of the Father, of the
 Son and of the Holy Ghost, one God in
 Trinity chosen by God, King of Kings.
 Theodorus of Ethiopia to Her Most Victorious
 Queen of England. I hope your Majesty
 is in good health. By the power of God
 I am well, My Father the Emperors having
 forgotten our Creator He handed over these
 Kingdom to the Gallas and Turks. But
 God created me. lefted ^{me} out of the dust and
 restored this Empire to my rule. He
 endowed me with power, and enabled
 me to stand in the place of my Father.
 By this power I drove away the Gallas*

But for the Turks I have told them
to leave the land of my Ancestors. They
refuse I am now going to wrestle with them.
Mr. Flouiden, and my late Grand Chamberlain,
the Englishman Bell, used to tell me that
there is a great Christian Sultan, who loves
all Christians. When they said to me this
"we are able to make you known to him,
and to establish friendship between you"
them in those times I was very glad. I gave
them my love, thinking that I had found
your Majesty's good will. All men are
subject to death, and my Enemies, thinking
to injure me, killed these my friends. But
by the power of God, I have extirminated
those enemies, not leaving one alive
though they were of my own family
that I may get by the power of God, your
friendship.

I was prevented by the Turks
occupying the sea Coast from sending you
an Embassy when I was in difficulty Consul
Cameron arrived with a Letter, and presents
of friendship. By the power of God, I was
very glad hearing of your welfare and
being assured of your Amity. I have received
your presents, and thank you much.

I fear that if I send an Embassy,
with presents of amity by Consul Cameron
they may be arrested by the Turks.

And now I wish that you
may arrange for the safe passage of my

Ambassadors every where on the road.

I wish to have an answer
to this letter by Consul Cameron and
that he may conduct my Embassy to
England. You may see how the Slaves
oppress the Christian.



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the one Triune God (lit. one God in Oneness, in Trinity).

From him whom God has chosen and enthroned, King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia, to the queen of England, Victoria (Bīktcriya). How are you? I am well, thank God.

Because my fathers the kings sinned against our Creator, He gave away their kingdom, until this day, to the Galla and the Turks. But now that I have been born, my Creator raised me from the dust, gave me power and placed me over the kingdom of my fathers. By the power of God I forced the Galla to relinquish [my kingdom]. But the Turks refused to leave my father's land when I told them to. Therefore, by the power of God, I shall fight [them] now.

Mr. Plowden (Buladīn) and Līqemekwas John (Yohannis) used to tell me that there is a Christian king, a great man, who loves Christians, with whom they would acquaint me. I loved them sincerely, thinking that I had obtained your friendship. Death being inevitable, people who hated me killed them in order to hurt me. And by the power of God, in quest of your friendship I wiped out the murderers by the power of God, not sparing even one, [though they were] my own relatives. Consul Cameron (Kēmiron) came to me, bearing a letter and gifts of friendship, at a time when I was facing difficulties from the Turks, who are on the sea [coast] denying my envoy passage.

I am very happy, by the power of God, to hear about your health and friendship. I have received the gifts of friendship you sent me. Thank you. Now too, since the Turks deny me passage by sea, I

have been unable to send my envoy with Consul Cameron to deliver gifts of friendship. Therefore tell (lit. send) me to whom and where [my envoy] shall deliver [the gifts]. [Let] Consul Cameron bring me the reply.

You too, stand by me (lit. be oppressed with me), when the Muslim says to me, the Christian, "I shall assault you."

Written in the year 7355, the year of Luke, on the 20th day of the month of Ṭiqimt, in the town of Yibaba in Gojjam.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

FO 95/721, no. 126 (no folio nos), Amharic and English original. The English text, produced, no doubt, by one of Tēwodros's secretaries, must also be regarded as an official text since the seal appears at the end of the whole document of four pages. Making the translation official in this manner shows how eager Tēwodros must have been to be understood without delay, and to be taken seriously. The English version was published in *Correspondence 1846–68*, pp. 224–225. Note that the fact that they were writing to a female slipped the mind of those who composed the letter.

The above is a new translation from the Amharic. A comparison shows that the differences are fairly unimportant, except that the English version has no date and place. The last sentence is ambiguous. See *Amharic Letters*, no. 3, for alternative translations of some phrases.

Cameron failed to follow Tēwodros's instructions to deliver this letter in person, and this mistake, followed by the long delay of the British Foreign Office in replying, contributed to the Ethio-British conflict and the Meqdela campaign of 1867–68. The letter was forwarded in Consul Cameron's dispatch no. 18 of 31 Oct. 1862. The minute on the letter reads, "1862. King Theodore of Abyssinia to Her Majesty. On his present position. Proposes to send an embassy to England. Answered May 26/64." Thus it took 18 months before the letter was answered. The reply, also published in *Correspondence 1846–68*, pp. 309–310, moreover, bypassed the main issue of Tēwodros's letter.

The letter mentioned in the text as arriving with Cameron, was a letter from the foreign secretary, Lord Russell, dated 20 February 1862, in reply to Tēwodros's letter to Baroni about the deaths of Plowden and Bell (no. 83). For descriptions of the conflict, see Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 223–268, and sources cited there.

The use of *Igzī'abihēr merto* instead of *Siyume Igzi'abihēr* in this letter demonstrates how thorough-going Tēwodros was in his desire to replace Gi'iz with Amharic as the official language of Ethiopia.

Tēwodros to Napoleon III, 29 Oct. 1862

Au nom des Pères, et de l'Esprit saint et de
 un seul Dieu. M'adressant ainsi à V. M. l'Empereur
 d'Éthiopie, c'est par l'unité et la trinité, à sa
 Majesté Napoléon III Empereur des Français.
 Que Dieu vous donne la santé et moi je le remercie
 de me l'avoir toujours conservée.

Dans les temps passés, les Pères d'Éthiopie,
 mes pères, ayant oublié leur Créateur, il avait relié
 sa son Esprit d'avec eux et leur avait ôté leurs
 Royaumes, qui il donna aux Gallas et aux Turcs.
 À une naissance, Dieu me prit de la poussière,
 me donna la force, me vêtus et par la puissance
 Divine je chassais les Gallas, mais les Turcs résis-
 tèrent à la volonté de Dieu, et puisque il refusent
 de rendre la terre de mes pères, je vais lutter
 contre eux. Je sçait de votre nom comme
 Empereur des Français et Prince chrétien
 vont jusqu'à nous. J'étais heureux et désirais
 que par la grâce de Dieu des lieux d'ambassade nous
 enissent, que vous me considériez comme un de
 vos parents et que vous m'aimiez. Je veux vous
 envoyer des ambassadeurs, que votre Majesté me
 fasse connaître si elle veut les recevoir. J'ai
 chargé Auguste Baviel votre sujet de vous parler
 de cette lettre, de vous faire connaître mes intentions ver-
 ballement, et je désire recevoir la réponse par
 lui-même.

Majesté, voyez-vous fraternellement les musulmans
 oppriment les chrétiens!

octobre 1862 le 29 à Gageben

Éthiopie



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

Tēwodros, king of kings, emperor of Ethiopia, created by the Unity and the Trinity, to His Majesty Napoleon III, emperor of the French. May God give you health. As for me, I thank Him for having always preserved mine.

Since the kings of Ethiopia, my fathers, in times past had forgotten their Creator, he withdrew his Spirit from them and deprived them of their kingdoms, which he gave to the Galla and the Turks. At my birth, God picked me up from the dust, gave me strength, raised me up, and by Divine power I chased away the Galla. The Turks, however, resist the will of God, and since they refuse to surrender the land of my fathers, I am going out to fight with them.

The splendour of your reputation as the emperor of the French and the prince of the Christians has reached us. I rejoiced and desired that, by the grace of God, bonds of friendship would unite us, that you would look upon me as one of your relatives, and that you would love me. I wish to send you some ambassadors. Please, Your Majesty, let me know if you will indeed receive them. I have instructed your subject Auguste Bardel to carry this letter to you and to make known my intentions to you by word of mouth, and I wish to have the reply through him.

Your Majesty, will you with indifference watch the Muslims oppress the Christians?

The 20th of October 1862, in Gojjam in Ethiopia.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

AEMD, Afrique 61, fol. 105, French original. Though dated 20 October, this letter was almost certainly written on 20 Tqimt (29 October) when the preceding letter to Victoria was produced. Important similarities point to the Amharic text of the letter to Victoria as a kind of draft.

Of Tēwodros's secretaries at least Mahdere Qal had studied in France (ACTA I, no. 187; II, no. 1), but it is also possible that a French-speaking European, most probably Auguste Bardel, who had accompanied Consul Cameron to Ethiopia, assisted in producing the translation. It is interesting to note the flexibility of Tēwodros and his staff with regard to the use of languages. The letter to London was bilingual, Amharic/English, but it was not regarded as necessary to write an Amharic text for the letter to Paris. In this French version Tēwodros's plea for support from his Christian colleagues against the Muslims is formulated as a question, reflecting the way in which the king would have been discussing the matter with Europeans in Ethiopia.

As stated in the letter itself, it was entrusted to Bardel, who went to Paris, handed over the letter in person and received a reply to take back to Tēwodros, signed, however, by the French minister of foreign affairs instead of by Napoleon himself (AEMD, Afrique 61, fols. 398–399, Drouyn de Lhuys, 24 March 1863). Tēwodros was deeply offended by this lack of courtesy as well as by the content of the reply (Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 230–231). It should be noted that the approach to the French government was not a matter decided on the spur of the moment: "why not France, too?" Relations with France, however, were more problematic than those with Great Britain, because of French demands that the activities of the Catholic missionaries should be tolerated in Ethiopia. Tēwodros refrains from bringing up the issue in his letter, apparently leaving to Bardel the decision whether or not to discuss it in Paris.

à notre Père M. Stella, afin qu'il vous
 la donne, parce qu'il lui connaît
 tous ses affaires —
 et ainsi des chefs —
 Adig Wedd Fidel.
 Gelawdēwos Wedd Shekhay.
 Berih Wedd Redi.
 Gebre Sillasē Wedd Akīm.
 Gondar Wedd Aradom.
 Keren le 1 Janvier 1865.

ከብርሃኑ ወጽ፡ ሞገድ፡፡
 ጠፊህ፡ ወጽ፡ ራዲዕ፡፡
 ግብረ፡ ለላላ፡ ወጽ፡ ከኪሮ፡፡
 ግንደ፡ ወጽ፡ ከራድ፡፡ —፡፡
 ከሌገ፡ ጠጥር፡ በ፳ ጥገ፡ —፡፡

fol. 1v

May the message from the Bogos reach His Excellency (*Abēto*) the French consul at Massawa.

How are you? Are you very well? After you had left, the Barya and the Benī Amir, numbering two thousand, fell on us by night without our hearing them. They killed 49 from amongst us. The young men and women who were captured were more than 100. The cattle that were taken were 1300.

You know that the Barya and the Benī Amir pay tribute to the Turks. Now, we do not know of anyone who can help us except the French king. Therefore we beg and implore you to tell the French king on our behalf that he should have our people and cattle returned to us, and that he should also protect us effectively (lit. much), accept us as his own people (lit. country), and help us in accordance with his ability (lit. knowledge). We have given this message to our father, Father Giovanni (*Abune Yohannis*), so that he may give [it] to you, since he knows our whole situation (lit. all our matters).

Adig Wedd Fidel

Gelawdēwos Wedd Shekhay

Izuz Wedd Minder

Berih Wedd Redi

Gebre Sillasē Wedd Akīm

Gondar Wedd Aradom.

Keren the 1st day of Ṭirr.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 1, Gi'iz/Amharic and French original. "*Abune Yohannis*" of the Amharic text is replaced by "M. Stella" in the French version, and the name of one of the signatories (Gelawdēwos) is missing there. The spelling "Gondar" (for Gonder or Gender?) has been retained because this is the way the person may himself have written his name. Whether the letter was written on 1 Ṭirr or on 1 January is impossible to determine with certainty. Apparently the translator has not bothered to convert the date. Since the French text seems to have been written first, 1 January is probably the correct date. The last figure of the year looks more like "5" than "3" (cf. "3" in "1300" on the first page of the letter), but if the letter was written in Bogos at all, the absence of Stella from December 1863 to March 1866 excludes 1 January 1865. The problem is that the writers address "the French consul at Massawa" as a person whom they know well. But Lejean, who had been appointed vice-consul in 1862, came to Ethiopia only in January 1863, and then through Metemma (no. 120). Stella, moreover, reported the receipt of the letter, enclosing a copy of the French text, only on 5 April 1865 (AACP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fols 153-154).

Lejean published the French version in *Théodore II* (p. 270) with the date 14 January 1863. A literal translation was published by J. Perruchon in *Revue sémitique*, VII (1899), pp. 367-368.

Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean [Jan. 1863]

በ ስሙ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቀዱስ ፡ ፊት ፡ አምላክ ፡
 ንጉሠ ፡ ነገሥት ፡ ተዎድሮ ፡ ደድረሰ ፡ ከፈረንሲስ ፡
 ንጉሥ ፡ መልክተኛ ፡ አንዲት ፡ ሰነዖት ፡ ለኔ ፡ አገረ
 አብሔር ፡ ይመስገን ፡ ይህኛ ፡ ነገር ፡ ሆኖ ፡ ለኔ ፡ ለገረ
 ገኛኛ ፡ አንገረ ወታደር ፡ በአገረ አብሔር ፡ ኃይል ፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach the envoy of the French king. How have you been? I am well, thank God. By the power of God, we will discuss everything when we meet.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 78. This is the first in a series of four preserved letters from Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean, who in April 1862 had been appointed French acting vice-consul in Ethiopia (AECC, Massouah 2, fols 4–25). Lejean arrived in Ethiopia from Khartoum in December 1862, informed the king of his arrival on 6 January 1863 and received a reply, in all probability the above lines, on 25 January (AEMD, Afrique 61, fols 130-133, Lejean to Drouyn de Lhuys, 28 January 1863). By then Bardel had undertaken to be the intermediary between Tēwodros and Napoleon (no. 117), which was to complicate Lejean's relations with the king (nos 122, 126–127).

Lejean published two accounts of his visit to Ethiopia in the French periodical *Le Tour du Monde*, the first, "Notes d'un voyage en Abyssinie" (*TM*, 1864, I, pp. 69–80), covering only the period up to 3 March, and a second, "Voyage en Abyssinie" (*TM*, 1865, II, pp. 221–272, and 1867, I, pp. 353–400), covering his whole trip in Ethiopia as well as a visit to Kassala. His book *Theodore II* contains much the same information.

Tēwodros to his governors on the western frontiers [1863]

በሰሙ: አብ: ወወራጅ: ግሙግራ: በ: ቅዱስ: ፩: አምላክ
 ንጉሠ: ነገሥት: ቄዳሎስ: ፡፡ በግዚ አብ ሐይ: ፡
 በሠጠኝ: በገዛ ሁት ገር: አቶ: አሰጣጥን: ቀ
 ራጥ: አት በሱት: ፡፡ ደምጣ: ከኔ: ጽሑፍ: አትከ
 ራክሱት: ፡፡ ሲሄድም: አትከልክሱት: ሢምጣም
 ቀረጥ: አትበሱት: ፡፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.
 King of Kings Tēwodros. Do not ask for duty from Mr. Haussmann (Isman) in the land which God has given to me, which I rule. Let him come to me; do not prevent him. When he goes, do not prevent him; when he comes, do not ask for duties.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

Waldmeier, between pp. 35 and 36, facsimile of Amharic original; pp. 35–36, German translation.
 C. Haussmann was a Protestant missionary in the Sudan, who visited his colleagues in Ethiopia in 1863. On his return to Khartoum, he stated (in a letter dated 4 January 1864) that he had stayed in Abyssinia for ten months. Assuming that Tēwodros’s letter was written to facilitate his entry into the country, it would therefore have been written in early 1863. See also J.M. Flad, *Zwölf Jahre in Abessinien, oder Geschichte des Königs Theodoros II. und der Mission unter seiner Regierung*, Leipzig, 1887, pp. 61–70.

Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean [March? 1863]

በስሙ ስም፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመኅራስ፡ ቅዱስ-ፊት-ሁለት-ጌታ፡
 ግጥሙ፡ ገገሥተ፡ ቲዎድሮስ-ደ-ፊት፡ ከፈረንሳይ
 ስ፡ ግጥሙ መልክተኛ፡ እንዲተ ሰበቅተ ህ፡ እኔ-አ
 ግዚአብሔር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይላኝ፡ እኔ-ከተወ
 ለድቡል-አንድ-ኛ ከበቃ ሁ፡ ወራ-ብሰማ-በእግ
 ዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ በእድር፡ በፈረንሳይ-ቸ፡ ስገር፡
 መገገሥተ-ደ-ፊት ሰበቅተ-ሥራተ፡ ያልገደለ
 ባቸው፡ ለሠተ-የሌለባቸው፡ ፍቸው፡ እያሉ-ኝ፡
 እጅ-ግ፡ ይህ-ደ-ሰኛ፡ ገበር፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይ
 ል፡ ለሁሉ ለገተ፡ ያገኘው፡ አሠተ-ኛ፡ ገው፡ ቀ
 ግሬ፡ ገው፡ ባልኾኝ፡ እውነተ፡ ቀጣሬ፡ ለሠተ-ኛ
 ፡ መሆኑን፡ በሦን-ምልክት ልመኝው፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach the envoy of the French king.

How have you been? I am well, thank God. Having heard reports from the time I was born until I reached maturity, being told over and over again that, by the power of God, there are in Europe, in the countries of the Europeans, those whose governments do not fall, who lack nothing in terms of law and order, in whom there is no deceit, by the power of God, I was very happy. If you tell me now that that man is a liar [and] a deceiver, how am I to know (lit. by what sign am I to believe) that he is truly a deceiver [and] a liar?



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 77bis, Amharic original. According to his own reports, Lejean had two violent disputes with Tēwodros. The first was caused by Lejean's request on 2 March for permission to leave for Massawa. The accounts of what followed indicate that the king became upset because Lejean insinuated that Bardel was not worthy of the trust the king had placed in him as emissary (see no. 118), but it is also possible that Lejean was suspected of spying for Egypt (AEMD, Afrique 61, fols 137-139, Lejean, 8 March 1963; *TM*, 1864, I, pp. 78-79). The second was triggered by a new request to leave three months later (no. 126).

The above letter with its reference to Bardel as the man accused of being "a liar, a deceiver" seems to fit well with the first encounter. By 1863 Tewodros had seen and heard a great deal of intrigue and slander between Europeans, and apparently he could not resist the temptation to use the weapon of irony in his response.

Gebre Hiywet Gětahun to Antoine d'Abbadie, 27 April 1863

ብክደዎ፡ ወላፀውዎ፡ እሉ፡ ታፈቅርዎ፡
ለፍቁርክሎ፡ መምህር፡ ጌታሁን፡ እስ
መ፡ አዕረፈ፡

ዛቲ፡ ጦማር፡ ዘተፈነወት፡ እምባብ፡
ወልድ፡ ክባ፡ ገብረ፡ ሕይወት፡ ተግዳሕ፡
ገብ፡ ክቶ፡ እንጦንዮስ፡ ዘአበደዮ፡ እንደ
ት፡ ገደ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ዋጋዎን፡ ይክ
ፈለገ፡ አባቴ፡ መምህር፡ ጌታሁን፡ ተ
ዘካር፡ አልባ፡ ሲቀሩ፡ ገበር፡ መልካም፡
ቶደረገ፡ ከቆንሱል፡ ከልዣን፡ ገብር፡
ተቀበልሁ፡ እነንም፡ አባቴ፡ ስርሰዎ፡
አደራ፡ በለዋል፡ ዘመድ፡ ይሁኑት፡ ገ
ሰው፡

ሀለደ፡ ጨረሰ፡ ተሀለደ፡ ተጨረሰ፡
ከሲኖስ፡ ከድጋ፡ አስ፡
ተጽሕፈ፡ በገደ፡ ወገኖ፡ ሃወረዳ፡ መተ፡
ምሕረት፡ አመ፡ ጌሁ፡ ስሚደዝደ፡

You who love your dear *Memhir* Gē-
tahun, cry and lament for him, for he
has gone to rest.

May this letter sent by the young *Ab-
ba* Gebre Hiywet reach Mr. Antoine
d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyoṣ Ze'abedīye).
How are you?

May God reward you. My father
and (my) teacher Gětahun would have
been left without a commemoration
feast (*tezkar*) [if it had not been for
you]. It was well done. I received
twelve thalers from Consul Lejean
(*Qonsul Lizhan*).

My father, moreover, put me under
your care, saying, "Be his protector."

Halede [means] "he finished"; *te-
halede* [means] "it was finished". It
occurs in the *Sīnodos* and in the *Dig-
gwa*.

Written in the year of grace 1855, on
the 20th of *Miyaziya*.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 176, Gi'iz/Amharic original. *Memhir* Gětahun was one of Antoine d'Abbadie's early teachers and collaborators (ACTA, I, nos 108, 139, 144, 168). D'Abbadie sent an answer to this letter "through Gebre İyyesus" on 23 September, thus together with his reply to no. 125.

The writer of the letter was not only the student or spiritual son of the deceased *memhir*, but almost certainly his biological son. See no. 132.

Gebre İyyesus to Antoine d'Abbadie, 28 April [1863]

መልክት፡ ዳግሚት፡ ዘተፈ፡ ሰው፡ እም፡ ባብ፡ ቀኝ፡ ~~ፊት~~፡ ገብረ፡ ኢ
 የሱሱ፡ ተብዳሖ፡ ገብ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ወፍቅር፡ ነፍ፡ እንገንዘብ፡ ዘክብረዎ፡
 እግዚአብሔር፡ ደዕቀብክ፡ እምነት፡ እኩይ፡ አሚን።
 በቅንሱል፡ ልዝን፡ እጅ፡ ሸብር፡ ተተበልሁ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ከመጽ
 ዋት፡ ደቀ፡ ጠርሶም፡ የኒ፡ ትጋር፡ መክራ፡ በዝቅ፡ ገብረ፡ ወዲህ፡ የል
 ጃቸን፡ ረጋብ፡ እያየሁ፡ ክርሶም፡ ከተሰየሁ፡ የወሰድ፡ ጳጳሳ፡ ጌታ
 ዩ፡ ሆይ፡ በጽሕፈት፡ አያልቅም፡ የኒ፡ መክራ፡ የጊት፡ ግመት፡ የወ
 ሬ፡ ደብዳቤ፡ ያሱት፡ ክጊት፡ ግመት፡ ይበልጣል፡ ጨርሽ፡ ስሰድላ
 ም፡ ያውቅታል፡ ካልተገርሁ፡ ካልተረብሁ፡ ሆኖ፡ ታደምን፡ ስራ፡
 አሰራሰሁ፡ እርሰዎም፡ ስሱ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ በሰው፡ ዘመድ፡ ይ
 ሆኑኝ፡ ቅንሱል፡ ልዝንም፡ አደራ፡ ይበሱልኝ፡ ወኪል፡ ይሁኑኝ፡
 አሁንም፡ የኒ፡ መክራ፡ ትጋር፡ እያሰጠኝም፡ ሀገራችን፡ ጠፋ፡
 መክራ፡ በ. በዛ፡ ተሰ፡ የደስታ፡ ምክሽ፡ ይመጣ፡

ሀሰድ፡ ጨርሽ፡ ተሀሰድ፡ ተጨርሽ፡ ማለት፡ ሰው፡ ክሲኖዶስ
 ከድጋ፡ አለ፡

መመህር፡ ጌታሁን፡ ደብተራ፡ ኃጉስ፡ ሸክ፡ አሊ፡ ሞቱ፡ *Haguas*

ተጽሕፈት፡ አመ፡ ሸውሸሰሚያዝያ፡

~~የሰላም~~ ይሰጣል፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ዘክብረዎ፡ ለኒ፡ ዜናክ፡
 እእግዚአብሔር፡ ደብዳቤ፡

May [this] second letter sent by *Qeñ Gēta* Gebre İyyesus reach my master and friend Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥoniyoጥ Ze'abediye). May God keep you from all evil. Amen.

I have received twenty thalers by the hand of Consul Lejean (*Qonsul Lizhan*). May God reckon it as alms from you; for my poverty and hardship had increased, especially when I saw the starvation of my children, who were born to me after parting from you. O my master, [the story of] my misery cannot be exhausted in writing.

You mentioned a report (lit. letter) of the news of the [past] seven years. When I have completed it and sent it to you, you will know that it is more than [the news of] seven years. Unless I suffer and starve, I will do what you want me to do. As for you, for God's sake be my friend. Tell Consul Lejean to take care of me. Let him be my contact (*wekīl*).

Now, do not feel sorry because of my hardship [and] hunger. Our country is ruined because of many hardships. Let a joyful reply come soon.

Halede [means] "he finished"; *tehalede* [means] "it was finished". It is found in the *Sinodos* and in the *Diggwa*.

Memhir Gētahun, *Debtera* Hagos and *Shaykh* Alī have died.

Written on the 21st of Mīyaziya.

O my master d'Abbadie (Debedī), God be praised who let me hear news about you.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 174, Gi'iz/Amharic original. Antoine d'Abbadie comments that Gebre İyyesus has forgotten the place and year, but then makes a mistake himself by assuming that it was written on 16 May 1863 instead of 28 April. He replies in September 1863.

Tēwodros to Guillaume Lejean [1863]

በ ስሙ ስብ ወ ወልድ ወ መንፈስ ቅዱስ ስም ላይ
ኅዳር ለገሥተ-ቲዎድሮስ ደ ደረሰ ከፈረንሳይ
ከካሉ ልደግዴት ስንበት ህእኔ እዚ አብሒር ደ
መሰገን ደህና ነኝ። እኔ መልካም ነው ቀድሞ ስ
የላክኩት ስው እከቲ መለከልኝ ቆይታ ስለሆነ ብቶቶ
ኩል ነው እንጂ። አሁንም አይዘነድ በእዚ አብሒር
ኃይል ደ ሲመጣ ልኝ መልካም አርጌ። አሁን ጭብቶ
ሃለሁ።



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.
King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach the French consul. How have you been? I am well, thank God.
Yes, it is fine. It was because you were in such a hurry that I told you to wait until the man whom I had sent earlier should return. Now, take it easy; when that [man] returns to me, by the power of God, I will dismiss you properly.
Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 79, Amharic original. Lejean accepted Tēwodros's order to remain, and this note was apparently written soon after to put the consul at ease, as he awaited Bardel's return. In his published account, Lejean quotes the letter as follows: "... Be patient, and by the mercy of the Trinity, everything will work out for the best. I have detained you because I had to do so, but when my agent has returned, I will send you back with the honours which you are entitled to..." (TM, 1865, II, p. 271). Lejean adds that he followed "this reasonable advice".
The reply brought by Bardel was, however, on several counts unacceptable to Tēwodros, and Lejean left the country (at the end of September) under a cloud, to say the least. One of the Europeans present reported that the consul was dismissed with the following words: "I have liars enough in my country; let Lejean depart." (The Autobiography of Theophilus Waldmeier, London, 1886, p. 81.) Lejean on his part reported that Tēwodros had characterized him and his British colleague in the following manner: "The French is a madman (bouda) and the English an ass" (TM, 1865, II, p. 271). For the issues involved in the expulsion of Lejean, see Rubenson, Survival, pp. 229-231.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to Napoleon III [July? 1863]

الحمد لله

من الحاج ابيك ابراهيم شميم الى الحاكم الفرنسي نبلبون هداه الله تعالى امين
 فان سلمت عنافتن في خير وعافيه جعلكم الله كذلك واحسن من ذلك ومما نؤفك
 فتن من محك تحت امركم وطاعتكم ومهمين في امركم والحال لا يخفى عليكم بعد
 وصول المركب الذي ارسلتم فيه الفلوس ورفعنا اليكم جملة كتب ولم اجانا
 منكم جواب ولا اعلام لعل الله المانع خير ونحن عطشانين لاخباركم ووصولكم
 الى طرفنا متاقين في مواجعتكم وتعملوننا اما بوصولكم والاجوابكم
 الذي نعتمد فيه لان نحن في امور الزمان وسمنا ان الباشه في حديده
 جديد ولا نذري مايجي منه ومن جناب سلطان ديني متاقيو
 وصولكم ولا تقطعون من الكتب الله الله والسلام لانتم في حفظ الله
 وسلموننا على اولادكم ومن له ديننا الاخ الحاج صالح شميم واولادنا الحاج ابراهيم
 ابوبكر ومحمد ابوبكر ودينني احمد وابوبكر احمد



Praise be to God.

From *Hājj* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm to the French ruler, Napoleon (Nabulyūn). May God Almighty guide him. Amen.

If you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise and even more so. What we want to inform you about is that we are under your orders and at your service. We are anxious for your instructions. The situation is not unknown to you. After the ship with which you sent the money had arrived, we sent you a number of letters, but no reply or [other] communication has come to us from you.

Perhaps God prevented it for the good. We are thirsty for news about you and your coming to us, eager as we are to meet you. Respond quickly to us either by (your) coming or (your) writing. This is what we depend on because our time is running out.

We have heard that the *pasha* is in Hodeida again, and we do not know what will come from him. As for His Excellency *Sultān* Dīnī, he is eager about your coming. [O] God, [O] God, do not deprive us of letters! Greetings. May you remain under the protection of God.

Greet your children on our behalf. From our side [our] brother *Hājj* Ṣālīḥ Shaḥīm and our children *Hājj* Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr and Muḥammad Abū Bakr and Dīnī Aḥmad and Abū Bakr Aḥmad [send their greetings].

Seal: Shaḥīm Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr . . .

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 254, Arabic original; fols 255–256, French translation. The dating is based on the fact that the letter was forwarded by the French agent at Aden on 20 July 1863 (*ibid.*, fol. 253).

The letters referred to by Abū Bakr are almost certainly those he wrote in August the previous year (nos 113–115) when he acknowledged the receipt of 5,000 thalers, *i.e.* the second half of the payment for the Obok territory.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel, 29 July 1863

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمَّ الصَّلَاةُ بِمَحَلَّاتِ بِنْتِ

حمدنا الولي الانعام المنفرد بالبقاء والدوام الذي لا تاخذه السنة ولا ضوام ولا تقصم الا شهر ولا
عوام جل تبارك وتعالى ذوالجلال والاکرام من الحاج ابي بكر ابراهيم شميم الى الورير امر خارجيه هذه
التي تجاز وابقاه وعافاه ورعاه وحرسه من كل سوء ومكره وقاه وكفاه امين فان سألتم عننا فقل في
خير وعافيه جمعكم الله كذلك بل احسن من ذلك صدرت الحروف من بندر ريلع وكل علم لدينا خير وعافيه
ولا بنا ضرر يجب رفعه اليكم الا دوام السر والسلامه وما نعرفكم ولما كان في شهر ذي الحجه وصل اليها
مركبين مركب كبير ارميون فرجه ومركب صغير كزيب ودخلنا ابع بتنا الصلح ثلاثه ليالي ونزلوا البر
ومتشوا وبعد ذلك مركب الكبير سافر الى عدن والصغير جابنا الى ريلع وبعد ذلك سافر الى عدن
بعد مركب الصلح الكبير الحربي ومن بعد ما سافر مشيه سفير من عندنا ولا اجانا منكم جواب لعالمه مانع
ونعرفكم يوم نتاجنا انا ومكندر فرجه في ابع واسري انني لا اعطي شي للبواش من الميري والآن
يا احبابي لا يخفى عليكم اجانا طلب من حديه من عند وكيلي كتاب فيه طلب الميري ولم رضينا
وردنا الجواب على وكيلي وعرفناه انني لا اسلم ريال دون ما يجينا كتاب من الامه الولايه وفيه امر
واعتمد فيه والان يا احبابي تجملون لنا جواب سريعا حتى اعتمد فيه وانتم تغفلون انا والذكم ما
نستد بينا عداوه وانا جالس في ريلع تحت امركم ولا لهم طريقه علي الا يدرون مني قبيح
وسمونا على الاحباب وعلى اولادكم وسلموا على المحب مشيه شفيق والسدم
وسالنا يسلم عليكم الاخ الحاج صالحكم وديني احمد جزيل السلام تازي يوم الجمع في صفر
ويسلم عليكم الولد ابراهيم والولد محمد والولد محمد عيال ابو بكر ابراهيم رحمه الله



In the name of God, the benevolent and merciful. Praise be to God. May good deeds be accomplished by His grace.

We praise the Benefactor, the gracious, the unique in permanence and immortality, whom age and slumber do not overcome, whom months and years do not diminish. He is great; He is blessed; He is exalted; He is glorious [and] gracious.

From *Hājj* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. May God Almighty guide him and keep him, sustain him, watch over him and guard him from all evil and cunning. May He preserve and protect him. Amen.

If you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise and even more so. The letters were dispatched from the port of Zeyla; all the information we have is very good and favourable. There is nothing we lack which should be brought to your attention, except lasting security and peace.

What we want to inform you about is, that in the month of Dhū-l-Ḥijja two ships came to us, a large ship, the frigate *Hermione*, and a small ship, the *Courier*. We called at Obok and stayed three nights. They went ashore and took a walk there. After that the large ship sailed for Aden, while the small one came with us to Zeyla and then sailed for Aden after the warship.

Since Mr. Schefer (*Mishyuh* Safir) left us, no letter has arrived from you. Perhaps God has prevented it. We also inform you that the day we met Hanoux (Anāw), [the] captain (*kumandir*) of [the] frigate, at Obok, he ordered me not to give any revenue to the pashas.

But now, O my friends, you are well aware that a demand from Hodeida has reached us through our agent, with a message claiming the revenue. We did not agree, and we returned the letter to our agent, and made it clear to him that I shall not hand over one thaler unless a letter reaches us from the government with instructions for me. I shall base [my actions] on it.

But now, O my friends, see to it to send an answer at once, so that I can base myself on it. You know that we and the Turks do not conceal [that there is] enmity between us. I am sitting at Zeyla on your authority, and they would have no way to get me, if they did not know [something] disgraceful about me.

Greet friends and your children on our behalf. Greet also the beloved Mr. Schefer. Greetings.

And on our side, [our] brother *Hājj* Ṣāliḥ Shaḥīm and Dīnī Aḥmad send you many greetings. The young Ibrāhīm and the young Muḥammad and the young Ḥumad, the sons of Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm send you their greetings. Most perfect greetings.

Dated Friday 12 Ṣafar 1280.

Seal: Shaḥīm Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr . . .

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 258, Arabic original; fols 259–260, French translation. This letter was forwarded to Paris on 20 August.


Abū Bakr had been reinstated as governor of Zeyla by the French in 1861, but is reported to have paid 3,000 thalers in tribute to the *pasha* at Hodeida as late as May 1862 (Douin, II, pp. 196, 199–200). Now that the pressure was on him from Hodeida, and the French had instructed him not to pay, he was evidently becoming worried and wanted to be reassured that France would protect him against the Turkish authorities on the other side of the Red Sea.

Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm to E.A. Thouvenel, 1 Sept. 1863



الحمد لله

من الحاج ابوبكر ابراهيم نجيم الى الوردي امو خارجيه في بلاد بربريس هذه الله تعالى امين
 وابقاه وعافاه ورعاه وهرسمه من كل سوء وكفاه اما بعد فانا سالم عننا فغن في خير
 وعافيه جعلكم الله كذلك بل احسن من ذلك وبعد الذي تعرفكم يا حبيبتنا لا يخفى عليكم
 حاله ومن بعد ما سافرتم من عندنا كنا ساكنين في بندر ريلج على امان واما منكم
 وهذه السنه وردت علينا طلب الميري من حديده جاء كتاب من حديده من طريق
 وكيلنا الذي في حديده والطلب من الياسه ولكن ما اجانا كتاب من ياشه ونحن ردينا
 للجواب على وكيلنا وعرفناه مالنا امر حتى نسلم الميري لحيث اننا من تحت امركم
 ولا من تحت امرهم بسبب هذا لم نرضينا نسلم الميري وردينا للجواب على وكيلنا والآن
 ١ نامنتظر جوابكم وانتم مجبولنا للجواب الذي اعتمدتم لحيث للجواب ما رجوع علينا
 من وكيلنا وانتم تعرفون الترك اذا اطلب شي من لم يعدر ونحن لم نسلم الميري
 وبقينا محسورين بين الامر بين حبيبتنا تعرفكم الله الله للجواب مبادره مبادره
 والدم ختام لارتم في حفظ الله وكل حقيقه من تجدون من لسن جوفينا والحمد لله
 ويسلم عليكم الاخ الحاج صالح حبه والولد محمد ابوبكر وديني احمد جورا الى السلام
 تاريخ يوم الروع في شهر ربيع ١٧ سنة ١٢٨٠

Seal:  Shaḥīm Ibrāhīm Abū Bakr . . .

Praise be to God.

From *Hājj* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the city of Paris. May God Almighty guide him. Amen. May He keep him, sustain him, watch over him, guard him from all evil and protect him.

Now then, if you inquire about us, we are well and healthy. May God make you likewise and even more so.

Moreover, what we want to let you know—O our beloved, nothing is hidden from you—is that we have been living in the port of *Zeyla* since you left us, relying on your protection and your loyalty. This year we received a demand for revenue from Hodeida. A letter came from Hodeida through our agent at Hodeida. The demand was from the *pasha*; no letter, however, came from the *pasha* [himself]. We returned the reply to our agent and let him know that we have no instructions to hand over the revenue, since I am under your instructions and not under theirs. Because of this we did not agree to hand over the revenue, and returned the reply to our agent.

And now I am waiting for your answer. Send the answer at once, so that I can base myself on it, because no reply has been returned to us by our agent. You know the character of the Turk. If he asks for something once, he does not repeat [his request]; and we are not going to hand over the revenue. We are in a dilemma (lit. left uncovered) between the governments. Give us the reply, Your Excellency, [O] God, [O] God! Quickly, quickly! Greetings. Concluded.

May you remain under the protection of God. The full truth you can find out orally from Juvénaï (*Jūfināl*) and (one word illegible). [Our] brother *Hājj* Ṣāliḥ Shaḥīm and the young Muḥammad Abū Bakr and Dīnī Aḥmad send many greetings.

Dated Wednesday the 17th of the month of Rabī' 1280.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 261, Arabic original; fols 265–266, French translation. Assuming that Rabī' stands for Rabī' al-Awwal the date should be 1 September, but note that the following letter in the Arabic text itself equates the 27th of that month with 12 September.

Abū Bakr apparently felt that his position *vis-à-vis* the Turkish authorities on the other side of the Red Sea was fast becoming untenable and wanted the French to accept their responsibility and tell him what to do.

Dīnī Aḥmad Dīnī to E.A. Thouvenel, 12 September 1863



الى عين اعيانه وقرائنه وعهده اخذنا وعضا مثل وزير امور الحاجر حيدر مني سفر انجي دام اسنا
 ا واين وبعيد التمه الكرام اعني به روي المحب التمام بعد ما سافرنا في عنكم مع مسيو شفيير في استعارة الدولة
 العاليه المرافضاي في اشغال بلد ابوخ وتمامها وساره في امان المرافضاي وكلتي في
 اشغالي الذي سويتها فوجدوا اخباره عند مسيو شفيير ومرتجين منكم جوابات لنا في هذا
 الوقت ان يونساهذا فلا جرننا منكم جوابات وقامو عليا الترك ونحالم رخصياهم والمات
 وصل بات صاحب يدال البادر اليمن وارسل بيضا فمنا حق ثلاثة سنين تسع لاف بلايين
 وسرا ال عدن واخذنا المنصل وقالنا هذا ما هو شغل حبي ودلحين نخاضا يمتي في
 بلد زله قامو عليا دعه يتولون ان كان عنكم وجد حضوره وان كان ما عنكم في
 سوا الدرع الملبوس والاختل بوجوده مع البادري حامل الكتابه هذا وانا مرادي
 بوصول الى طرفكم لاجل الوجهه وبسر الخبر بيتا وبيتكم ان كان مرادكم نودل الى
 خبايكم فتعرفونا بكتابه ويكون نطلع مع القناصله ويكون فرخنا عليه هذا ما لزم تعريفه
 ورسنا اليه
 و سلمنا على مسيو شفيير وبسلم عليكم التبع ابو بكر ابز هبم مح
 و ابو بكر احمد ديني والحاج صالح شيم نيارنج ٢٧ في شهر ربيع اول ١٢٨٤

ص
 ديني احمد ديني

Seal [Dīnī Aḥmad]

To the one who is the most prominent among the (lit. his) prominent, the pride of his companions and the pillar of his brothers, the beloved of his peers, the minister of foreign affairs, (*ministī safar rānkhḥīa*). May God perpetuate his existence. Amen.

After greeting Your Excellency, by this I mean the echo of the glory of the eminent—after we had departed from you together with Mr. Schefer (*Misyū Shafir*) on the business of the great French empire concerning the land of Obok, we concluded it, and [Obok] came under the protection of the French. Everything concerning my business, which we settled, you can find out. The report about it is with Mr. Schefer. We have been expecting letters from you all this time, until this very day, but we have received no letters from you.

The Turks turned against us, but we did not agree with them. And now a new *pasha* has arrived in the ports of Yemen. He has sent and requested the dues for three years, 9,000 thalers, from us. We went to Aden and informed the consul, but he told us that this was not something within his jurisdiction. And now we are stranded (lit. lost) in the town of Zeyla. They turned against us and said, “If you have any excuse, present it; if you have no excuse, hand over the revenue.” As for [more] information, you will find it with my messenger, the bearer of this letter. I want to come to your place in order to meet you, and the matter will be settled between you and me.

If it is your wish, we shall come to Your Excellency. Please inform us in writing, and we shall make arrangements with the consul (*qunāsilah*). Our expenses shall be on him. This is what must be understood.

May you remain healthy. Greet Mr. Schefer on our behalf. *Shaykh* Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm Shaḥīm and Abū Bakr Aḥmad Dīnī and *Ḥājj* Šālīḥ Shaḥīm greet you.

Dated the 27th of the month of Rabī' al-Awwal, 12 September 1863.

Verified: Dīnī Aḥmad Dīnī.

AEMD, Afrique 63, fol. 262, Arabic original; fols 263–264, French translation. When Dīnī Aḥmad visited Paris and negotiated the treaty in March 1862 (no. 98), he signed as Dīnī Aḥmad Abū Bakr, possibly because Abū Bakr was the best known of the Afar chiefs. Why he changed his final name from “Abū Bakr” to “Dīnī” in the above letter is more difficult to guess, but this is not the only case of inconsistency in such matters. Unfortunately the seal above is illegible, and the one used by Dīnī Aḥmad in 1862 contains only the two names Dīnī and Aḥmad.

This letter is poorer in several respects than the previous ones (nos 128–130) from Abū Bakr himself. Note the interesting attempt to write “ministre des affaires étrangères” with Arabic letters—*ministī safar rānkhḥīa*(?).

Gebre Hiywet Gētahun to Antoine d'Abbadie, 29 Sept. [1863]

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ዘቲ፡ጠጣር፡ዘተፈተዎት፡እም ናገ፡አገ፡ገብረ ሴዊዎት፡
 የመ ምር፡ጌታ ሁግ፡፡ ልጅ፡፡ ቆጥሮ ስ፡ግብ፡ጌታ፡
 እምናዮስ፡እጅ ጉን፡እግዳታ፡ክሎ፡፡ አገ፡ጌብረግዳር፡
 ሞቱ፡አገረጌ፡ሳዎገቡኝ፡ ዘመድ፡የለ ሻም፡አር
 ግሰዎ፡ዘመድ፡ይሁኑኝ፡፡ እገዚክ፡ገብረ፡ጌ፡፡ ጌ፡፡ ፊ፡፡
 ይስጠዎ፡፡
 ቀለምም፡ቢሰጥሰዎ፡ ገብረ፡ልጅኝ፡ አለኝ፡፡
 ተጽሕፈ፡በከተማ፡ሳግ ደር፡፡ አመ፡፡፡፡ ለመስክ
 ረሞ፡፡

May this letter from *Abba* Gebre Hiywet, the son of *Memhir* Gētahun, reach Mr. Antoine (*Inጎጎጎ*). How are you, really?
 My father died at Gonder without taking me to my country. I have no helper. Be my helper. May God give you health and long life. If you lack copiers, there are many young people [here] (lit. if you lack ink (*qelem*), we have many children).
 Written in the city of Gonder on the 19th of Meskerem.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 256, fol. 482, Amharic original. This letter is almost certainly written by the Gebre Hiywet who announced the death of his father and teacher in April the same year (see no. 124).
 It must be assumed that *qelem*, literally “ink”, is here used in some figurative sense, either “writer, copier, scribe” or possibly “information”. It seems probable that Gebre Hiywet is actually suggesting to Antoine that he is able to arrange a large-scale copying of Ethiopian manuscripts for him. But it is also possible that the sentence “If you lack (or want) copiers (or information)” was left unfinished. In that case “We have many children” is added as a piece of information, probably intended to move d’Abbadie to be generous with financial assistance.

Tekle Haymanot, Gebre Maryam and Gebre Medhin to Pius IX [1863]

ገጽ 1.

ታብዓሕ፡ ጌባ ፡ ፓ ፓ ፡ አበ፡ ነጥሉ፡ ስብኦ፡ ዘሀ

ሎ፡ በደብ፡ ምድር፡ ህዋዓተ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ አክሙ፡ አ
 ግዳ፡ ውሉቱ፡ ፡ ለክ፡ ተው-ህበክ፡ መራሁት፡ ዘመዓት፡ ግሥት፡
 ስማዎች፡ ወዮ-ምድ፡ አግሥት፡ ጌደለክ፡ ክመ፡ ታርሁ፡
 አናቅደሐ፡ ለኢትዮ-ጵያ፡ ዘተሐፅረት፡ በአስዋክ፡ ፀላኤ፡
 ስብኦ፡ ፡ ወደክዜ፡ ፈኑ፡ ፍጡን፡ አሳተ፡ ፍቅርክ፡ ክመ፡
 ደው-አደ፡ ጌደሉ፡ ለፀላኢ፡ ወባሕቱ፡ ግሴብሐ፡ ለአግ
 ዚአብሔር፡ ስቡሐ፡ ለዘአብድሐን፡ አስክ፡ ዘቲ፡ አክምድ፡
 ተ፡ አብ፡ ወደም፡ በብዝሃ፡ ሣህሉ፡ ወምሕረቱ፡ ለአም
 ለክን፡ ፡ ወባሕቱ፡ ነሐዝግ፡ ፈድቆደ፡ በአግተ፡ ጥፍአተ፡
 ዜና፡ ሠናደ፡ ዘኢትዮ-ጵያ፡ ወክመ፡ ኢዲላዝግ፡ ልብክ፡
 በደአቲ፡ ጠማረ፡ ሐሰት፡ አስመ፡ ትቤ፡ ተፈኖ-ኩ፡ በ
 ምክረ፡ ነጥሎ-ሙ፡ ካህናት፡ ካቶሊካው-ያግ፡ ፡ ዳሰሙ፡
 ግሐን፡ ኢስማልን፡ ወኢርዲን፡ ወኢሀበርን፡ ምስለ፡ ደ
 ፅቲ፡ ጠማረ፡ አኪት፡ ወሐሰት፡ ዘትዌ፡ ል፡ አበ፡ ወጠማ
 ረ፡ ጉህሉት፡ ስዲጣን፡ ምስለ፡ መሣግራሁ፡ ወዘታደ
 ክም፡ ልበ፡ አበው፡ ፡ ወታርላቅ፡ ፍቅረ፡ ስብኦ፡ ወታሌሐል፡
 ፍቅረ፡ አምላክ፡ ወደም፡ አም፡ አም፡ ወጥድ፡ ወበአ
 ግዝ፡ ግስአለክ፡ ወኖስተበቀ-ዓክ፡ አሰብ፡ ክመ፡ ደጥፋ፡
 ዜና፡ ዘክሮታ፡ ለደአቲ፡ ጠማረ፡ ሐሰት፡ ፡

ተክለ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ገብረ፡ ማርያም፡ ዘአጋሜ፡ ጉልዳ፡ ገ
 ብረ፡ መድ-ላግ፡

May [this letter] reach the Pope, the father of all people, because he is the one representing Our Lord Christ on earth.

To you are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Renew this day your power to open the doors of Ethiopia which are closed by the thorns of the enemy of mankind; and (now) be quick to extend your fervent love (lit. the fire of your love) at once so that it will consume the power of the enemy.

On the other hand, we praise the glorious God who has brought us to the understanding of the Father and the Mother by the boundless mercy and forgiveness of Our Lord. We are, however, very sad due to the absence of good news regarding Ethiopia.

So that you might not be disheartened because of that false letter which states that it was sent by the consent of the Catholic clergy, [we would like you to know that] we never heard or saw or agreed to that letter of wickedness and falsehood, which undermines a father—a letter [full] of the Devil's deceit, with his snares which weaken the heart of the fathers and drive away human love, and withdraw the love of fathers and mothers from [their] children.

For this reason we ask and implore you, O father, that references to that letter of falsehood be stopped.

Tekle Haymanot [and] Gebre Maryam of Agamē Gwela; Gebre Medhin.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 575, Gi'iz original. This is the first of seven letters filed with translations and comments in one integrated document (fols 583–584) by Cardinal Massaja and dated "Collegio delle missioni 22 Maggio 1864". Only the above letter was not translated at the time because Massaja did not know Gi'iz. He had spent the last four months of 1863 in northern Ethiopia on his way to Europe, and since five of the letters are addressed to him, it was most probably during this period that they were written.

The three signatories of the letter belonged to the group of priests ordained by Massaja in February 1847 (O'Mahoney, vol. I, pp. 58–59, 230).

The "letter of wickedness" referred to is almost certainly the letter to Cardinal Barnabò dated 26 February 1861 (no. 87), where the names of Tekle Haymanot, Gebre Maryam and Gebre Medhin are missing. The three signatories were all from Gwela in Agamē; it is impossible to determine whether "Agamē Gwela" should be read together (as above), leaving Gebre Medhin as an addition, or be divided so that Gwela is read with the third name. Though probably as loyal to the memory of De Jacobis as any of their colleagues, the three priests who signed this letter were apparently not prepared to question the authority of Biancheri. Crummey, p. 112, refers to this and the following letters as evidence that during 1862 Father Delmonte, who was then responsible for the mission, had succeeded in re-establishing discipline.

The clergy of Agamē to the S. Congregazione de Propaganda Fide [1863]

ኋባ፡ አበዊኑ፡ ነቶሊካውያን፡ ጉባዔ፡ ዘ ትሮጵታን፡ ዘ
ቅድስት፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡።

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አለበዊኑ፡ ንኤም ሕክሙ፡ በአምሕ፡ መንፈስዊት፡ ስላም
ክሙ፡ ወስላሙ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ዲሳድር፡ ላሕሌኑ፡ አ
ሜን፡።

አባቶቻችን፡ ሆይ፡ በአቡነ፡ ቢያንኪሪ፡ ለይ፡ የተጸፈ፡
በሁሉ፡ አዳ፡ ነው፡ ተብሎ፡ ስሐስተኛ፡ ወረቀት፡ ወጸ፡
አላንተ፡ የመጣ፡ እኛ፡ አልሰማንም፡ አላየንም፡ አልተጮ
መርንም፡። ዲላንን፡ ክቶ፡ ወሬ፡ ብቻ፡ ተደፎ፡ ሔ
ደ፡ ብንሰማ፡ አጅግ፡ አዘነ፡።

ብጹዓን፡ አባቶቻችን፡ ሆይ፡ የኔታችንን፡ መስቀ
ል፡ ተሸክመው፡ ክስዲጣን፡ ባርነት፡ የኢትዮጵያ
ን፡ ስው፡ አወጣለሁ፡ ብለው፡ ህያ፡ ሁለት፡ ዓመ
ት፡ ምሉ፡ በመልካም፡ አብነት፡ በደድቅነት፡ አቡ
ነ፡ ያሕቅብ፡ የደክሙበትን፡ አግር፡ ሊያጠፋ፡ የስ
ው፡ ጠላት፡ ስዲጣን፡ ነው፡።

አሁንም፡ ክቡራን፡ አባቶቻችን፡ ሆይ፡ በዚህ፡ በ
ሰዲጣን፡ ትንኮሳ፡ ምክንያት፡ በኛ፡ ለይ፡ ልባች
ቱና፡ የጠባቂያችን፡ ልብ፡ እንዳይደክም፡ አደራ፡
አደራ፡ ብለን፡ እንለምናለን፡።

fol. 577r

To our fathers, the Catholics of the Congregation of the Propagation of the Holy Church.

O our fathers, we greet you with spiritual greetings! May your peace and the peace of God abide in us. Amen.

O our fathers, we have neither heard nor seen, nor did we have a part in the false letter against Bishop Biancheri (*Abune Bīyankēri*) which has come to you saying that it was unanimous. When however, we heard that such bad news had been written and sent to you, we were very sad.

O our holy fathers, it is Satan, the enemy of mankind, who wants to destroy the land for which Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) laboured for as many as twenty-two years, as a good example and in righteousness, carrying the cross of Christ, saying I will free the Ethiopian people from the slavery of Satan.

And now, our honoured fathers, we earnestly beg you not to let your hearts and that of our protector grow cold towards us because of this cunning of Satan.

The second matter [is] that we beg you to consecrate (lit. make) for us a successor to Bishop Biancheri (*Abune Bīyankēri*), with the consent of Bishop Biancheri. Bishop Massaja (*Abune Masiyas*) and Bishop Biancheri will testify that, from [the day] when you began to send apostolic preachers to us until now, we have, as far as it has been

ሁለተኛ፡ ነገር፡ የአቡነ፡ ቢያግኤሪ፡ ወራሽ፡ በአቡነ፡
 ኪርታኤሪ፡ ልቃድ፡ ጳጳ፡ ተደርጉልኝ፡ ይገለጸዋል
 ለኝ፡ ሰባክያ፡ ሐዋርያት፡ ክስደዳችሁልኝ፡ ጀም
 ጭ፡ አስክ፡ ዛሬ፡ ደረሰ፡ በተሸላገ፡ ነገር፡ ሁሉ፡ በባቶች
 ችግ፡ ለደ፡ በቀጠሉት፡ አገዳጭ፡ አቡነ፡ ማስደሰኛ፡
 አቡነ፡ ቢያግኤሪ፡ ደመሰክሩልኛል፡ ጠይቁልኝ፡፡

within our power, done no wrong
 against our fathers. Inquire [about
 this] for us.

The priests of Agamē Gwela: Tekle
 Haymanot, Gebre Maryam, Gebre
 Medhin; Se'isi'i Qēs Amha, Gebre
 Igzi'abihēr, Fissiha Šiyon, Tekle
 Gīyorgīs of Alitēna, Barekineh Qēs
 Imnetu, and Tekle Mika'el, Akkele
 Guzay.

ካህናት፡ ዘአጋሜ፡ ገደል፡ ተክለ፡ ላይማኖት፡ ገብረ፡
 ማርያም፡ ገብረ፡ መድኃኔ፡ ሰፊሲክ፡ ቁስ፡ አምሳ፡ ገብ
 ረ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ ጥራት፡ ድኅን፡ ተክለ፡ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ዘ
 አልቴኛ፡
 ባረክቶሁ፡ ቁስ፡ አምሳ፡ ወተክለ፡ ማኅኤል፡ አክለ፡ ጉዛ
 ደ፡፡

ASCPF.SRC, vol. 7, fol. 577, Gi'iz/Am-
 haric; fol. 583, Italian translation of all
 but the first paragraph, which is in
 Gi'iz. Though the writers deny that they
 had anything to do with the letter di-
 rected against Biancheri in February
 1861 (no. 87), the names Fissiha Šiyon
 and Tekle Gīyorgīs appear also there.



fol. 577v

Document no. 136

The clergy of Agamē to Guiglielmo Massaja [1863]

ኣቡነ፡ አቡነ፡ ማክረክ፡

To Bishop Massaja (*Abune Masiyas*).
 [Please] take and deliver for us the letter we
 sent to the *Propaganda* while you were at Mas-
 sawa, after considering whether it is good or
 bad, and improving and sealing it. Read it,
 seal it and take it for us.

ወደ፡ አረጋጋኝ፡ ደሰደድኛል፡ ወረ
 ቀት፡ እርሱም፡ ጥራት፡ ሰፊሲክ፡ መገንጠል
 ኛ፡ ክፈ፡ መሆኑን፡ አይታወቅም፡ አሳምሮው፡
 አትመው፡ አገዳጭ፡ አይገኝ፡ አገዳጭ፡
 ጠጥሮ፡ አይታወቅም፡ አትመው፡ ደውሰ
 ይልኝ፡፡

The priests of Agamē.

ካህናት፡ ዘአጋሜ፡፡

ASCPF.SRC, vol. 7, fol. 579, Amharic original; fol.
 583, Italian translation.

Gebre Maryam to Guiglielmo Massaja [1863]

ቅብዓሕ፡ ገብ፡ አቡነ፡ ማስያሕ፡ አብ፡
አአቡነ፡ ኢትርሰኣና፡ በደሎት ክ፡ በ
ዝ፡ ዓለም፡ ወ በዘይመድድኣይ፡ ዓለም፡
አሚኛ ፡፡

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ክባታችን፡ ሆይ፡ መደሕፍት፡ ወንጌ
ል፡ ቀደሰች፡ አይርሱን፡፡
ሆለ፡ ጊዜ፡ አጥይ፡ አሰቡን፡) ለምና
ለሆ፡ ደህነን፡ ወረቀት፡ ከአጃዎ፡
ክጸዊት፡ ጋራ፡ አጥይሆን፡ ያጥመር
ልኝ፡ አደራ፡ አደራ፡

May [this letter] reach Bishop Massaja (*Abune Masiyas*), [our] father. Do not forget us in your prayers, in this world and in the world to come. Amen.

O our father! Do not forget the books of the Gospel and the New Testament for us. I beg [you] to think of us always. Keep this letter in your personal Psalter. Please, please, do not forget us.

Gebre Maryam Gwela.

ገብ፡ ማርያም፡ ገጠ፡

ASCPF.SRC, vol. 7, fol. 582, Gi'iz/Amharic original; fol. 583, Italian translation.

Welde Rufa'el and Welde Istifanos to Gebre Maryam [1863]

ዘክባ፡ ወልደ፡ ጌቶኤል፡ ወልደ፡ አሐ
ጢቶኖስ፡ ወንጌ ጥቅሆይ፡
አደራ፡ አደራ፡ በክብር አብሰራ፡
ስም፡ አሚኛ፡ አለሁ፡ በዚህ፡ ዓ
ለም፡ ቢሆን፡ በወይይ፡ ዓለም፡
ቢሆን፡ በደሎት፡ በሁሉ፡ አትር
ሱን፡ አባታችን፡ አቡነ፡ ማስያሕ፡
መደሕፍት፡ አጥይ፡ ደረሱ፡ አሰሰቡ

From *Abba* Welde Rufa'el [and?] Welde Istifanos.

O, my brothers!
Please, please, I plead in the name of God, do not forget us in [your] prayers, in everything, be it in this world [or] in the world to come.

Remind Bishop Massaja (*Abune Masiyas*), so that he does not forget the books.

ASCPF.SRC, vol. 7, fol. 583, Amharic original; fol. 584, Italian translation by Cardinal Massaja. Though there is no “and” between the the two names and the Amharic text does not clearly indicate that two persons were involved, Massaja makes that clear enough; he adds “and”, and the word “brothers” after the names, followed by “i miei due giovani attualmente rimasti in Egitto, in allora nell’Agamien in casa di Abba Tekle Aymanot” (my two boys at present in Egypt, otherwise in the house of *Abba* Tekle Haymanot in Agamē). The letter is addressed to “Gebre Maryam Gwela, the household of Gelawdēwos”, but was presumably kept by Massaja.

Following the translations Massaja provides the date “Collegio delle missioni 22 Maggio 1864”. See also Massaja, *Lettere*, III, p. 49.

The 3rd [letter].

Written at Halay in the year after the birth of Our Lord 1856 on the 4th of the month of Tahsas.

I greet my eminent master, the esteemed Cardinal Barnabò (Kerdīnal Bernabo). I prostrate myself at your feet (lit. shoes) and worship Your Great Honour. We pray to Our Lord to give [long] life to our holy father, the vicar of Jesus Christ, our father Pius (Piyos) IX, the most exalted of the exalted.

O my master, I approach you with great love. Prostrating ourselves, we received with joy the letter coming to us from the head of the Holy Church, [a letter] which sanctifies and in which there is great love and great hope.

We received our father Bishop Biancheri (*Abune Bīankērī*) with honour. The printing press you sent has become [a matter] of great joy to all the people of Ethiopia.

O master, I approach you with great diffidence. As I told you when I came [before], I think it would be good if ten young students, together with one priest, were brought to Rome to study, if such is your pleasure.

The letter which our holy father sent to *Dejjach* Nigusē, he sent to Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) to be translated into Amharic. It was with me. Now I have given it to Bishop Biancheri.

King Tēwodros likes [some] of the priests, but now he has quarrelled with the consul. However, God knows what will happen.

The king had sent a letter to me saying, "Come, so that we may consult each other." I sent a reply saying that I am a monk who lives in a monastery under the orders of an *aleqa*.

Look at the order which the master, Bishop Biancheri, sent to me, to me alone, after he had arrived at Massawa. Nevertheless, so that it should not seem as if I have been disobedient, I have done the three things he told me to do.

I am your slave,
Imnete Maryam of Gerīma (lit. the Gerīmite).

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 542r, Amharic original; fol. 542v, Italian summary. Note that the three lines of the letter just above the signature are written in a different hand. The most probable explanation is that a scribe penned the letter for *Abba* Imnete Maryam, who then added the critical lines about Biancheri himself.

The letter was written after the return of Biancheri to Ethiopia on 1 December and most probably brought to Europe by Massaja, who also translated it. Massaja commented on the conflict between Imnete Maryam and Biancheri and suggested that Imnete Maryam, whom he defined as a traitor, be called to Europe or to some place in the Near East "on the pretext of wanting to listen to his reasons in order to drop him there (*a titolo di voler sentire le sue ragioni, per staccarlo di là*)". See Massaja, *Lettere*, III, pp. 119–120.

By handing over the, potentially dangerous, letter which the Pope had written to *Dejjach* Nigusē, Imnete Maryam would seem to have demonstrated his loyalty towards the mission. This probably had to do with his desire to play a diplomatic role once more, now between the mission and King Tēwodros. Note that the king is now reported to be well disposed towards priests, *i.e.* the Catholic mission, but on bad terms with the French consul, *i.e.* Guillaume Lejean.

የርሱዎን፡-ደብዳቤ. ክልተቀበልሁኛ፡-አንደዎ-
ረ.ኩኝ ደረ.ረ.ኝ፡-አበለኝኛ፡-አንድ. የነብር፡-ለዎ
ድ. ሰደ. ጳለሁ፡፡ ሌላ. ነዚ. የሚፈልጉት
ን. በፍቅር. አደርጋለሁ፡፡

አዎነተ፡-ማርያም፡-ገሪሚዊ፡፡

fol. 180v

The 4th [letter].

Written at Halay in the year 1856 after the birth of Our Lord on the 9th of the month of Ṭirr.

To the head of the scholars, Master Antoine d'Abbadie (*Gētaw Inṭoniyos Ze'abediye*), he who is above the wise and the learned. Peace be to you, O my beloved. How are you? The news is as follows:

King Tēwodros is living at Abora in Gonder, having fortified [the place] with Islamgē inside the barricades. This is because they told him the Turks were coming. Gonder is destroyed. [The reason] why the French consul is arrested is that he does not know the language.

From the hands of Bishop Biancheri (*Abune Bīyakēri*) I have received with great joy and respect one *tejj* flask and a number of books which you sent with me in mind.

O my true friend, the master Bishop Biancheri brought twelve *tejj* flasks and gave them to me, and said that he was told, "Give one of them to *Abba Imnetu*," which I [therefore] took. [But] this does not seem to be true.

Since I have not received any letter from you, do not forget [to write to] me. Please do not regard it as bold disrespect that I have sent you a leopard cape. I am willing to do what else you want me to do.

Imnete Maryam of Gerīma (lit. the Gerīmite).

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 180, Gi'iz/Amharic original. For *Abba Imnete Maryam*, see no. 44 and *passim*.

Imnete Maryam Gibretu to Alessandro Barnabò, 1 Feb. 1864

Massawa, 1 February 1864

Monsignor,

I have just received the letter which Your Eminence has been so good as to write to me, and I shall follow your advice with all respect. I cannot hide from Your Eminence that your letter profoundly distressed me, since I find myself accused there of having lacked in the obedience due to my legitimate bishop, and of causing a schism by exciting the faithful against him, something which never entered my heart or my mouth. Since the death of Monsignor De Jacobis I have, on the orders of the superior, built three churches, one at Halay, the second at Tekonda, the third at Marda.

At present I am about to go to Bogos in obedience to the orders of the bishop, although the needs of the priests who are to continue this mission have been very poorly provided for. Whereas Mr. Stella received eight hundred thalers annually, we have been allotted for two priests two thalers each per month, money which does not suffice for the maintenance of a servant. Nevertheless I shall not fail in due obedience, and shall stay at my post until Your Eminence condescends to give me final orders. I permit myself to attach to this letter another one in Amharic written three weeks ago, and two letters which are referred to there.

Please believe, Monsignor, that I shall always try to do what might be agreeable to Your Eminence and useful for our Our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church.

Accept, Your Eminence, the expression of my very humble regards.

Imnete Maryam of Gerīma
Abba Imnete Maryam.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 549, French original. Since Imnete Maryam did not know French, certainly not to the level of this letter, it is obvious that someone else wrote the letter for him. In addition to his name under the letter in Latin script, however, "*Abba* Imnete Maryam" has been added in Ethiopic letters in Imnete Maryam's handwriting, so there can be no doubt that the letter is authentic.

Though written six weeks earlier, rather than three, the letter referred to is almost certainly Imnete Maryam's letter to Cardinal Barnabò dated 14 December 1863 (no. 141 above), and one of the others mentioned is no doubt what Imnete Maryam refers to there as an order which he, and he alone, had received from Biancheri on the latter's return to Massawa. While Imnete Maryam seems to have been trying his best to regain the confidence of his superiors in the mission, Biancheri was determined to keep him out.

Chiefs of Bogos to Napoleon III [April? 1864]

መልህ ስጦት፡ የተገባዎብኛል፡ እገርኝ፡ ከረገ፡ ጄፋ፡ አሻ፡ ታገተሮአ፡ ለፍረንሲስ፡ ግጥም፡ ና ጳጳሳዎች፡ ርኝ፡ ትጽፈኛለሁ።

May the message of the suffering lands [of] Keren, Jufa, Ashala, [and] Tantarwa, reach the king of France, Napoleon (Napoliwon) III.

ጠፍተው፡ የነበሩ፡ ብዎች፡ ሲመለሱ፡ ጠፍተው፡ የነበረ፡ ግንዛብ፡ በርስዎ፡ ረዳትነት፡ ስናገኝ፡

When the lost people returned through your assistance and we got [back] the property which was lost, it seemed to us as if we rose up from the grave. Thank you for this work which you have done for us.

ከመቀበር፡ እንደ፡ ተነሳህ፡ መሰለን። ጠዘህ፡ ያደረጉልን፡ ሠራ፡ እግር፡ ይስጥልን።

We pray that, with your power and your assistance, we may find and live a new life. May the blessing of God increase upon you and your kingdom.

በርስዎ፡ ኃይል፡ በርስዎ፡ ረዳትነት፡ እደ፡ ሕይወት፡ እገኛለን፡ እንደገና፡ እንገላምናለን።

የእግር፡ ጠረኩት፡ ለርስዎ፡ ለምግጥም ትዎ፡ ይጠሩ።

Izuz, chief of Keren
Berih, chief of Jufa
Adig, chief of Ashala
Idad, chief of Tantarwa.

እዙ፡ ሹም፡ ከረገ።

በሪህ፡ ሹም፡ ጄፋ።

እደግ፡ ሹም፡ ሕሻለ።

እደደ፡ ሹም፡ ታገተሮዎ።

AECP, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 142, Amharic original; fol. 143, French translation certified by Lejean. The letter was forwarded to the French government by Lejean on 11 May 1864 (*ibid.*, fol. 141). In a note on the French translation Lejean states that the signatories represent a quarter of the Bogos population.

Note that two of the names of the places or districts are spelled differently in the opening sentence and at the bottom of the letter; "Tantarwa" seems a more likely spelling than "Tantaro'a", while "Ashala" (at the top) takes precedence over "Ashale". Though quite clearly written "Idig", the correct name of the chief of Ashala was "Adig" as in document no. 119.

The letter refers to a raid from Egyptian-controlled Kassala which had caused Lejean to interfere on behalf of the Bogos. See no. 119; also BN 184, fols 96-97. The property referred to was largely restored through the payment of 17,000 francs in December 1863. Lejean visited Kassala in January 1864 together with Stella and Abba Zekkariyas to obtain the release of the remaining of the captives (Lejean, pp. 237-238; Douin, I, pp. 70-71, 83).

The above letter is clearly related to the one which follows. Which was written first is impossible to know with certainty. While the above is no more than an expression of gratitude for the help rendered by the French consul, the following amounts to a formal request for status as a French protectorate. Why Lejean (and Stella), who for all practical purposes already regarded Bogos as a protectorate, forwarded the above but not the following is something of a mystery.

The chiefs of the Christians of Anseba, Bogos, Mensa, Bijuk [and] Adi Gayim make known to the French (Firensīs) king of kings, the powerful and victorious protector of the Christians of the East, Napoleon (Napoliwon) what they are thinking.

For ages we were subject to the king of Abyssinia. Since two hundred years, however, they have lacked the power to save us from the Muslims who surround us, and we have been left in the middle.

At the time of the Sinnar kingdom there was no one who oppressed us. But since the Turks began to rule Semhar and Barka they have pillaged us many times. In order to Islamize us by force they have robbed us of our wives, children [and] cattle. For fear of this our neighbours, the Marya, Halhal [and] Habab, converted to Islam. We refused (lit. hated) to become like them; we preferred to live with our religion and in freedom.

The last time the Turks pillaged us we heard that the French king took up our cause and helped us. Furthermore, as we heard about the might of France (Fransa) and the great things which it does [and] that those who live under its law are in peace, we beg the magnanimous King Napoleon to accept ourselves and our country under his law and real protection (lit. protector) as a province of the French kingdom, and to make known on our behalf the boundary of our country so that our neighbours, the Muslims, do not harass us in any way.

May the blessing of God increase upon the king, his house [and] his kingdom.

Keren on the 14th day of Mīyazya 1864.

Izuz and Berīh, chiefs of Keren and Jufa

Adig and Gebre Sillasē of Adi Zemat

Gelawdēwos and Tukrīrade of Adi Shibot

Idrīs of Adi Gayim

Kentība Da'ir of Upper Mensa

Kentība Tēwodros of Lower Mensa

Amaray of Bijuk

Asfaday and Mīkal, the chiefs of Gebey and Alebu.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fol. 40, Amharic original. In this letter the year (and possibly the day, too) of the date is according to the Gregorian calendar. It was fairly common that Ethiopians in touch with Europeans at this time used the Gregorian calendar, and it cannot be explained how the letter ended up in Lejean's private papers unless it belonged to the period when he was active in the area.

This document is very large and clearly intended to impress the French government. The list of chiefs is the most complete found in any of the documents of the period (cf. nos 119 and 144). The request that Napoleon officially declare their lands a French protectorate is quite formal. It was most probably dictated by Lejean or someone in the Catholic mission who was anxious to place the region under official French protection. Therefore it is odd that it was not forwarded to the government but remained with Lejean. The most likely explanation is that he was dissuaded from submitting it because the French government was more interested in good relations with Egypt than in the would-be protectorate.

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mika'el to Guillaume Lejean, 5 July 1864

Hēbo, 5 July 1864

Most Illustrious Mr. Consul,

I have already written one letter and sent [it] by the hand of the camel-driver Idrīs, who came with us the first time and more recently with Mr. Delmonte. I hope that it has reached you.

The people of Šena Deglē want to send one or two chiefs to Massawa, and request me to escort them to you, Sir, for the business which has already been started, because if it is not finished before Your Excellency leaves, it will be worse than before. The Saho have already turned to threatening words and actual robbery instead of abstaining. I hear from someone here who was with them a few days ago and who tells me that they have received a letter by which they are summoned, but that they really do not want to go down to Massawa. Ahmed Arī has been commissioned as their chief by the *qā'im maqām* in order to make them come, so he should be applying himself seriously [to the matter], which he has not done because he is in collusion with them.

Now Your Excellency tells me that you intend to come for about two weeks, together with the chief of Šena Deglē and [that you] hope to settle the matters. In case then that you leave at once and we would not be able to proceed there, I think it would be better to reconcile them here if it is possible, and I will try [to see] if I can succeed, so that nothing worse happens; in this case, however, send me a reply.

I am sending you a letter which, being very urgent, I commend to your care to forward as fast as possible to its destination by a secure route, because my affairs depend on the reply to this letter; therefore I shall be much obliged for Your Excellency's diligence, and I beg you not to let it fall into the hands of the Lazarists.

I have already started to make some collections of the poetry which Your Excellency wants, and if I come to Massawa and Your Excellency wishes, I shall bring them with me. Do not forget to tell Mr. Munzinger in the absence of Mr. Dutschler everything that we have planned so far.

I hear that Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie had given Mgr. De Jacobis a list of 200 books, which have not [yet] been received by him, but since this list has been lost, I do not know which books they are. Therefore, when Your Excellency goes to Paris, find out and let me know. Thus I will be busying myself for the government of His Imperial Majesty. Moreover, I shall see if I can find a rare book; I shall send it as a present.

Remember this poor and wretched mission and, in case some benefactors [can] be found, inform us in the most secure way, as in all the other matters we have planned.

I suppose that Your Excellency knows all the news from Abyssinia. The king is still in Gonder. It is confirmed that the bishop is still imprisoned; *Balambaras* Gelmo is also imprisoned; the [news] which says that the Europeans have been freed is false; they are still imprisoned, even worse off than before; two are said to have died in prison; it is not known who. All Tigray is today full of *shifita*. It is not possible, in fact, to go to Adwa. Everyone is waiting for the Tekkezē to fill up, in order to meet and appoint a *dejjazmach*.

I close here, begging that you would deign to accept the sentiments of esteem and most profound respect which I have for you.

From Your Most Illustrious Excellency's humble and devoted servant,

Zekkariyas the priest, M. A.

Mgr. Biancheri laughs at me and says to everyone, "He has put his hope in the consul, and we shall see what he can do for him." Do not, however, neglect to send something for the little girl who lives with the monks.

P. S. After I had finished this letter, I heard that yesterday eight cows had been stolen from San(?) Maybela, from the very Asa Keri(?) who have been called but are not willing to come.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fols 104–105, Italian original. Parts of this document are very difficult to read, and the rendering is in some places conjectural. This is in particular the case with the P. S., which is written in the margin, where the names along the edge of the paper are almost illegible. The Saho group reportedly robbed is most probably the Asa Keri, mentioned in Carlo Conti Rossini's article in Ferdinando Martini (ed.), *Eritrea economica*, Rome, 1913, p. 74.

For information on the writer, see *i.a.* nos 18, 35, 82, 87, and 95. When this letter was written, Zekkariyas was apparently on very poor terms with his bishop, Mgr. Biancheri, and acting behind his back. No doubt this was partly because Zekkariyas was co-operating too closely with Lejean and Stella. In early 1864 he had accompanied them to Kassala on behalf of the Bogos (Douin, I, p. 83).

Şena Deglē was a district with some 6,000 inhabitants, according to Werner Munzinger almost exclusively Catholics: "C'est la plus belle et la plus sûre conquête de notre mission" (AECF, Égypte, Massouah 3, fol. 187).

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie, 10 Oct. 1864

፩ ላበ፡አገገጦገኖክ፡ዘኸበዲዳ፡ዘይሁቦመ፡ሊ ቃ ወ ንተ፡አ
 ውስኦተ፡ሠናየ፡ ወደደወ፡፡ እጅጉግ፡ ከገዲት፡አሁ፡፡
 በሚያዝሃ፡ መዛኛ፡ ርስሰል፡ ክደብዳቤ፡ጋራ፡ ለደድሁልክ፡ይ
 ላቡ፡ አልደረሰልኝም፡ የጠቀብቱ፡ ስፍራ፡ እይታቸውትም፡ የ
 ደብረ፡ ቤዘገ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ በኒ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ቁጥር፡ ያልተገኘ፡፡
 ቢኖር፡ ንገረኝ፡ እድራ፡ ይሉኝኝ አል፡፡ የርስዎግ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ቁ
 ጥር፡ በሌት፡ ይስደዳልኝ፡ ሷሳ፡ ገገ፡ ያስጠግኛ፡ የሲለው፡፡
 አውቃስሁ፡ ይህ፡ ቀረ፡ እስሰሁ፡፡ ከዚህም፡ ቀድሞ፡ ስደው፡ ከ
 ገደሆነ፡ አልደረሰልኝም፡፡ ያደሰ፡ ብርሃን፡ የተባበ፡ መጽሐ
 ፍ፡ ወረቀት፡ ፍ፡ ምጋ፡ ካቡነ፡ ቢያንኬሪ፡ ተተብሰኝ፡ አስጽፍ
 ልኝ፡ ይሉኛል፡፡ እገኝ፡ ወረቀት፡ ፍ፡ ምጋ፡ ቢሰጡኝ፡ ሰባምታ
 ከ፡ እንኳ፡ አልነገሩኝም፡፡ ባክሱም፡ የሚገኝ፡ የቅድሞ፡ ብር
 አገዲለበስቡ፡ ስሮወዳጅቸ፡ ነገር ሁዋታው፡ አሽ፡ እንከበስብ
 ልሀቡ፡ አሽኝ፡ እኒም፡ ምጋ፡ ሁግ፡ ክንስል፡ ሲመጣ፡ ትቃ
 በባባኝ፡ ፡ (በያቸዋሁኝሁ)፡፡ ደብተራ፡ ብርያው፡ በእነሱም፡ የ
 እቲዋኝ፡ ፍ፡ ወሰኔ፡ ሁሉ፡ እንዲጽፉልኝም፡ ልኬልኝሁ፡፡
 በኒ፡ ዘገድ፡ የገ፡ ይሰብሰቡ፡ ነገር፡ የባም፡ አንገግሜህም፡ ጉል

[No.] 1.

To Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥጥይ Ze'abediye), who gives to scholars a good and appropriate answer. How are you, really?

You say that you sent me three paintings together with a letter at the beginning of Miyazya. They have not reached me, and it is not known where they were lost. You ask me to please tell you if there are [any] Debre Bizen books missing in your list. Send me your list first; and then I will know what you have and what you do not have, and I will tell [you] what is missing. If you have sent it already, it has not reached me.

You tell me that I should obtain paper and payment from Bishop Biancheri (Abune Biyankēri), and have the book called *Sedale Maryam* copied for you. Far from giving me paper and payment, he did not even extend greetings to me.

I have told three of my friends to collect the ancient coins (*yeqedmo berr*) which are found at Aksum. They told me, "All right, we shall collect them for you." I also told them that they would receive their pay when the consul came.

I have sent to *Debtera* Baryaw from Aksum to write all the news of Ethiopia for you. As far as I am concerned, I have not failed you in anything. And in the future, aside from limitations due to my lack of strength and my poverty, I will not be slothful on my part. I will do whatever I can for you.

fol. 185v

በት፡ ከማጣቴና፡ ከሮጥነቴ፡ አልገበገጠም፡ እስከ፡ ተቻሎኝ፡ ን፡
 ደርግልዎ፡ እስሁ፡ ፡ ላረሰኝ፡ መስሎኝ፡ ነበረ፡ እሁን፡ ገን፡ በሰ
 ነ፡ በ፫ቀን፡ የጻፉልኝ፡ ወረቀት፡ ሁሉን፡ ነገረኹኝ፡ እኔ፡ ገ፡ በ
 ማስብዎ፡ እጅግ፡ ደስ፡ አለኝ፡ እጅግ፡ እጸኑቅሁ፡ ፡ የወርቅ፡
 ነገር፡ ብትረገጡ፡ እስደገገዎ፡ ያሉኝን፡ ደከደዳልኝ፡ ቡንስ
 ል፡ ስመጣ፡ በርሱ፡ እጅ፡ የርሰዎንም፡ ጉዳይ፡ የኔንም፡ ጉዳ
 ደ፡ በኩንሱል፡ ደከደዳልኝ፡ ፡

ሌላውን፡ ለሁሉ፡ ገን፡ እንጂ፡ እውቀትዎ፡ ያድርጉልኝ፡ እኔ፡
 ሰሰ፡ ተናገርሁ፡ የሚሆን፡ ነገር፡ የሰም፡ እርሰዎ፡ የሚያስቡ
 ልኝ፡ ደካሳል፡ ሰዎቲ፡ ለእነገሩ፡ ሳንበሳ፡ አይመሳሩ፡ ፡

ጥጽሕል፡ በሀሳደ፡ እመ፡ አማራ፡ ስፕቅምት፡ ወንምልደተ
 እግዚአብሔር፡ በ፲፱፻፶፯፡ ሻ፲፱፡ ዓመት

ደቤ፡ ደብተራ፡ አሰጋኝኝ፡

fol. 186r

I thought you had forgotten me, but now the letter which was written on 3 Senē has told me everything. I am very glad that you thought of me, and I am very surprised [too]. You say you will send me something made of gold if I want it; [please] send it. When the consul comes, send through him about your concerns and my concerns.

However, do everything else for me as you know [best]. There is nothing that is done [merely] because I say it. What you plan for me is the best. "Do not teach the person who knows; do not cut meat for a lion."

Written at Halay on the first of Ṭiqimt in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1857.

[So] says *Debtera* Asseggaheñ.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 185v–186r, Gi'iz/Amharic original. This is the first of a series of numbered Asseggaheñ letters. It was not, however, included among the letters published by Conti Rossini in the "Epistolario", *RRAL*, 6, I, pp. 449–490, and translated into Italian by Luigi Fusella, "Le lettere del dabtarā Assaggākhañ", *RSE*, XII (1953), pp. 80–95; XIII (1954), pp. 20–30, apparently because it deals primarily with the personal relations between Asseggaheñ and Antoine d'Abbadie.

For the earlier history of Asseggaheñ, see no. 96 above. *Debtera* Baryaw was one of Antoine d'Abbadie's early collaborators (*ACTA* I, nos 55, 58, 107).

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie, 10 Oct. 1864

18- 1866 10/10/11

[No.] 2.

(148)

ኃበ : እቶ : እንጦን ሞስ : ዘክበዲሃ : ዘይህ-ገሙ : ለኪታው
 ንት : እውስት : ሠናዩ : ወድልወ :: እቶ : ጉን : እንዲት : እ
 ሱ :: እጽፊኖ : ዜና : ዘኢት ሞቶያ :
 ተደባ : ጊሱ : ገግርምን : ሁሉ : ይገዛል :: ሚጫን : ገገሥ : ኦ
 ፕ ፍቶታል :: በጉንደር : በደምብያ : እንድ : ሌት : እይገኝም : ስ
 ውም : ሁሉ : በረኃብና : በደግ : አከተ :: የተሰደዱትንም : ስው
 በያገሩ : እንዳይቀበባቸው :: ቢቀበባቸውም : እንዲወረክ :
 ንገሥ : እዋጅ : ነገሩ : ስበዚህ : የደምብያና : የጉንደር : ጥፋ
 ት : የኢየሩሳሌምን : ጥፋት : ዲመስካል : ሌሲትም : እየወ
 ጡ : ደጠቶሉ :: ካገው : ምድር : ጅምር : እስክ : ወገራ : ስእ
 ርኻ : አይታይም : አሌ : ለክ : ገግደረ : አሌ : ስክ : ደምብያ ::
 በወልታይትና : ጸገዲ : ወገራና : ስሚኒ : ጥሶ : ጎበዜ : የ
 ሚባል : ሸፍታ : ወጽቶክል : እጅግ : በርትቶዋል :: የዋግኹም :
 ገብረ : መድኃን : ልጅ : ጎበዜ : ምፍካኝና : በራን : ደዞክል : ሽ
 ፍታ : ነው :: ወሰን : ወርቁትት :: እማራን : የትኩ : ብርሌ :
 ልጅ : ደዞዋል : ሸፍቶች : ናቸው :: እክለ : ገዛይ : በድርትጥ : ብ

fol. 187r

To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (In-toniyos Ze'abediye) who gives to scholars a good and appropriate answer. How are you, really?

I will write the news of Ethiopia. Tedla Gwalu rules all Gojjam. The king has devastated Mēçha. Not a single house is left in Gonder and Dembiya, and all the people have perished from famine and disease.

The king has issued a decree that [people] must not receive any of the refugees into their respective districts, and that if they receive them, [their property] will be confiscated. Because of this, the devastation of Dembiya and Gonder is like that of Jerusalem. People leave by night and disappear. From Agew Midir to Wegera not a single cultivated field can be seen. Woe unto you, Gonder; woe unto you, Dembiya!

In Welqayit and Şegedē, Wegera and Simēn, a *shifta* called Ṭiso Gobezē has risen; he has become very strong. *Wagshum* Gebre Medhin's son Gobezē has taken over Wofla and Boran; he is a *shifta*. Werqīt has taken over Wello, and the son of Tikku Birillē Amhara; they are [also] *shifta*. Akkele Guzay is devastated by drought and locusts.

The English consul, the [rest of the] English and *Abba* Selama have been in prison from last year until now. The Catholics have found some relief. The king has passed the rainy season at

Zekkariyas Tesfa Mīka'el to Guillaume Lejean, 12 Oct. 1864

Hēbo, 12 October 1864

Most Illustrious Mr. Consul,

Here is what I have done so far. Living, as Your Excellency well knows, in the narrow valley of Hēbo without any communication with [those] who come and go, having done all the research possible, I have not been able until now to find anything more than this, namely 370 [poems], of which 50 are in Tigriñña, about which Your Excellency will have every reason to say to me “you sing in a different key” (*canis extra chorum*); but I have done [what I have done] because of the peculiarity or uniqueness of the language.

Mahdere Qal, who is at the very source where all the news of the present and the past is listened to [and] repeated, is in a better position than I am; but I hope that with your encouragement the willingness and the urge to explain the saying presented will make me better qualified than him in your eyes. Hoping, therefore, to make a superior collection as time passes, I venture to send you what I have done until now. And you, please be willing to accept what is of no value as if it were of value.

The Amharic language has two types of poetry, one merely in rhyme with or without poetical ideas; another kind consists of word play in rhyme. The allusion is almost always found in the second verse. Therefore the former is less beautiful and less appreciated, and the latter more beautiful, more appreciated and more praised. Translated literally, it loses its beauty and its force. I have, therefore, exerted myself as much as possible so that I understand the intention of the composer.

For example, the verse

*Qidamē, qidamē, awajachihu bezza,
birillēw laygeññ, maru laygezza.*

The verb *gezza* has two different meanings, namely “to buy” and “to govern or subdue”. Therefore, instead of saying, “The *birillē* is not to be found, and the honey is not to be bought”, I have translated, “Every Saturday your proclamations are repeated in vain; the *birillē*, however, is not to be found, and Maru does not surrender.”

Another, the verse

*Ṭedowin bīyabezut min yihonal ṭejj,
marun gefa adirgo bīṭlut new inj.*

The verb *gefa* means to push, to add, and the verb *ṭale* means “throw away, prepare”. Therefore, instead of saying, “By adding honey, *ṭejj* is not prepared”, I have translated, “What is the purpose of putting much *ṭedo* in the *ṭejj*, if Maru cannot be pushed aside and defeated.”

Another, the verse

*Yegojjam mekwanint indēt kerremachihu,
lemesqel nigusu gibbu aliwachihu.*

The force and clue of this verse is in the word *mesqel*, which means firstly “hang in a high position”; secondly, simply “cross”; thirdly, “the feast of the lifting up of the Holy Cross”, which is celebrated on the 26th of September according to the Ethiopian calendar, on which [day] it is customary to make a *rendez-vous* and a general review of all the army of the empire in the capital, where the emperor resides. So, instead of saying, “Princes of Gojjam, how did you pass the rainy

season? The king tells you to come to Gonder on the holiday of the Holy Cross," one should say, "Princes of Gojjam, how did you pass the rainy season? The king orders you to a *rendez-vous* in Gonder so as to hang you". This was said to indicate and prevent the vengeance of Tēwodros and to confirm Tedla Gwalu and his [men] in [their] rebellion.

An example of the first type of rhyme would be this:

Abora lay hunew nigus bīfekkeru; iske İyerusalēm tenawette bahiru.

When camped at Abora, the *nigus* began to boast; the sea raged all the way to Jerusalem.

Nigus wede bahir fītun bīmelles; abēt, abēt, ale yeferenj nigus.

When the king turned his face towards the sea, the king of the Europeans cried, "Have mercy upon us; have mercy upon us."

It is necessary to note that *dejj* means "door", *bēt* "house", *isat* "fire", *mar* "honey", with all the indefinite extensions. But when one says *dejju*, *bētu*, *isatu*, *maru*, *tejju*, one makes a restriction; and in the accusative one says *dejjun ziga* "shut the door", *isatun amta* "fetch fire", *marun giza* "buy honey", *tejjun tefta* "drink the *tejj*". And also affixing the pronoun "his": *dejjun zegto*, *bētun titto*, *isatun atifto*, *marun gezto*, *tejjun tejtito hēde*, "having shut his door, left his house, extinguished his fire, bought his honey, drunk his *tejj*, he left". However, Your Excellency will use them as examples and have the kindness to indicate to me any error committed, whether it lies in the selecting or in the manner of translating, so that I may be able to avoid [mistakes] in the future.

Mr. Delmonte has not given me the letter which Your Excellency wrote to me recently from Massawa. When I wrote to Mr. Munzinger, [asking] if Your Excellency had received my letters for Rome, he informed me that Your Excellency had received my letter and had written to me in reply. Note therefore that Delmonte is a fox, a cunning man, daring and ambitious, who wants to take over even the consulate, as I have heard him talk like this many times. It would be better for us if no consul is appointed here at Massawa because they do us more harm than good. He says that he has even said these same words frankly in the presence of Your Excellency, but I believe that he is lying, because with all his audacity he would not dare to speak [so] in [your] face. Therefore Your Excellency should beware of sending me anything through Delmonte.

Monsignor Biancheri left here on 18 August. On 11 September, when Mr. Delmonte entered the room, he found him dead in the chair. Monsignor was healthy and strong. He had said Mass in the morning and had eaten his lunch with appetite. Two hours after midday he expired in his chair. Brother Fatipini is at Anus to cut wood. There was no monk or priest [present]. So there was only Delmonte. It was a good thing that he had gone to Massawa, because if he had died amongst us, Delmonte would infallibly have said and written that the monks had smothered him.

Count Bisson has written to Monsignor and said, "I have sent Eduardo to establish himself at Shotel, with the permission of *Dejjach Haylu*"; if he comes to Massawa do not receive him. Now, the dragon is at Keren. He says he went to the king as an envoy of the general.

I have other information, more exact and reliable, that the number of books missing—the names of which I still do not know—is between 20 and 25. The mule which Your Excellency gave me for the equivalent of 5 1/2 has been sold for 5 thalers. I have given these 5 thalers to the monks for the girl, and this not because of their fault, but because the country finds itself in extreme shortage of grain, firstly, because of the great drought due to the lack of rain, secondly, because of the locusts of Egypt, to the extent that there is no grass in the country, nor leaves on the trees. One *madiga* of barley costs one thaler.

The *pasha* of Massawa has said that the Saho were coming and that he would warn the *Şena Deglē*. Until now he has not done it. What is worse is that in the end he himself has left. They are utterly discouraged. Since his departure from here the men of *Şena Deglē* have lost 45 cows because

of the Assaorta. The foolish Ahmed Arī, who was at first well disposed, has now made himself a client of the Assaorta. The Turks and the *nā'ib* are the same. When they see that someone has gone away, they believe that he will not come back. They believe the same about Your Excellency. When Count Russel was at Halay in 1860, there was an artist with him. According to what has been told to me here—I was at Adwa at the time—he was called Bonchoche(?). He has made a drawing of Mgr. De Jacobis and many others at Halay. Therefore I beg Your Excellency to send [it] to me together with whatever else you are sending.

All Abyssinia has great and inexpressible admiration for you, except as far as the king is concerned. There is no doubt about what we heard, that he later gave an order for your arrest; this order was given to the chief of Debarq. Your Excellency had already arrived at Zarēma. This chief wanted to follow [you] as far as the Tekkezē. But unexpectedly Ṭiso Gobezē placed himself at Adi Arqay and so he had to save himself and turn back from Enzo. Then he bit his finger; he was fixed in his mind and said, *Weynē, and sew amelleṭebin. Fiqirachin weyṭebachin leyto sayaweq hēde*. "Ah, a man has escaped from us; he left without knowing if we were friends or enemies (lit. our friendship or our hostility)." Then he continued to boast with the voice of a madman, unsheathing his sword. *Ferensīs guday, ingliz guday; kemerkeb awiraj, bebahir araj*. "The conqueror of the French and the English. One who pulls down from the ship and slaughters at sea."

All the Europeans are in chains to this day. Some of them are given *koso* three times a week, for having written that his mother used to sell *koso*. Fifteen strokes weekly with the elastic root of *indod* are assigned to Consul Cameron. At every stroke the miserable man cries out and says "Christ", which perhaps means, "I implore you to forgive me in the name of Christ." The governor of Aden has been at Massawa with a steamship for two months. He sent two paid Abyssinians to the king to have a reply. But it has not turned up. He has sent a second time; the same has happened. It seems that they are afraid of presenting themselves, and they are right. The governor would like to go to the king, if he would permit him to do so. And it is certain that he would be treated worse than the consul. The dragon has arrived at Massawa with three soldiers and is at Minkullu. It is not known where his steps will be directed. Please remember the case of the Ṣena Deglē and of our mission. It would perhaps be a good thing to write to the Ṣena Deglē; it would serve as an encouragement.

Waiting for much news about your dear person, I close here by begging you to deign to accept the sentiments of esteem and reverence which I have [for you].

From Your Most Illustrious Excellency's humble and devoted servant,
Zekkariyas the priest.

BN, Ethiop. 184, fols 3–4, Italian original. This second preserved letter from Zekkariyas to Lejean further indicates how closely he worked with the consul in 1864.

The first two couplets play with the name of the famous *Dejjazmach* Maru of Dembiya in the early decades of the nineteenth century (see Rubenson, *Tēwodros*, pp. 19–21). It is quite possible that *birillē* also stands for a person, a Wello chief who was contemporary with Maru. The correct translation of the second line of the first couplet would then be "but neither is Birillē to be found, nor does Maru surrender". The purpose of these two couplets seems to be to ridicule Maru's opponent or opponents at Gonder itself. The third couplet refers to the rebellion of Tedla Gwalu and his followers against Tēwodros (*ibid*, p. 67–68, 80–82). The two unrhymed statements also refer to Tēwodros, and are most probably intended as ridicule. Though the word *drago*, which appears twice in this letter, could possibly be the name of a person, it is more likely that it is used figuratively about a mutual acquaintance of the writer and the addressee who, in their opinion, was a cunning and dangerous person; hence the translation "dragon". In view of the description of Delmonte earlier in the letter, it is quite possible that Zekkariyas was referring to him. Another possibility is that the person referred to was a military man, and that Zekkariyas really intended to write *dragone*, "dragoon". If so, he could be the person called Eduardo in the paragraph where "drago" is first used.

The person referred to in the letter as "the foolish Ahmed Arī" was one of the brothers of *Nā'ib* Idrīs. In the opinion of Werner Munzinger, who probably knew the area and its population better than any other European, the brothers were "energetic people, clear-headed, decisive, reliable, honest". Ahmed in particular was outstanding (Werner Munzinger, *Ostafrikanische Studien*, Schaffhausen, 1864, p. 171).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 5 July 1865

በሰላም፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመገረሰ፡ትዳሰ፡ፊጽ፡ሳክ፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡
 ያልጥፍላህ፡አብ፡ሰላም፡ከክብ፡የሚባል፡ፈሳሽ፡ቀገሰል፡
 ብላገቸሁ፡የሰደዳቸሁ፡ቱ፡ኪምሮ፡ከገዛ፡ከተማየ፡በእግዚአ
 ብሔር፡ኃይል፡በፍቅር፡አስቀምጫቸው፡ሰሰሁ፡ሰደሰ፡
 የእግዚአብሔር፡ገግሥት፡ፍቅር፡ሰፈረ፡ሰገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡
 ሚባሉ፡የእግዚአብሔር፡ሰደዳቸ፡ከገረ፡ቢደበደሉ፡፡በእግዚአብ
 ሔር፡ኃይል፡የእግዚአብሔር፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡በእግዚአብሔር፡
 ፍቅር፡ሰሰሁ፡ሰደሰ፡፡ቀገሰሉ፡ኪምሮ፡የሚባሉ፡የገገ
 ሥት፡ሰሁ፡ሰገ፡፡የገረገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡
 ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡
 ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡
 ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

[The reason] why I do not write my name to you is that *Abune Selama*, the Felasha called Stern (Kokeb), and Cameron (Kēmiron), whom you appointed and sent as consul, insulted me when, by the power of God, I had settled them in a friendly way in my own city, because I wanted the friendship of the queen of England. When the Englishmen called Plowden (Buladin) and John (Yohannis) were attacked in my country, and when I avenged their blood, by the power of God, they insulted me for this, calling me a murderer.

When he who was called Consul Cameron told me that he was the servant of the queen, and when I awarded him a decoration of my country, gave him provisions, and sent him to make me the friend of the queen, he came back after staying some time with the Turks. When I said, "What about my letter?", he said to me, "I have not received a reply (lit. it has not come back to me)." Wondering what I had done that they should dislike me, by the power of my Lord, I kept quiet.

ይድረሱ፡ከሁር፡ገ፡ፈሳም፡አሁንም፡ትገረ፡ሸፍኑ፡ወጥ
 ቸልልኝ፡በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል፡ዘረሰ፡በሰላም፡ገገ፡፡
 ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡ሰላም፡ገገ፡፡

ለኢሰባተሰጸህተገ፡ረሰተጣል፡

May [this letter] reach Hormuzd Rassam (Harz Resam). Now, since rebels have risen in Tigray, by the power of God, make a detour and come through Metemma. When you reach Metemma, inform me and, by the power of God, I shall send you people to receive you.

Written on Wednesday, the 29th day after the beginning of Senē.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 31, Amharic original; fol. 30, Arabic translation. The Amharic was reportedly written by *Aleqa Tekle* and the Arabic by Tēwodros's Arabic scribe *Mu'allim Mattā*. The discrepancies are negligible. The translator has entered a "Praise be to Him forever. Amen." to the invocation of the Trinity, and dated the letter Tuesday.

The letter is the first in the long sequence of letters from Tēwodros to the British envoy Rassam, who had been sent to obtain the release of Cameron. It was sent in response to Rassam's third letter, written on 30 March. Two earlier letters had been deliberately neglected. Both the delay and the omission of the king's name and seal indicate that Tēwodros was very upset about the whole affair. The messengers who succeeded in bringing back an answer, but also the false information that the captives had been freed from their chains, were two Muslims from the coast, named Ibrāhīm and Muhammad Sihawī. They had reached Meqdela only on 4 July and were hurried off the following day. See Rassam, I, pp. 62–102. Almost all the letters from Tēwodros to Rassam were published at the time in *Correspondence 1846–68* and in Rassam's *Narrative*, the above in vol. I, pp. 93–94. The date of the receipt of each letter is noted; in this case 12 August 1865. Most of the letters were also published by Girma-Selassie Asfaw, Appleyard and Ullendorff in *Amharic Letters*. The missionary Henry Stern was known in Ethiopia as Kokeb (star). The Yohannis of the letter is John Bell, who was well known by his Christian name.

Tēwodros to Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥīm 5 July 1865

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, to whom be praise.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus, Emperor of all Abyssinia. To our beloved son, the Nayab Mohammed, son of the Nayab Abd-ar-Raheem.

How are you, and how is your condition? With regard to ourselves, thanks be to God, we are well, prosperous, and in good health. By the power of God and His favour, all your wishes and the desire of your heart shall be satisfied when we come to Tigré. You can then speak to us of your requirements face to face, &c.

If your friend Rassam Sahib depart [hitherward] you should send letters by him.

Wednesday, 10th Rabee Alawal (Safar), A. H. 1282 (5th July, A. D. 1865).

(L. S.)

P.S.—Furthermore, a letter reached us inside yours from Rassam, the [Agent of the] English Government, which we understood. God willing, when he comes all his requests will be granted to him.

Correspondence 1846–68, p. 387, English translation. The original in Arabic—note date and addition “to whom be praise” in the invocation—has not been preserved in any known archive. Rabī’ al-Awwal is incorrect and was corrected to Şafar, most probably when the letter was translated at Massawa. Şafar is also the correct month for the following three letters, all written on the same occasion. The letter is not complete. It is reproduced with the orthography, including italics and brackets of the *Correspondence 1846–68* version, the earliest published.

Samu’el Gīyorgīs to Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, 5 July 1865

(After Compliments)

We have received the letter you sent to us, and understood it all. We have not neglected your business, nor what is due to you. The King said, “After we go to Tigré everything will be granted to him, because no attention will be paid to correspondence. There is a greater advantage in the meeting.” We have to inform you, furthermore, that our cousin, our brother Ibraheem, is returning to you with orders from our Lord the King, that he should accompany the General [Mr. Rassam] to Matemma by way of Bogos. When he reaches you, you should exert yourself in getting him [Mr. Rassam] to come to the King, and everything will be all right. Allah! Allah! (for God’s sake) let them come quickly to us, and settle [the business].

We recommend to you our son, Mohammed Bin Hamed Shoon. Treat him with favour, and listen to his counsel, and act according to his advice. May you remain prosperous. Amen.

10th Jamad Awal [Safar], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Correspondence 1846–68, p. 387, English translation. The Arabic original has not been preserved in any known archive. The letter is not complete. It is reproduced with the orthography, etc., of the *Correspondence 1846–68* version. For date see no. 153.

Mattā to Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, 5 July 1865

(After Compliments)

Be it known to you that in the most propitious of moments we received your letter and understood its contents.

With regard to what you have mentioned it has been postponed until our Lord the King goes to Tigré, which will take place soon (as you are aware), when all your wishes will be fulfilled. Do not have any concern about what touches you, because he [the King] likes you very much.

With regard to the General [Mr. Rassam], he has got what he desired, for he [King Theodoros] has directed him to come hither by way of Matemma, &c.

10th Jamad Alakhir [Safar], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Correspondence 1846–68, pp. 387–388, English translation. The Arabic original has not been preserved in any known archive. We have assumed that the addressee of this letter is the *nā’ib*, as indicated in no. 153. The letter is not complete. It is reproduced with the orthography, etc., of the *Correspondence 1846–68* version. For date see no. 153.

Samu’el Giyorgīs to Abdella Alī, 5 July 1865

(After Compliments.)

Be it known to you, oh dear brother, that an answer [from the King of Abyssinia] is on its way down to the General [Mr. Rassam], couched in friendly terms, as you will understand it.

The reason that it is neither signed nor sealed is on account of the misfortune which has been brought about by wicked men [rebels on the road]. When he [Mr. Rassam] reads it, explain to him the cause of the want of the signature and seal, which have not been omitted in vain, as God bears witness. You should do the needful with those you are acquainted. There is no harm in it [King’s letter]. It means nothing but friendship and honour to the Sublime [British] Government.

It is necessary that his Mr Rassam’s appearance should be made in haste, in order that the General might meet with his hoped-for desire, &c.

Dated 10th Jamad Aakhir [Safer], 1282. (July 5, 1865).

Correspondence 1846–68, p. 388, English translation. The Arabic original has not been preserved in any known archive. The addressee was almost certainly Samu’el’s brother Abdella Alī., of the family of Subagadis’s envoy to Cairo in 1827 (ACTA I, nos 23, 34). Note that Samu’el attempts to mitigate the king’s omission of his name and seal. The letter is not complete. It is reproduced with the orthography, etc., of the *Correspondence 1846–68* version. For date see no. 153.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 10 Dec. 1865

سبوح الاب والابن والروح القدس الهه الواحد له الحمد الى كل الابد امين
 الى سيب الجيب هرز سام بعد السلام عليك والسوال عن صحة عانيتك
 ونحن الحمد لله الوف مترتره طيبين بفاية الصحه والداينه ثم مانع به جنابك
 انه قد ورد الينا جرابك المورح ٢٢ في قيراي وفيه منا مرقيا وشلنا الباري على محبتك
 والان ايها الجيب قد شرحنا لك هذا المكتوب الخالي من رخصه هوانه المانع من ذلك
 الناس الدين كنت احبهم وكل يوم وكل جالين على فراش قد يشترق المانع هذا
 هو كما قد شرحنا لكم واتح في مصوع والان لما ان الله احضرك بالعافيه الى هذه
 اجرات فقد ارسلنا بالتاكيد الكلي الى احكام الدين اجرات الشلكه لاجل القبول
 والوصول الى طرفنا واما من جهة الخدامين الدين حضرو الينا وانتم في مصوع فقد
 صاروا عيابين ووجدنا واحدين اربعتهم اسمه محمد لبي هو عيان وقد ارسلناه اليك
 في هرز غوبك وقد امرنا محمد المذكور اذا كانا اتفانوا احدكم معك ودمته
 ١٢٨٢ م
 ١٠ م نهاس

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him for ever. Amen.

To the beloved and noble Hormuzd Rassam (Huruz Risām). After greeting you and inquiring about the soundness of your health—we are, abundant (lit. thousandfold) praise be to God, well to the extent of the most excellent (lit. the summit of) health and well-being—what we inform Your Excellency [about] is that your letter, dated the 22nd of November(?), has reached us; we understood it word by word, and we thanked the Creator for your friendship. And now, O beloved, as we have explained to you this letter is without our name since it has been withdrawn from such people as those whom I used to love, and who were permitted to sit on my throne (*divan*) every day, [but who] reviled me. This is the withdrawal which we explained to you while you were at Massawa.

Now, seeing that God has brought you safely to these parts, we have sent firm instructions to the governors in the neighbourhood of Çilga with regard to receiving [you] and bringing [you] to us.

Regarding the messengers (lit. servants) who came to us while you were at Massawa, they fell ill. One of the the four, named Muḥammad, we found in good health (lit. not sick); him we have sent to you in accordance with your wish. We have ordered the said Muḥammad, “If they have recovered, take them with you.”

May you live long.

The 1st of Tahsas 1282 A. H.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 32, Arabic; fol. 93r, English translation. This Arabic text is the original letter from Tēwodros. It is one of two letters in Arabic, the other one sealed (no. 158), which were received by Rassam at Metemma on 26 December 1865 (Rassam, I, pp. 178–181). The dates are confusing. We have read 1 and 4 Tahsas respectively, following Rassam. These dates, however, correspond to 10 and 13 December, not 8 and 11 as stated in Rassam and in *Correspondence 1846–68*, pp. 439–440. We have accepted Tahsas 1 as the correct date of the first letter, but have had to correct the date of the second since 4 Tahsas was a Wednesday, not a Monday as stated in the letter, and it is less likely that someone should make a mistake about the day of the week than the date. We have assumed that QMBRĀMĪ of the Arabic text is the result of misreading “November” in Rassam’s letter.

The above letter was not included in *Amharic Letters* in spite of the fact that some other letters in Arabic were.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 11 Dec. 1865

عيسى الاب والابن والروح القدس الاله الواحد له احمد سرمدياً
ملا الملك النخشا السلطان تادوروس

الى المحب البرية الصادق المحبه هرز ربيع اول والي عدن بعد السلام الجزيل
عليك واهدا تجايت لويك اما من جهتنا فله العلي لمحمد الوف متواثر ثم ان
الذي الهم لتسطير هذا ايها البريز هوانه سابت قد حزننا لك عدة جوابات غالية
من الاسع ولختم لاجل ما صدر من الناس المغرنا الشاقيين الله ومن ولاء ولا نعلم
ولا ندري ان كان هولاء القوم هم يهود او ام غير عارفين بالله وطايرينا
في هذا الامر قد حزننا ان يجب ان نوضع لكم اسمنا وفتحنا وقد وضعنا
لكم الاسع ولختم الملوك لان اذا كان هولاء الاشرار شتموني فانت يا حبيب
ماذا صنعت معنا من الش فالان واصل لكم اسمنا وفتحنا مع خدا مينك لاجل
ان كل موه ما يحرق منا القدي كما ما ينف هذا واسم
ورجى يوم الاثنين ٤ في شهر ربيع ١٢٨٤



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, praise be to Him for ever.

[From] the Negashite (*al-Najāshiyya*) king of kings, *Sulṭan* Tēwodros, to the beloved, precious and sincere friend, Hormuzd Rassam (Huruz Risām), principal governor of Aden.

After [presenting] abundant greetings and conveying salutations to you—on our part generous and constant praise be to God Almighty—what compelled me to write this, O friend, is [the fact] that we have written a number of letters to you earlier, lacking [both] name and seal, because of what originated from impudent people who reviled God and him whom He had appointed ruler. We do not know and do not understand whether those people are Jews or people who do not know God.

When we looked into this matter, it became clear to us that we must set down for you our name and our seal. We have [now] set down for you the name and the royal seal, for while those wicked [people] have reviled me, what evil have you, O beloved, done to us?

Now I am sending you our name and our seal with your servants, so that never again shall such an offence occur on our part as happened previously. Greetings.

Written on Monday, the 4th of Tahsas 1282 A. H.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 33, Arabic original; fol. 93v, English translation. Tēwodros had apparently decided to change his attitude towards Rassam almost immediately after dispatching the preceding letter (no. 157) to Metemma. Since 4 Tahsas was not a Monday but a Wednesday, the scribe has erred either with regard to the day of the week or the date. The latter being the most probable, we have concluded that this letter was written on Monday 2 Tahsas (11 December), thus the day after the preceding letter.

In *Amharic Letters* this Arabic document appears in the appendix as no. 35; the letter published as no. 157 above has, however, been omitted.

The rendering of the king's title is problematic. The scribe has quite clearly written *malik al-mulūk al-najāshiyya*. Ullendorff has simply replaced *al-najāshiyya* with "of Abyssinia". In his article "The Amharic Letters of Aṣe Tewodāros to Queen Victoria and Her Special Envoy", NEAS, V, 3, pp. 51–58, Getatchew Haile connects the word with the title "Bahir Negash" and translates "of the Nagashite (Kingdom)".

Document no. 159

Tēwodros to Jima [Dec. 1865]

A beloved friend of mine, named Hormuzd Rassam, an Englishman, is at present with you at Matamma. You are to convey him safely to the district of Chálga, where he will be received by my people. You will attend to this, because he is my beloved friend, and you should honour him.

Rassam, I, p. 183, English translation. This is almost certainly not the letter in full. Rassam states that Jima received a letter with the messengers that brought him the letters written in December (nos 157 and 158) and quotes the above as the content of the letter to *Shaykh* Jima. Once Tēwodros had decided to receive the British mission he was apparently anxious that there be no delays or other problems.

የቀጥ፡ ፊደል፡ ከወደላም፡ ስለዚህ፡ ቀደሳት፡ መጻሕፍት፡ በርሰው፡
ማሳተም፡ አንደታተም፡ ይወዳሉ፡ ስትመው፡ ቢሰዱ ልን፡ አጅግ፡
አንወዳለን፡ ከአግዚአብሔርም፡ ብዙ፡ ዋጋ፡ ያገኛሉ፡ ይልቁንም
ያለቃ፡ ወልደ፡ ሩፋኤልን፡ ያረወርቅ፡ ትርጓሜ፡ አኔ፡ አፈልጋለሁ
ፍ፡ አደራ፡ ይሰደዳልኝ፡፡

አምልደተ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ በገደብ፡ የሃውጊ፡ ዓመት፡ በሐሳብ፡ ኢትዮ-
ጵያ፡ ወበገደብ፡ ፍጥጥ፡ በሐሳብ፡ ላቲን፡ ሞተ፡ አቡ፡ ቢያረክ፡
አመ፡ አሜሩ፡ ለመስክረም፡ ኢትዮጵያን፡ ሁሉ፡ አንበጣ፡ በላ-
ው፡ አኔም፡ ወደ፡ ዋድላ፡ በጥቅምት፡ ሃድሁ፡ ስንቅ፡ አጥቶ፡
በጭንቅ፡ ደረሰሁ፡ በዋድላ፡ ፎወር፡ ተቀመጥሁ፡ ጌላም፡ ወደ
ላለ፡ በላ፡ ሄድሁ፡ በገንተ፡ ማርያም፡ ዕዓመት፡ መጽሐፍ፡ አስ-
ተማርኩ፡ በዚያም፡ መጽሐፈ፡ ማሳየዊ፡ ጥላተ፡ በርሃን፡ ይ-
ሚባሉ፡ ፎመጻሕፍት፡ አገኘሁ፡ በርሰው፡ አጅ፡ አኔህ፡ መጻ-
ሕፍት፡ ይኖሩ፡ አይኖሩ፡ አላውቅም፡ ስይኖሩ፡ ግን፡ ይላኩብ-
ኝ፡ በሀሳይ፡ ተቀምጧለሁ፡ ሠዕል፡ መሳል፡ በገንተ፡ ማርያ-
ም፡ ተማርኩ፡ አንደ፡ ኢትዮጵያ፡ ሠዕል፡ አውቃለሁ፡ የ-
ሠዕል፡ ቀለም፡ ይከደዳልኝ፡ ረል፡ ቀለም፡ ቀይ፡ ቀለም፡ ከፈ-
ይ፡ ሳምግ፡ ብጫ፡ ግንጂር፡ ነጭ፡ አረጋጋይ፡ ናቸው፡፡

አጎ፡ ላብታይ፡ ዘሀላይ፡ አንደጎት፡ አሉ፡ ይሉዋል፡ ደህኖ፡ ናቸው፡
የኃድጉ፡ ልጆች፡ ዘይግሳ፡ ከደጎት፡ አንደ፡ ሃደ፡ ወራ፡ ሰማሁ፡ ገ-
ብረ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ ጭስ፡ ገብረ፡ ቃል፡ በእድዋ፡ አሉ፡ ደብ-
ተራ፡ ፈንታ፡ መንሆሰው፡ በማይ፡ ጊጊ፡ አሉ፡ የደብተራ፡ ገ-
ርያውን፡ የብረቱን፡ ወራ፡ ዘንድር፡ አላገኘሁም፡ ሰገኝ፡ እ-
ልካለሁ፡ ደብተራ፡ ገብረ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ መጽዋ፡ ደርሰ፡ የማቀ-
በለው፡ ሰው፡ አጥቶ፡ ወደ፡ ጎንደር፡ መመለሱን፡ በወራ፡ ሰ-
ማሁ፡ ደህኖ፡ ነው፡ አለቃ፡ ገብረ፡ ሐናን፡ ጎን፡ ሠ፡ መቱዋ-
ቸው፡ በከመል፡ ወደ፡ ትግራይ፡ ወደ፡ ሳከታ፡ ተሰደዱ፡ አጅግ-
ተዋረዱ፡ አኔም፡ በዋድላ፡ አገኘሁቸው፡ ወደ፡ ቁራጣ፡ ሄዱ፡፡

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የገብረ፡ ሐይ ወትን፡ አላገኘሁም፡ ሳገኝ፡ እስደረሁ፡ ስህመዱ፡ የር
ሰው፡ ሎሌ፡ የዙላ፡ ሰው፡ እስላም፡ ሁሉ፡ ወደ፡ ጎንደር፡ ለገጣ፡ ሂደ
በእስላም፡ ቤት፡ እንደ፡ ሞተ፡ ወሬ፡ ሰማሁ፡፡ የክንብትም፡ መደሊደ፡
እንደ፡ ልጉ፡ ለገሰውች፡ ነገርሁ፡ እስከሁሉ፡ ማጣታቸውን፡ ማጣኝ
ታቸውን፡ አላኩብኝም፡፡

የገገሥ፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ ወሬ፡ እንደሆነ፡ ነው፡ ዘንድሮ፡ በወይዘት፡ ክረመ፡፡
ገምሮን፡ የገገሥ፡ ቀንደኛ፡ መቅደስ፡ በሚባል፡ አምባ፡ እስከ፡ ዛ
ሬ፡ ታስሮዋል፡ እጅግ፡ ባለ፡ መክራ፡ ነው፡፡ ክርሱም፡ ጋራ፡ ጊዮሴው
ሮፖ፡ ሰዎች፡ እስከ፡ ዛሬ፡ ታስረዋል፡፡ አልተፈቱም፡፡

ከለ፡ ገምሮን፡ ቅኔ፡ ጉባዔ፡ ቃ፡፡

ይደሉ፡ ተዓሥሮተ፡ ጸር፡ ወትረ፡፡ ተዓሥሮተ፡ ቀንደኛ፡ ገምሮ
ን፡ ባሕቱ፡ እንበለ፡ ድልወት፡ ተገብረ፡፡

ዘለምላኪዮ፡፡

መኪንንተ፡ ፓሪስ፡ አክምራ፡ በሰሚዓ፡ ዜኖ፡ ወቃል፡፡ ክመ፡ ኢተ
ፈትሐ፡ ገምሮን፡ ቀንደኛ፡ እስከ፡ ተብህለ፡ ተፈትሐ፡ እንደ፡ በ
ማሰሠ፡ ገገሥ፡ ኃይል፡፡

የፈረንሳይ፡ ቀንደኛ፡ ሎጂን፡ እግዚር፡ አወጣሉ፡ ክወጣሙ፡ ክወጣሙ፡ በጌ
ላ፡ ክመንገድ፡ መሰሰው፡ ሊያስሩት፡ እንደ፡ ነበረ፡ ወሬ፡ ሰማኝ፡፡
የአዋ፡ ገገሥ፡ የኃይለ፡ መለኮት፡ ልጅ፡ መንገደክ፡ ገገሥ፡ ክ
ድት፡ አዋ፡ ገባ፡ የገገሥ፡ ሹም፡ በዛብረት፡ ተዋጋው፡ መንገደክ፡
ል፡ አደረገ፡ የአዋ፡ ሰው፡ ሁሉ፡ በደስታ፡ ተቀበሉት፡ በጽል፡ ጊዜ፡
ክሐ፡ ነፍጥ፡ ል መድፍ፡ አገኘ፡ ክንብረት፡ አምባ፡ ክሐ፡ ነፍጥ፡ ለ
መድፍ፡ ጋራ፡ አገኘ፡ እጅግ፡ በርትቶ አል፡፡ በዚህ፡ መክንያት፡ ገ
ገሥ፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ ስፊ፡ የታሰሩ፡ የጋላ፡ መኪንንት፡ እየገዱ፡ ገደ
ል፡ ጣሉዋቸው፡፡ ጣሩም፡ ነገር፡ ተደረገ፡ ከፍ፡ ፎቱ፡ የትኩብ
ርሌ፡ ልጆች፡ ፍቸው፡፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ፍቸው፡፡ ክዚህም፡ በጌላ፡ ስፊ
መኪንንት፡ ክርስቲያን፡ በክመል፡ እየመቱ፡ ገደሉ፡ ክፍቱ፡ ልጅ፡
የላስታ፡ ደጃዝማች፡ ነው፡ ስሙ፡ ይማም፡ ተድላ፡ ነው፡፡ ከለዚህ፡

ም፡ ልግቶሁ፡ ብታስፈቱዋቸው፡ ብለን፡ ተከቶ፡ አለን፡ ሣስፈታት፡
ግን፡ ገይሆን፡ ለግቶሁ፡ ለግቶሁ፡ ገንዘብ፡ ያለው፡ በገንዘብ፡ ገንዘብ
ም፡ የሌለው፡ በጸሎት፡ አንዲረዱ፡ ቢያደርጉ፡ ከጅም፡ መልግ
ም፡ ይመስለኛል፡ የሚጸድቁበት፡ ከሆነ፡ ብዬ፡ በቤህ፡ ገንጠ፡ ይ
ቆራም፡ አለሁና፡ ምናልባት፡ የሚያሰኝም፡ አንዲሆን፡ ይሣሩኝ፡ በ
ላዋቂነት፡ ነውና፡

ሥላሴቅ፡

አንጦንዮስ፡ ግቶሁ፡ ገንጠ፡ ገንጠ፡ አትመነይ፡ አምጣ፡ ርሐ
ቀ፡ ገንጠ፡ ይአገ፡ አም፡ ኢትዮጵያ፡ ሀገር፡
በከመ፡ ሰማይ፡ ይርሐቅ፡ አም፡ ድር፡
አገሩ፡ ተሐንጸት፡ መልሰልተ፡ ለሆኖክ፡ ያብር፡
አንተ፡ ኢትትጋባሰ፡ ቤተ፡ ቆቅር፡
ወበአፈ፡ ነሱ፡ ቆጠረት፡ አልገቲ፡ ምረር፡
ለአሐቲ፡ ቆቅርክ፡ መግር፡

አንሆ፡ በረከት፡

ሰላሳል፡ መለኪያ፡ የሚሆን፡ ነምጋት፡ የኢሐክና፡ የወርቅ፡ አፈር፡
ተገኝቶዋልና፡ አወጣጡን፡ ጥበቡን፡ የሚጨመርበትን፡ የሚገባር፡
ደብዳቤ፡ ይከደደልኝ፡ አም፡ ገንዘብ፡ በማጣት፡ ከአልቀረብኝ፡ አር
ሰም፡ የሚረድሁትን፡ ሁሉ፡ ይለኩብኝ፡ አከገተቻለኝ፡ ድረስ፡ አይ
ርጋለሁ፡

አምልደተ፡ አገሪክን፡ በገደ፡ የሃወ፡ ጥመት፡ በሐሳብ፡ ኢትዮጵያ፡
ተጽሐፈ፡ አመ፡ ሰዳሱ፡ ለጥር፡

ሄክሰጋክኝ፡ ዘዋድሳ፡

To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyos Ze'abediye), who gives to scholars a good and correct answer, for he is learned in science.

How are you, really? The letter together with the paintings which you sent me reached me after two years. But one letter Bishop Biancheri (*Abune Biyankeri*) gave me at once. Having written the reply, however, I gave it to Father Delmonte (*Abune Delmontē*), so that he would send it to you for me. If it has reached you, send me the answer. If it has not reached you, get it from Father Delmonte. But I do not think it has reached you. If the letters you send do not reach me, the letters to you (lit. your letters) do not even reach Jidda. The whole business of priests is teaching; but they do not bother about letters; they forget. For such matters laymen are better. Everything you send, send [it] by the hand of laymen so that it reaches me quicker.

It is good for you to understand what Solomon says, "Teach the wise, since he will increase his wisdom." Ponder this, because in this saying you will find great wisdom (lit. many things). If you want the book called *Ṣedale Ṣehay* of Bizēn to be copied, it will require paper and payment for a scribe. Unless you send [this], there is no one that will provide payment and paper.

The reply to your proposal (lit. what you said), "If you send me four letters a year, I will send you four thalers," is this: Yes, I will send letters with the news. But according to the market of this year, four thalers buy four bushels (*madiga*). Tigray is really starving. Nevertheless I want to carry out all your business. But because of lack of money it will fail, for I have no money. Until this day I have not seen the list of your books. Bishop Biancheri did not give it to me. He remained for a whole year without giving me *The Shepherd of Hermas* (*Meṣhafa Hērman*). I found it after Bishop Biancheri had died.

Your printing press is very good. It is greatly praised in Ethiopia. The printing of the English does not have easily readable characters. For this reason [people] would like to have the Holy Scriptures printed at your printing press. We would appreciate it very much if you would print them and send us. You will get a great reward from God. Above all I would like to have *Aleqa Welde Rufa'el's Commentary on Chrysostom*. Send it to me, please.

Bishop Biancheri died on the first day of Meskerem 1857 according to the Ethiopian calendar, and 1863 (*sic*) according to the Roman calendar. Locusts have devastated all Ethiopia. I went to Wadla in Ṭiqimt. I was short of provisions, and it was with difficulty that I arrived there. I stayed in Wadla for two months. Then I went to Lalibela. I taught Bible (lit. Books) for a year at Gennete Maryam. There I found two books called *Meṣhafa Mahiyewi* and *Hohite Birhan*. I do not know whether you have these books or not. Send me an answer, if you do not have them. I am staying at Halay. I learned painting at Gennete Maryam. Since I know how to paint in the Ethiopian manner, send me colours for painting. These are [the colours needed]: blue colour, red, dark red, rose, yellow, dark blue, white and green colour.

Ato Habtay of Halay says, "How are you?" He is well. I have heard the news that Hadgu's children have migrated from Digsā. Gebre Igzi'abihēr and the priest Gebre Qal are at Adwa. *Debtera* Fenta has become a monk and is at May Gwagwa. This year I have received no news concerning *Debtera* Baryaw and Birritu. I shall write as soon as I get [news]. I have heard that *Debtera* Gebre İyyesus reached Massawa. But he returned to Gonder, since there was no one to receive him. He is well. *Aleqa* Gebre Hanna was beaten with a cane by the king. He was disgraced and fled to Tigray and Lasta. I met him in Wadla. He went to Qoraṭa. I have found no news concerning Gebre Hiywet; I shall send when I get [some]. I heard the news that Ahmedo, your servant, the man from Zula, became a Muslim and went to Gonder to trade, and [that] he died in the Muslim quarter (*Islam Bēt*). I have told three persons to find the medal of Aksum for me. They have not written (lit. sent) to me so far whether they have found [it] or not.

The news about King Tēwodros is as follows: This year he stayed in Wadla. Cameron (Kamiron), the English consul, is still imprisoned on the *amba* called Meqdele. He is suffering badly. Seven Europeans have been imprisoned with him until now. They have not been released.

Guba'ē Qana poem about Cameron:

It is always just to imprison one's enemy,
but the imprisonment of Consul Cameron was done without justification.

Ze'amlakiye:

Understand, noblemen of Paris, by listening to [the] news (and words),
that Consul Cameron is not released.
For it is said that he is released,
when he is still imprisoned by a powerful king.

God saved the French Consul Lejean (*Qwinsil* Lojan); we heard rumours that after he had been released, [Tēwodros] was about to turn him back from the road and imprison him. Minilik, the son of the king of Shewa, Hayle Meleket, has deserted the king and gone to Shewa. The king's governor, Bezzabih, fought against him. Minilik was victorious. All the people of Shewa received him with joy. At the time of victory, he got one thousand muskets and one cannon. From Kibret Amba he got one thousand muskets together with three cannon. He has grown very powerful. Because of this, King Tēwodros had twenty-eight imprisoned Galla noblemen pushed along and thrown over the cliff. An awesome thing happened. Two of the twenty-eight were sons of Tikku Birillē; they were Christians.

After this he killed twelve Christian noblemen by beating them with rods. One of the twelve was the *dejjazmach* of Lasta. His name was Yimam Tedla. Therefore Yeju and Lasta, Meqēt and Shede-ho, Ambasel and Delanta, Negela and Wag rebelled and became outlaws (*weyanē*). Tedla Gwalu governs Gojjam, Mēcha, Damot and Agew. The son of *Wagshum* Gebre Medhin, Gobeze, has entered Tigray and stayed there. All the enemies of the king have joined him. He spent the rainy season in Shirē. In Tigray the famine has worsened; very many people have been dying. Especially in Akkele Guzay they have perished. These days many people have died unexpectedly. From Agamē to Selewa in particular people are perishing until this day; uncounted numbers, as the sand of the sea, have died. In particular, the people of Tiltal have perished. Hence salt has become expensive. [Of] the people of Tigray half say, "We are the king's;" half say, "We are Gobeze's." In Bogos four *injera* cost one thaler. They are starving.

Tiso Gobeze is ruling Simēn and Wegera, Welqayit and Şegedē, Armaçhiho and Dembiya, Weynadega, Belesa and Kīnfaz. He has become very powerful. The wives of the king number about one hundred. He accused *Abba* Selama of taking his wife, and placed him on the *amba* and kept him under guard. He was prevented from ordaining priests and deacons. Because of this there has been some relief for the Catholics. The Wello Galla are growing powerful. The king's only domain is Begēmdir. All his soldiers have deserted. The king has grown weak.

Ever since *Dejjazmach* Nigusē died, Amarē Kinfu has been imprisoned by the king. At first he imprisoned him for being with *Dejjazmach* Nigusē. Later on the king asked him to embrace his faith. When he refused, he beat him, and has imprisoned him to this day. He has no one to visit him and has no one to befriend him. Even though he sent word and said repeatedly that he was dying of hunger and cold, nobody took pity on him. If, however, it is possible for you, and you would like to, we hope he will be released if you write a letter to the pope of Rome and to the government to write (lit. send) to Tēwodros, asking him to release him. If he is not released, however, I think it would be very good if you ask Catholics who have money to help him with money, and those who do not have money to assist him with their prayers. For I have become bold in this matter, believing that it would make you a saint, but if perhaps it offends you, pardon me, for it is because of [my] lack of wisdom.

Sillasē poem:

Antoine the Catholic, I wish to see your face,
for you are as far from the land of Ethiopia
as heaven from earth.

For on the mountain of your heart is built
a house of love, which cannot be concealed.
In the mouth of all creatures,
your sweet love is without bitterness.

This is a present.

Send me a pair of compasses for drawing. Copper and gold dust have been discovered in the ground, so send me a letter about the method of extracting it and what to add to it. Write to me about whatever you want. Unless it is impossible due to lack of money, I on my part will do what is within my ability.

Written on 6 Ṭirr in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1858 according to the Ethiopian calendar.

(Of) Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 189–191, Gi'iz/Amharic original. Conti Rossini ("Epistolario", pp. 451–455) and Fusella ("Lettere", pp. 82–86) have omitted all of page one (except the first two lines) and the first five lines of page two, starting where Asseggaheñ begins to write about the death of Bishop Biancheri. A few minor errors have crept into Conti Rossini's rendering: Asseggaheñ's stay in Wadla lasted *two* months, not nine as Conti Rossini states, and the people thrown over the edge of the cliff numbered 28, not 29; also, the correct version is "Gebre Igzi'abihēr and the priest Gebre Qal", not "Gebre Igzi'abihēr, the priest, and Gebre Qal".

The information about conditions in Ethiopia embodied in this letter is obviously of the greatest importance, since it was written so close to the events. Asseggaheñ had returned to his co-religionists in the north only shortly before the letter was written, after having spent more than a year in his home country Wadla and in Lasta. The letter sums up the situation just before the arrival of the Rassam mission at the camp of the king on 25 January 1866. See Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 241–242, for references to other sources.

Several of the people mentioned in the letter belonged to Antoine d'Abbadie's early friends and collaborators in Ethiopia: *Debtera* Baryaw, *Debtera* Fenta, and *Qēs* Gebre Qal. See ACTA I, nos 55, 58, 107; no. 92 and *passim*; and no. 91, respectively.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam [28 Jan. 1866]

كسهراب والابن والروح القدس المله الواحد له الحمد سرمدياً آمين
ملا الملع الخ شيعه السلطان اودورم

بجل بقوة الله حيث انك حمة طالب لنا سبل المحبه مجنا هز ريباً
في هذا العمى ن لارح البيات والراحه ويج بال الواجبه ولكن صرنا جالسين
في بلاد قد اكلت مستنظين حصرك فالسار والحيوش قد صاروا جفاين
قد صار الامر اليم بالواجبه مع — وفي بال السفر فالان احصا الاعدنا



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. Praise be to Him for ever. Amen.

From the Negashite (*al-Najāshiyya*) king of kings, *Sulṭān* Tēwodros. May [this], by the power of God, reach our beloved Hormuzd Rassam today, since you have forwarded a request to us in the interest of friendship.

Shelter(?) and rest should have been imperative, and the talk in the morning. But we have been quartered on the land and it has been eaten [bare], waiting for your arrival. The troops are starving; they have become unruly. So the meeting with me has been ordered for today—and in the morning the journey. And now come to me.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 29, Arabic original; fol. 93, English translation. Rassam states that this letter was received in both Amharic and Arabic (Rassam, I, p. 247; also FO 401/2, pp. 460–461). It has not, however, been possible to locate the Amharic letter.

The well-nigh telegraphic style of this letter is most certainly an indication that Tēwodros was preoccupied with other matters when he dictated it, and that he wanted Rassam to understand that there could be no postponement of the audience for any reason whatsoever.

In Rassam's narrative the receipt of this letter and the first audience took place on 28 January (I, pp. 243–247), followed by the writing of the letter to Queen Victoria (no. 162) the next morning. Blanc and Prideaux, however, both give 25 January as the date of arrival and first audience (Blanc, pp. 125–128; Clements R. Markham, *A History of the Abyssinian Expedition*, London, 1869, pp. 97–98).

Tēwodros to Victoria, 29 Jan. 1866

በሰሙ፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመን፡ረስ፡ቀዳ፡ከ፡ፊአምሳክ፡የእግዚአ
 ብሔር፡ፍጡር፡ባርያው፡የዳዊት፡የሰሎሞን፡ልጅ፡፡ንጉሠ፡ነገሥት፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ደረሰ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ከሰው፡ሁሉ፡መር
 ጠ፡አልቆ፡ካነገሠዎ፡ሃይማኖት፡ፍቅር፡ከሚወዱ፡የተጠቃ
 ፡ደሀ፡ከሚጠብቁ፡ከሰንገራዝ፡ንግሥት፡ከቢክቶርያ፡ሕር
 ምዝ፡ርስአምን፡በኪምሮን፡ጉዳይ፡ሠድጄዎሰሁ፡ያሱን
 ን፡እንኳን፡እርስዎ፡የባርያዎ፡ባርያ፡ቢልክብኝ፡እምቢ፡እላ
 ስሁ፡አገ፡ሰድጄልዎ፡አሰሁ፡እኒይ፡ግን፡ጳጳስ፡ነኝ፡ብሎ፡ከመ
 ጣ፡ግብጥ፡ጋራ፡ሁነው፡ያደረጉኝን፡እግዚአብሔርን፡ከሚ
 ፈራ፡ሰው፡ጠይቀው፡ያገኙት፡እኔ፡በታላቂቱ፡ከርስዎ፡ጋራ፡
 መላላክ፡ተገብቶኝ፡አይደለም፡ዳሩ፡ግን፡ተላቅ፡ሰው፡ኖብሐ
 ር፡አንድ፡ነው፡ሁሉን፡ይቸሳል፡እኔን፡የኢትዮጵያን፡ደንቅር
 ስለ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ብሰው፡ይቸሱኝ፡አስረክቸው፡የነበርሁ
 ስዎቻ፡ያደረጉኝ፡የሰደቡኝ፡ጋላ፡ገዝቶ፡የእስራኤል፡ልጅ፡ጠ
 ፍቶ፡አክ፡ለምኖ፡ነበረ፡ያንዲቱ፡የእስራኤል፡ልጅ፡ደሀ፡የሆ
 ነቸው፡ልጅ፡እኔ፡ነኝ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ግን፡ያባቴን፡መንግ
 ሥት፡ሃይል፡ሠጥቶኝ፡መሰሰልኝ፡የኢትዮጵያን፡ሰዎቻ
 ድገቱርነታቸውን፡ሰውርነታቸውን፡ሠይሰሙት፡አይቀ
 ሩም፡ያሟረ፡መሰሎኝ፡ደፍራ፡የላክሁብዎን፡ከፍቶብ
 ኝ፡ቢገኝ፡ይሞክሩኝ፡እንጂ፡አይከፉብኝ፡እግዚአብሔር፡የ
 መረጠዎ፡ንግሥት፡ሃይማኖ፡የበራ፡ነው፡ኖ፡፡

ዓለም በተፈጠረ በጊኸህ ከር፣ ሃ፣ ጁ አመት በጥር በጽፎ ቀ
 ን ተጣፈ ፡፡ ጌቷ ከተወለደ በኸ፡ ከ፣ ሃ፣ ጁ አመት፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

May this letter from God's creature and slave, the son of David [and] of Solomon, King of Kings Tēwodros, reach Victoria, queen of England, whom God has chosen from among all men and exalted and made to reign, who loves friendship and religion and defends the oppressed [and] poor.

As for what you tell me, that you have sent Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Risam) concerning the matter of Cameron (Kēmiron), would I say no even if the slave of your slave, let alone you yourself, wrote to me? All right, I have sent him to you. But what those others did to me in company with the Egyptian who came and claimed to be a bishop (*pappas*), you can find out by asking anyone who fears God. I am not worthy of corresponding with you who are great. However, a great person and the ocean are the same, they can bear everything.

Bear with me, the ignorant Ethiopian (lit. the ignorant of Ethiopia), for the sake of God. It is myself whom the people I had imprisoned humiliated and reviled, I, the son of a daughter of Israel who became poor when, as a result of the rule of the Galla, the children of Israel had been brought to naught, and were itching and begging. But God has granted me power and restored my father's kingdom to me.

You must have heard of the ignorance and blindness of us, the Ethiopian people. If you find offensive what I was bold enough to write to you because it seemed appropriate to me, do not be angry with me, but advise me, for you, the queen whom God has chosen, have had your eyes opened.

Written in the year 7358 after the creation of the world, on the 22nd day of Țir; in the year 1858 after the birth of our Lord.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

FO 1/26, fol. 210, Amharic original; fols 212-213, English translation. This reply to Queen Victoria's letter was apparently drafted early in the morning the day after the arrival of the mission (no. 161). The king's Amharic secretary, *Aleqa* Ingida, read it to the members of the mission, and Samu'el Giyorgis, who had been appointed Rassam's *baldereba* by the king (no. 167), was instructed to translate it word for word into Arabic. Tēwodros then asked Rassam to translate it into English and "have it fairly copied, in order that he might sign and seal it. He did not wish to send an Amharic copy with it, as he said he wanted to show the world how he trusted me, by signing a letter the contents of which he did not know, relying on me for its accuracy." Rassam, however, asked for an Amharic copy, "urging that our Queen would prefer having the letter from him written in his own language" (Rassam, I, pp. 264-268). Rassam was probably overemphasizing the issue of Tēwodros's confidence in him. Tēwodros had set his seal on letters in European languages before (see nos 117 and 118). In a letter to Tēwodros dated 4 October 1866 Victoria acknowledged the receipt of the above as well Tēwodros's letter of 17 April (FO 401/2, pp. 400-401).

The expressions "a daughter of Israel" and "the children of Israel" are used in this letter as synonyms of royalty and nobility in conformity with the tradition of the Solomonic ancestry of the Ethiopian kings, as embodied in the *Kibre Negest*, and should not be confused with the *Bēte Isra'el* or Felasha. The extraordinary combination of self-assurance and humility demonstrated in this letter has resulted in alternative translations. Rassam's translation, for instance, has "the Royal children of Israel", but then "one of the humble women of Israel" instead of "a daughter of Israel".

Some care is also taken in his translation not to offend the British queen; thus her title "Defender of the Christian faith" has been added, and she is addressed as "exalted above all men" and "glorified". Likewise "the slave of your slave" has become "the lowest of your servants". "*Ako*" from "*akkeke*" (to itch, to scratch) is related to skin problems but is used also as an insult, indicating extreme poverty.

For important comments and amendments of the translation in Girma-Selassie, Appleyard and Ullendorff, see Getatchew Haile's review, *NEAS*, V, 3, pp. 51-58.

Tēwodros to Kīdane Maryam *et al.* [1866]

በሰሙ፡ አብ፡ ወልድ፡ ወመን፡ ልሳን፡ ቅዱስ፡
 ፊት፡ ክም፡ ላታ፡ ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ተወካዮች፡
 ደፍረሱ፡ በተደጃቸ፡ ኪዳን፡ ማርያም፡ እንግሥት፡
 ደታ፡ ሰነበታቸው፡ ስኔ፡ ስግዚአብሔር፡
 ይመስገናሉ፡ ይህን፡ ጽሑፍ፡ ሹሚያቸውን፡
 ሠራዊቱንም፡ እንዲቀ፡ ስንቸታቸው፡ አለ
 በሉል፡ እይም፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ሕይወ፡
 ልመጣ፡ ነጃ፡ ከሠራራ፡ ልገብ፡ አይዘኑቸው
 ተገባላቸው፡ ማሠራ፡ ሳይ፡ ተሰፍረው፡ አለሁ፡፡
 የጃ፡ እኩዳላሁ፡ ብደ፡ የነበረውን፡ ቀረሁ
 ፡ደጃም፡ እህሉን፡ ማረ።

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Dejjach* Kīdane Maryam and his companions. How have you been? I am well, thank God. Tell the chiefs and the army for me that I said, "How have you been?"

By the power of God, I am about to come and enter my quarters. Fear not! I have encamped on Anbessa Maseriya. I had intended to go to Yejju, [but] I cancelled it. Yejju has paid the tribute (lit. loaded its grain).



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

Ethiopian Embassy, London, no 2, Amharic original. Here only Kīdane Maryam is mentioned by name, but it is quite possible that the prefix *kenne* in front of his name refers to the other members of the governing council, not to his companions in a general sense.

Pankhurst concludes that this and the two following letters were written not earlier than November 1864, when Kīdane Maryam was still a *liqe mekwās*, and not later than March 1867, by which time he had been promoted to the rank of *ras*; also, in the case of this letter, that the reference to camping at Anbessa Maseriya suggests Mēḥa and therefore January 1866 (Pankhurst, *Tax Records*, pp. 145, 152-153). The fact that the king mentions his intention to go to Yejjū, presumably to collect tribute, but nothing about Gojjam, suggests that he may still have been encamped in Wadla (see no. 160), provided that a place called Anbessa Maseriya exists there.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam [4? Feb. 1866]

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. Amen.

The servant of God and His created being, the son of David, the son of Solomon, the King of kings, Theodorus.

To the servant of her whom God has exalted above all Sovereigns, and glorified above all princes and peoples, and made the Defender of the Christian faith, and the succour of the poor and oppressed, Hormuzd Rassam, who is, by the power of God, endowed with wisdom and a benevolent heart.

Be it known that by your favour I have abundance of fire-arms. I send you one single-barrelled and four double-barrelled muskets, and five double-barrelled pistols; and if besides these you require more to give to persons who ask you for them, by the power of God I will supply you with them. I am the Sovereign of my country, and you are the servant of the Queen, my friend, and I should feel hurt if anyone asked you for anything that you refused him. I do not do this because you cannot afford to make such presents; but, having been sent in haste, you had no time to bring such things. When you arrive at your destination, whatever arms or other articles you require, Aito Samuel, the agent appointed between you and myself, will supply them.

Between this and Koorata, Aito Samuel will also supply you with 5,000 dollars, to be spent in any way you like, except in a manner displeasing to God.

When the men shall be delivered to you, if God permit, I will come and wish you farewell; but if I am not able to come to you in person, I will give orders to have you sent to the frontier in safety and honour.

IOL, Eur. F 103, fol. 86, English translation. This letter bears the following note: "This is a translation of an Amharic letter which was sent by His Majesty to me with a request that it should be returned to him after it was translated into English." This was obviously done. The original has not surfaced in the years that have passed. Why Tēwodros asked for this letter to be returned to him is a mystery. It was probably written immediately after a long meeting between the king and Rassam on 4 February (Rassam, I, pp. 298–306). Rassam reports that the king had offered him money for his daily needs some days earlier and that he had then refused to accept it (pp. 276–277), which he now thought he had better do.

This letter is reproduced with the orthography of the English translation.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam [Feb. 1866]

ቆከህዕጥ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ጠመንጎ፡ ስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ዕለምላክ፡
 ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ቲፍጥሮስ፡ ደድረስ፡ ካቶ፡ ሐርም
 ዝርከስም፡ እንዲት፡ ሰነበት፡ ህ፡ እኒ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ርደመስገን፡ ደላና፡ ነኝ፡ ወንድሞችንንም፡ እ
 ነህኪምን፡ እንዲት፡ ሰነበታቸው፡ አለ፡ በልልጅ፡
 በፊጣሪያ፡ ኃይል፡ ካንተ፡ ከተሰየሁ፡፡ ይገንበሣ፡ ግ
 ልገሱች፡፡ ዕየወረቦ፡ ልጅ፡ ማርኪ፡ ሠድጀልሃሰሁ፡
 የናንተን፡ ደህና፡ መግባት፡ አደምጣሰሁ፡ ብዬ፡
 ሚጢ፡ ከሚገል፡ አገር፡ ላይ፡ መጥቶ፡ ሠፍራሐ
 ሰሁ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ቢል፡ እንገናኛለን፡ በታ
 ነኳ፡ መሸገር፡ አምሮኛል፡፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, the doctor and his companion, on my behalf, "How have you been?"

By the power of my Creator, since I parted from you I have captured two lion cubs and one young antelope, and have sent them to you. Hoping to learn of your safe arrival I have come to a district called Mēçha and set up camp [there]. If it is God's will, we shall meet. I would like to cross over by boat.



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 34, Amharic original. Tēwodros had sent Rassam ahead to Qorata, where the envoy received this letter by the hands of the two courtiers called *Lij Kasa* and *Lij Abitew* on 16 Feb. (Rassam, II, pp. 1-2).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam [Feb. 1866]

በሰላም፡ እብ ወወልድ፡ መሠና፡ ስ፡ ቀዳሱ፡ ፩ አምላክ፡ ግድዓ
ነገሥተ ተዎድሮ ከ ደረሰ፡ ከ አቶ፡ ስርዎዝ፡ ርከአም
፡ እንዲሁ ሰነበት፡ እኔ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይህ
፡ ገና፡ ሐዘም፡ ብሎ፡ ግና፡ አቶ፡ ጥረዩን፡ ወግድሞት
ኾን፡ እንዲሁ ሰነበታችሁ፡ ስለ፡ በሰልጋ፡ የሌሎችም
አክክሮች፡ ባሉትም፡ አክክሮች፡ የምትወዳችሁ
ን፡ ሁሉ፡ እኔ፡ ስለግሳሱ፡ እነኩን ሱል፡ ተፈቱ፡ ይ
ሰላም፡ አክክሮች፡ አቶ ጥሰው፡ አውነት፡ ጠልታችሁኛ
ል፡ መከሰ፡ የእንግሊዝ፡ ልጅ፡ ሁሉ፡ ብትልክላችኛ
ምላሽ፡ ብነሳችሁ፡ እንዲሁ ስ፡ እንደቀርቅብሱ፡ የታ
ሰቁቱን፡ ግሥት፡ ታሰቁን፡ ሰው፡ እውነተኛውን፡
አቶ፡ ሐዘምዝ፡ ርከአምን፡ ወዲህን፡ እንደገና
አረገኝ፡ ይህን ስ፡ ሰው፡ ከወዲህም፡ ከግሥተቱ፡
አሰው ድድል፡ አንተም፡ ወዲህም፡ እኔም፡ ይህ
ን፡ ከሰማሁ፡ ወዲህ፡ አጥብቄ፡ መደሁት፡ በእግዚአብ
ሔር፡ ኃይል፡ አንተ፡ ባትመጣ፡ እኔ ህን፡ ሰዎች፡ መገን
ይስፈታችሁ፡ ነበረ፡ አንተን፡ ባሳገጥሁ፡ የናንተ
ን፡ ወዲህ ገና፡ ሂት፡ አገኘው፡ ነበረ፡ እናንተን፡ እኔ
ን፡ በቆቅሮ፡ ሰመገናኒት፡ ደበቃኝን፡ ሰው፡ ከላይም፡
ፈጠረ አቶን፡ ይውደድራን፡ ከታችም፡ ፍጡሮቹ፡
እንደ ደደው፡ ወረታውን፡ ሰመመሰክ፡ ይብቃችኛ፡
ይብረ፡ ታሰር፡ ይሁትን፡ ረገጃች፡ ወዲህ ገና፡ ሁሉ፡
መጥታችሁ፡ ተገናኙት፡ ብዬ፡ ልክ አሰሁ፡ ልጅ
አብተውን፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Risam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prido), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

Well then, I shall decorate (lit. dress) all the servants you like, whether they are present or not. Do not be angry with the servant who said that the consul and his companions had been released. For when it seemed to me that you really hated me, and I refused to write replies, and when you sent me all the servants of the English, he brought about my meeting [with you], my true friend, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, the great queen's great man, by saying [to him], "Do not worry; do not go away." See to it that this man is loved by the queen for my sake from now on, and you, too, love him for my sake. Ever since I heard this, by the power of God, I, too, liked him very much.

If you had not come, who would have had these people released? And unless I had met you, how (lit. where) would I have found your friendship?

May our Creator on high and we His creatures below love the man who made it possible for us, you and me, to meet each other in friendship. May He make it possible for me to return his favour. I have sent *Lij* Abitew to tell all the foreigners, my friends, at Debre Tabor to come and meet you.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 36, Amharic original. This letter was received 21 February by the hand of a messenger named Haylu. He had carried letters from Massawa for Rassam, who called him "the most upright of all the messengers who had been employed between the King and myself". The "servant" referred to was Muḥammad Sihawī, who had deceived Rassam about the release of the prisoners while he was still at Massawa (Rassam, I, pp. 95-97; II, pp. 8-10, 50). The writer has "him" in the last sentence because it is direct speech; the reference is obviously to Rassam himself, not to "the servant concerned", as interpolated by Girma-Selassie, Appleyard and Ullendorff (*Amharic Letters*, no. 8).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 25 Feb. [1866]

በከመ፡ ኣብ ወወልድ፡ ወመን፡ ልኩ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ፊላም ላክ፡ ንጉሠ ፡
 ነገሥቱ፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ደድረኩ፡ ከእቶ፡ ሐርምዝ፡ ርስእም፡
 እንዲት፡ ሰነበት ህ፡ እኔ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ደመስገን፡ ይ
 ሳኖ፡ ነገ፡ ህኪም፡ ብሎ፡ ግኖን፡ አቶ፡ ጥሪ ይን፡ ወንድሞ
 ቾኸን፡ እንዲት፡ ሰነበታችሁ፡ አሰ፡ በልልኝ፡ ቀድሞ
 ምክላውቀት፡ ሰይጣን፡ ነው፡ እንጂ፡ እንዲህ፡ ይረገግ
 አውቂ፡ ደደረግሁት፡ ጉዳይ፡ የሰኘሞ፡ እሁንም፡ ይል
 ተበላሹ፡ ሰቃ፡ እንዲሉ፡ አሹ፡ እቶ፡ ሣሙኤል፡ እየረሰ
 ጉይሥ ጥልኝ፡ የተበላሹ፡ ቢኖር፡ እንግሥቲቱን፡ ወ
 ዳጅነት፡ አገገቻ፡ የኖንት፡ የገታችሁ፡ ፍቅር፡ ይበ
 ቃላት ል፡ ገገኝ፡ ከብሔን፡ ገገ፡ አካለቱን፡ እክሣ
 ቻኝላሁ፡ በጌታየ፡ ኃይል፡ የረደን፡ ነገር፡ ግን፡ እ
 ሳኪአብሔር፡ ይህኖ፡ ሰመድረኩ፡ ከኖንት፡ በ
 መገኛት፡ ሣለበቃቸው፡ እውነት፡ አድርጋችኋ
 ልን፡ አሳደረጋችሁም፡ ብላችሁ፡ ጠይቃችሁ፡ ከቃ
 ላቸው፡ ታገኛታላችሁ፡ የኖንትን፡ አጣሁት፡
 መሰሎኝ፡ ተስፋ፡ ቆርጫ፡ ነው፡ እንጂ፡ መቻ፡ እግ
 ዲህ፡ ክፍ፡ ሥራ፡ እሠራ፡ ነበረ፡

በየካቲት፡ በ፲፱ ቀን፡ ተጣፈ፡፡



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Risam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prido), your brothers, on my behalf, "How have you been?"

It was Satan who in the first place made me do what I did in my ignorance; but there is nothing [bad] that I have done deliberately.

And now, if there are any undamaged articles, be it so, let *Ato* Samu'el look for them and hand them over on my behalf. If anything is found damaged, I shall give compensation, for it will be enough for me to obtain the friendship of the three of you, let alone that of the queen. I will, by the power of my Lord, compensate you from my property (lit. house), if not with my body.

As for the question of those [prisoners], however, ask them, when God makes it possible for them to arrive safely and meet you, whether indeed they did [wrong] to me or not, and you will find out from their own words. I had given up hope, thinking that I had lost your friendship, otherwise how would I have done such an evil thing?

Written on the 19th day of Yekkatit.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 37, Amharic original. The date was mistakenly rendered 16 Yekkatit in the translation and in later printed versions (Rassam, II, p. 12). Rassam probably confused this letter with a short note which he had received three days earlier (Rassam, II, p. 10), which was preserved in an Amharic copy and which read, "By the power of God, I am very happy to hear about your health and well-being until now. Written on the 16th day of Yekkatit." (IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 88).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 28 Feb. [1866]

በከመ፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመን፡ረከ፡ቀደስ፡ፊት፡አምላክ፡ንጉሠ፡
 ነገሥት፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ይድረከ፡ከአቶ፡ሕርም፡ዘርከአም፡
 አንዲት፡ሰነበት፡ህ፡እኔ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ይመሰግን፡ይህ
 ና፡ኃጃ፡፡እነህኪምን፡ወንድሞቻችን፡እንዲሳሰኑ፡ሰነበታ
 ቻሁአለ፡በልልጃ፡፡የሻሰቃ፡ወልድ፡ጋብር፡ተልከ፡ሰ
 መጣ፡ሰው፡ገንዘብ፡እንድሰጥ፡ፍቅድልግ፡ብሉሃል
 ብሉ፡ነገረኝ፡እግዚአብሔር፡መርጦ፡ደሳቃቸው፡የ
 ታላቂቱ፡የእንግሊዝ፡ነግሥት፡ሉሊ፡፡በእግዚአብ
 ሔር፡ኃይል፡የኔ፡ወዳጅ፡ምን፡ይቸገርህብኛ፡እግ
 ዚአብሔር፡ከሚጠላው፡ጉዳይ፡በቀር፡ፈቅጆልሃ
 ለኔ፡እኔ፡ይሁ፡የሚልክን፡ሁሉ፡አድርግ

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, the doctor and his companion, on my behalf, "How have you been?"

Yeshaleqa Welde Gabir has told me that the servant of the great queen of England, whom God has chosen and exalted, has asked me to permit him to give money to the man who came as a messenger. By the power of God, my friend, why should you be so concerned? I give you permission, except for anything that is displeasing to God. So be it, do whatever pleases you.

Written on the 22nd day of Yekkatit.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

በየካቲት፡በጽፎታ፡ተጠፈ።



IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 38, Amharic original. The issue here is that Rassam, anxious not to offend Tēwodros, had asked whether it was permissible for him to reward the messengers.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 6 March [1866]

በሰሙ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቀዱስ፡ ፊት፡ አምላክ፡
 ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ ይድረስ፡ ከአቶ፡ ሐሮ
 ምዝ፡ ርስ፡ አምላካዊ፡ ሰነድ፡ ህጻኔ፡ አገዚአብሔር
 ር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይህኖ፡ ነገሥት፡ ሀኪም፡ ብሉግ፡ ሳኖ፡ አቶ
 ጥሪ፡ ይን፡ ወጥቶ፡ ሞቻኸን፡ እንዲት፡ ሰነድ፡ ታችሁ
 አሉ፡ በልጅ፡ አገዚአብሔር፡ ይህኖ፡ ቢአደርሳቸው
 ሰዎቹ፡ ሲገቡ፡ እንመክራለን፡ እኼ፡ ከኔ፡ መልካም፡ ግ
 ም፡ ጃ፡ ብሏል፡ ለግሳሥ፡ ከገበያም፡ አይውል፡ ካገራች
 ን፡ እንደልገዛ፡ አንት፡ ከሠጠኸኝ፡ ግም፡ ጀቶ፡ ስጥም
 ጆቶ፡ ሠድጃሁ፡ ከነገበራቸው፡ የሚአሰመሠ፡ ግን፡
 ቢሆን፡ አሠጥቶቸው፡ ልበሱልኝ፡ የሚአሳማ፡ ግን
 ቢሆን፡ ይኔ፡ ስፍራት፡ ያንቲሰፍረት፡ ነው፡ ሆኖ፡ ለክብ
 ግ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Risam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

If God helps them to arrive safely, very well, we shall confer when the people arrive. When I looked for some fine silk in my house (lit. from myself), I could not find any. It was not to be had in the market, so I could buy none in our country. From the silks that you gave me, I have sent three pieces together with their linings. If they deserve praise, have them tailored and wear them for my sake, but if it will cause derogatory remarks let me know, for your humiliation is my humiliation (lit. my humiliation is your humiliation).

Written of the 28th day of Yekkatit.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

በየካቲት፡ በጳጵቲ፡ ቀን፡ ተጣፈ፡



IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 40, Amharic original; fols 95v–96r, English translation. Rassam calls this “a startling letter” because of the reference to a consultation to take place when the prisoners arrived from Meqdela. He attributes what he felt was a first change in Tēwodros’s attitude to news that Dr. Charles Beke had arrived at Massawa, on his way to the king to plead on behalf of the captives (Rassam, II, pp. 21–23). Though Beke had written to Tēwodros on 29 January to announce his coming (see no. 195), it seems improbable that this alone could have caused the king to change his attitude towards Rassam.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 9 March [1866]

በአመ፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመንፈስ፡ቅዱስ፡ፊአምላክ፡
 ንግሥት፡ሃገራት፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ደብረሰ፡ካቶሎሎስ፡
 ወርቅስ፡አንዲት፡ሰነበተህ፡እኔ፡አገዚአብሔር
 ደመሰገን፡ደህኖ፡ነኝ፡። ሀኪም፡ብሉ፡ግናን፡አቶ፡
 ጥሪዩን፡ወንድሞቻችን፡እንዲት፡ሰነበተሁ፡
 ፡አለ፡በልልኝ፡። በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል፡ሞቻችን
 ፡መጡ፡እጋ፡ራሳሉም፡ሳክብኝ፡። እኔም፡ደስ፡አ
 ሰኝ፡እኖንተንም፡ደስ፡ደበሰሁ፡። ሀኪም፡
 ደህኖሰት፡ብሉ፡አለ፡ብሉ፡ደሸሰኛ፡ወልድ፡ጋብ
 ር፡ነገረኝ፡እኛ፡አቶ፡ሣሙኤል፡ደዘሰት፡ደገከ
 ግሰ፡እነዚያ፡ደህኖሲገቡ፡ሣገረኛችሁ፡ሳ
 ኩብኝ፡በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል፡እንድንጠወ
 ት፡።

የመጋቢት፡መገቻ፡ዓርብ፡ተገባ፡።



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Risam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

By the power of God, *Aggafari* Golem has sent a message to me that our people have arrived. I am happy. May you be happy, too. *Yeshaleqa* Welde Gabir has told me that you had requested that the doctor should go to him.

Very well, let *Ato* Samu'el take him and hurry up. When those [people] have arrived safely and have met you, tell me, so that, by the power of God, we may have a friendly talk.

Written on Friday, the first of Meggabīt.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 41, Amharic original; fol. 96r, English translation. Rassam's translation has "Consul Cameron" in brackets to explain for whom the assistance of the doctor had been requested (Rassam, II, pp. 26-27).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 14 March 1866

በሰሙ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወወግረ፡ ትኩረት፡ ስጋምላክ፡
 ግጥ፡ ሃገሥት፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ ደድረሱ፡ ካቶ፡ ህርም፡
 ረስአም፡ እግደት፡ ሰነበት ህ፡ እኔ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ይመስገን፡ ደህና፡ ነኝ፡ ፡ ሀኪም፡ ብሉግና፡ አቶ
 ጥሪ ዩን፡ ወግድሞቻችን፡ እግደት፡ ሰነበታች
 ሁ፡ አለ፡ ስልጣን፡ ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ቸርነት፡ በኒ
 ና፡ በግገሥቲቱ፡ በቢክቶርያ፡ ሀብት፡ ወደጆ፡
 ፍታልኝ፡ ደህና፡ ሰዎች፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃ
 ይል፡ ደህና፡ መምጣታቸውን፡ ከኖንት፡ መገና
 ገታቸውን፡ ሰዎች፡ እጅግ፡ ደስ፡ አለኝ፡ ፡ እኔ፡ ወ
 ደጆ፡ ግገሥቲቱ፡ የሰብኝኝ፡ ፈቃድ ምን፡ አደረግ
 ሁ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ ፡ አሁንም፡ ወደጆ፡ ግገ
 ሥቲቱ፡ የሠደዱልኝ፡ ይብደቤ፡ እገደህ፡ ይሳል
 አቶ፡ አርም፡ ረስአምን፡ የአደን፡ ሹም፡ የነበረው
 ግ፡ አማኞች፡ ሉሊዮን፡ (ወደጆን)፡ ሠድጆ ሞሁና፡ ፡
 (ከኛ፡ የምትፈልገውን፡ ሁሉ፡ ጉዳይ፡ ክርሱ፡ ጋር፡
 ፡ ተማክር፡ እርሱ፡ ደረግላል፡ ብለው ገኛል፡ ፡ አሁን
 ም፡ እኔ፡ የምፈልገው፡ እውር፡ ነኝና፡ ዓይኔ፡ እገደ
 በራ፡ ጥበብ፡ ነው፡ ፡ ፡ አሁንም፡ አግተን፡ ደስ፡ እን
 ደለህ፡ እኔንም፡ ደስ፡ እገደሰኝ፡ በእግዚአብሔ
 ር፡ ኃይል፡ ብልህ፡ ልክህ፡ እስመጣልኝ፡ ፡ የግ
 ገሥቲቱንም፡ ቃል፡ ገልብጠህ፡ የሠጠኸኝን፡
 ሠድጆ ለሁ፡ እገድት ሰሙት፡ ብዬ፡ ፡ ፡ እኔህን፡
 ስራታ ሀቸውን፡ ሰዎች፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡
 እውነት፡ አዋረደችሁትን፡ አላዋረደችሁትም፡
 ብለህ፡ ጠይቃቸው፡ ወግድሞቻችን፡ ይዘህ፡ እን
 አቶ፡ ጥልፍ፡ ማየርን፡ ርቢሞረህ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prido), on my behalf, "How have you been?" I rejoiced greatly, when I heard that, by the grace of God and the resources of Victoria, the queen, and myself, the men of whom she said, "My friend, release [them] for my sake," had, by the power of God, arrived safely and had met you. I have, by the power of God, carried out the (lit. her) request which my friend, the queen, conveyed to me.

Now, the letter which my friend, the queen, had dispatched to me says this: "I have sent to you my trusted servant and friend, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who was the governor of Aden." She told me, "Consult with him about all that you want from us; he will do it for you."

Now, what I require is knowledge, so that my eyes may be enlightened, for I am blind. But now, so that I may be happy just as you are happy, by the power of God, write and have [skilled men] sent to me. I am sending the queen's letter which you had copied and given to me, so that you may hear it. Ask these people whom you have had released, in the presence of (lit. taking with you) your brothers, in-

fol. 45r

ዕለሃው ከጠፈጠረ በጊዜ ከጊዜ ላይ ሳህተት ፡
 ጌታ ከተወለደ በኋላ ከጊዜ ላይ ሳህተት በዘመ
 ኑሃር ቶሱ በወርሀ ስምጋቢት በጊቀን ተጠፈ፡፡



fol. 45v

cluding Mr. Waldmeier (Wald Mayer) and his companions, whether, by the power of God, they have indeed insulted me or not.

Written 7358 years after the creation of the world, 1858 years after the birth of the Lord, in the year of Mark, in the month of Meggabīt, on the sixth day.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 45, Amharic original; fol. 96v, English translation. The parentheses in the Amharic text indicate passages to which Rassam took exception. The queen had not called Rassam *wedaj* (friend), and the words *keñña yemitifelligewin*, i.e. "Consult with him . . ." are annotated in the margin, "no instructions thus".

This letter can be regarded as Tēwodros's official request for an indemnity. The passage in Queen Victoria's letter which he quotes to support his request actually runs, "And so, not doubting that you will receive Our servant Rassam in a favourable manner, and give credit to all that he shall say to you on Our part, as well as comply with the requests which he is instructed to make to you, We recommend you . . ." Since no Arabic or Amharic version of the queen's letter is preserved in Rassam's collection in the archives (one might well ask why), we cannot be certain at what stage the mistranslation took place. The members of the mission all provide different versions of the translation procedure. Rassam makes Prideaux, Samu'el, the king's secretary Ingida, and one of his own interpreters responsible for the translation of the queen's letter (Rassam, II, pp. 32, 36-37); Prideaux passes over his own and the interpreter's eventual participation in silence, and implies that three of the king's employees were responsible (Markham, p. 99); Blanc simply states that the translation was made by Rassam into Arabic, and then by Samu'el from Arabic into Amharic (Blanc, pp. 129-130). See also Waldmeier, *Autobiography*, pp. 88-91. Whether Tēwodros ever found out that he had misquoted Queen Victoria is not known; Rassam apparently did not want to take the risk of informing him.

ሰው ይሰደዱልኝ፡ ብዬ፡ የጭቅር፡ ደብዳቤ፡ ሠጥቻ፡
 ሰደዱሁ ት፡፡ ከወደያ፡ ተላክሁ፡ ብሎ፡ የመጣበትን፡ ከ
 ዚህ፡ ተማክሮኝ፡ የሄደበት፡ ጉዳይ፡ ትቶ፡ ከቱርኮች፡
 ከማይወዱኝ፡ ሰዎች፡ ሂደ፡ ሲሰጥር ደኝ፡ ሢሆንቀኝ፡ ሰ
 ንብቶ፡ መጣ፡፡ የሠጠሁህ፡ የጭቅር፡ ደብዳቤ፡ ምላሹ
 ሂት፡ አለ፡ ምን፡ ይዘህ፡ መጣህ፡ ብዬ፡ ብጠይቀው፡ እንጂ
 አላሁ፡ ቅም፡ አለኝ፡ እንግዲያ ከየወደጁም፡ ስራ፡ አይደ
 ሰህ፡ ብዬ፡ በፈጣሪ የኃይል፡ አሠርሁት፡፡ ይኸን፡ አሉ፡
 ቢልህ፡ በቃሉ፡ ጠይቀው፡

የባርደልም፡ ነገር፡ ከፈረንሲስ፡ ንጉሥ፡ ሳከተዋው
 ቅህ፡ ብሎኝ፡ እሺ፡ ብዬ፡ ብሠደው፡ አስከሰክሉ፡ እኞ
 ቢብሉ፡ ሠደደኝ፡ ብሎ፡ ሆጠ፡ ብሸው፡ እገዛአብሔ
 ር፡ አለኝ፡ ብዬ፡ ገም፡ ብዬ፡ ተቀምጧል፡ ሣለ፡ ፈረንሲስ፡
 ነው፡ መክረርን፡ ጭታ፡ አለኝ፡፡ ከወደያ፡ ሳከተዋው
 ቅህ፡ ብሰህ፡ ሂደህ፡ አስከሰክሉ፡ ሠደደኝ፡ አልህ፡ የሚ
 ገ፡ ወደጁ፡ ብዬ፡ ነው፡ የምፈታው፡ አይሆንም፡ አልሁት፡
 በዚህ፡ ተቆጥቶ፡ ካደባባይ፡ ሸማውን፡ ታጥቆ፡ የነበረ
 ወን፡ ፈትቶ፡ ተከናኘ፡፡ በዚህ፡ ተቆጥቶ፡ አሠርሁት፡
 በጊታዩ፡ ኃይል፡ አሉ፡ ቢልህ፡ ጠይቀው፡፡ ይህን፡ ሁሉ፡
 የሚሠድቡኝ፡ አልሠሙም፡ አልነገሩ አቸዉም፡ ብዬ
 አይደለም፡ እወዳቸው፡ አቆሳምጣቸው፡ ነበርና፡
 ወደጁ፡ ጋሽ፡ ነው፡ የመክተልኝ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃ
 ይል፡ ብዬ፡ ነው፡ የጠላኝቸው፡

I agreed and rejoiced. According to the custom of my country, I enjoyed doing everything (lit. I did everything that pleased me) for them, for Bardel and for him.

The Turks have seized my country from me and have become my enemies, but I have no ships and cannot match them at sea. So, by the power of God, I gave him a letter of friendship and sent him, asking [the queen] to send someone to me to receive the gifts that I would send as well as my envoy (lit. servant). He abandoned the business for which he had come—claiming that he had been sent from beyond [the sea]—and about which he had consulted with me here and returned after having gone to the Turks, people who do not love me, and after having spent some time there humiliating and slighting me.

When I asked him, “Where is the answer to the letter of friendship I gave to you, and what have you brought in return?” he said, “What is that to me! I do not know.” Then I said to myself, “You are not the servant of my friend, the queen,” and by the power of my Creator, I imprisoned him. If he denies this to you, question him personally.

fol. 43v

As to the matter of Bardel, when he told me that he wanted to introduce me to the French king, and I agreed and sent him off, he came back and said that [the king] had refused him [an audience] and sent him back.

When I said to myself, “I depend on God,” and kept my calm, he told me to release Mackerer (Mekrer) because he was a Frenchman. I refused, asking myself whose friend was he [Bardel] that I should release him [Mackerer], since he had said that he had been refused [an audience] and sent away, although he had gone there saying that he wished to introduce me [to the king]. Angered at this, he untied the *shemma* with which he had girded himself in my presence (lit. court) and covered his head with it. Angry at this, I imprisoned him. By the power of my Lord, if he denies this, question him.

It is not that I think that they have not heard or been told of all the insults I have suffered (lit. the insulting of me). But it is because I used to love them and to cherish them, so they should have defended me, for a friend is a shield. This, by the power of God, is why I have come to hate them. And now, by the power of God, since I love the queen and you, her fellow-countrymen, am I to go back and hate these [others]!

አሁንም፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ሕይወት፡ ግግራ ለቅኝቱ አገር ምን፡
 ሰው፡ እኛን ተገን፡ እየወደድሁ፡ እኔ ነህን፡ እንደገና፡ ተሰጠልኪ
 የምጠላቸው፡ ነኝ፡ ከንጹህ፡ አስተርቀኝ፡ በድብ፡ እንደሆ
 ነ፡ እየብኝና፡ ልካሰ፡ ተበድብ፡ እንደሆነ፡ ርቆቀር፡ ካሳ፡ ጸከ
 ክሱኝ፡፡

Have me reconciled [with them] from the heart. If I have done wrong, judge me and let me make amends. If I have been wronged, have [them] make amends to me as a friendly compensation.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.



fol. 44r

IOL, Eur F 103, fols 43–44, Amharic original; fol. 96v–98r, English translation. This formal and detailed indictment of the detained Europeans was prepared for Rassam in view of their trial, which took place on 15 March, three days after their arrival from Meqdele. Because statements referred to in the text are rendered in direct speech in the Amharic, and the persons involved are often referred to simply as ‘he’ and ‘they’, it is not always entirely clear to whom the writer is referring. Though Rassam, in the words of Girma-Selassie, Appleyard and Ullendorff (no. 16), “frequently does not reflect the Amharic original in its literal sense (for obvious reasons), he almost invariably grasps the gist accurately”. This is certainly the case with regard to this document, which Rassam must have discussed with several of the people involved, who were all gathered for the “trial”. The description of the double-barrelled long-range rifle is slightly confusing, inasmuch as the number “one” follows after “*hulett af terazami*”, probably to avoid two numbers following each other.

Bardel was a French adventurer who had accompanied Consul Cameron to Ethiopia and posed as his secretary—hence Tēwodros’s reference to him as Cameron’s deputy (*wekīl*) and Cameron as the superior or principal (*aynetēñña*). Mackerer, also a Frenchman (his name may originally have been Macraire), had entered Ethiopia as a gunsmith in the service of Nigusē, but had soon moved on to serve Tēwodros. See Rubenson, *Survival*, pp. 193, 222–231 and *passim*.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 18 March [1866]

በስሙ፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወሀዕን፡ፈስ፡ቅዱስ፡ፊልሎ፡ከ፡ጌዳሞላክ፡ንጉሠ
 ነገሥት፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ደድረሰ፡ካዳ፡ሐርም፡ዛ፡ፈስአም፡አንዲ
 ተ፡ሰነበት፡ህ፡እኔ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ይመሰግን፡ይህኖ፡ኖኝ፡ሀኪም
 ፡ብሎ፡ገኛ፡አቶ፡ፕሪንሲ፡ወንድሞቻችን፡እግዲቶ፡ሰነበት፡ቶ
 ሁ፡እለ፡በልልኝ፡የነኪምሮን፡ጎን፡ወደጆቻችን፡ብዬ፡ሃ
 ቆላምጣቸው፡በድለውኝ፡መገኜታቸው፡እኛ፡አንድ፡አንድ
 ት፡አወቃቸውልን፡እንጂ፡፡በእግዚአብሔር፡በታች፡
 ሥለታለቂቱ፡ኅግሥት፡ሥለወደጆ፡ሥለ፡ቢክዳር
 ደ፡ይቅር፡ምንተ፡እግዚአብሔር፡ታርቂልላሁ፡በእግዚአ
 ብሔር፡ኃይል፡ይከ፡አሠንጉላ፡የላክህግኝን፡ቃል፡
 እጅኸን፡እግርኸን፡ገብቶ፡የምሥመህ፡ነኝኖ፡መ
 ኅታችሁ፡ተገኛችኋል፡እንድንመካከር፡፡የነኪምሮን፡
 ታከረው፡የነበሩት፡እኛት፡ምኸት፡ዘመዶች፡አልቀሰ
 ሁ፡የላክህግኝን፡በእግዚአብሔር፡ኃይል፡ሥለታለ
 ቂቱ፡ኅግሥት፡ሥለወደጆ፡ሥለቢክዳር፡ታርቂ
 ላቸዋለሁ፡ሁሉንም፡በፈጣሪአቸን፡ኃይል፡ሥ
 ንገኛችኋል፡እንመካከር፡አሁን

በመጋቢት፡ገብቆን፡እሁድ፡ተጣፈ፡፡



Written on Sunday, the tenth day of Meggabit.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prído), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

As for the matter of Cameron (Kēmiron) and his companions, now that you have recognized on our behalf that they have been found to have offended me, when I considered them my friends and cherished them, under God I am reconciled, saying, "I forgive them, for the sake of the great queen, for the sake of my friend Victoria, and for God's sake."

By the power of God, you have made me happy with the message you have sent me, and I bow and kiss your hands and feet; therefore come and meet me so that we may consult with each other.

As for what the weeping mothers, wives, and families of Cameron and his companions, who had been detained, have written to me, by the power of God, for the sake of the great queen—for the sake of my friend Victoria—I am reconciled with them. We shall consult with each other about everything when, by the might of our Creator, we meet.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 46, Amharic original; fol. 89, English translation. This letter is written in reply to one from Rassam, in which he reported the outcome of the proceedings three days earlier, and held out hopes that he would assist Tēwodros in obtaining instructors on technical matters (Rassam, II, pp. 40–42).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 20 March [1866]

ጉዳይ፡ ሕግጃቶች፡ ወደዚህ፡ አሰፍሎቻችን፡ እንደሌሎች፡ ሆኖ፡ አቶም ሰጡ፡ ለገባችን፡ አልነገባችን
ለሆኑ፡፡ በመጋቢት፡ በ፲፪ ቀን፡ ተገባል፡፡

Because I have [some] business, I am passing this way. Remain where (lit. as) you are; do not come. When I get there, I will inform you.

Written on the 12th day of Meggabit.

IOL, Eur F, fol. 89v, Amharic copy; fol. 98v, English translation. The opening phrases were omitted from this copy, which Rassam indicates with the words "After compliments" in the translation. The originals of this and the following document are missing among the Rassam papers, probably because Rassam regarded their content as of little importance. According to Rassam, the business referred to had to do with the transport of some of Tēwodros's horses around the southern shores of Lake Tana to Zegē (Rassam, II, p. 53).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 21 March [1866]

በእግር እና በሌሎች፡ ሕይወት፡ ለደቆሁ፡ ልገና ፍቶሁ፡ እጅግ፡ ፍጥ ይሰጡ፡ ነበረ፡፡ አሁን፡ በጉዳ
የግብር ቀን፡ ፪ ቀን፡ እጅግ፡ ነገረሁ፡ ከመሰከር፡ አልነገባችን፡ ሆኖ፡ ለሆኑ፡ ፍቶሁ፡ ሆኖ፡
ፍጥ ይሰጡ፡ በእግር እና በሌሎች፡ ሕይወት፡ ለደቆሁ፡ ልገና ፍቶሁ፡ እጅግ፡ ፍጥ ይሰጡ፡ ነበረ፡፡ አሁን፡ በጉዳ
የግብር ቀን፡ ፪ ቀን፡ እጅግ፡ ነገረሁ፡ ከመሰከር፡ አልነገባችን፡ ሆኖ፡ ለሆኑ፡ ፍቶሁ፡ ሆኖ፡
በመጋቢት፡ በ፲፫ ቀን፡ ረቡዕ፡ ተገባል፡፡

By the power of God, I have been yearning to see you and to meet with you. Now I have gone on business to [a place] from where I shall return after staying for a day [or] two. When I return, I shall inform you for, by the power of God, I miss your friendship. May our Creator let us meet in safety, and give health to you, my friends, and to myself.

Written on Wednesday, the 13th day of Meggabit.

IOL, Eur F, fol. 89v, Amharic copy; fol. 98v, English translation, annotated "After compliments" as in the previous document.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 23 March [1866]

በሰላም፣ አብ፣ ወወልድ፣ ወመን፣ ፈክ፣ ቀደስ፣ ፀሐምሳ ክንጉሠ
 ነገሥት፣ ቴዎድሮስ፣ ደረከ፣ ካቶ፣ ህርም፣ ለገሥት፣ ለአምላክ
 ትሰጥህ፣ እኔ፣ አገዛዚ አብሐር፣ ይመከገግ፣ ይህኖ፣ ነገ፣
 ሀኪም፣ ብሎ፣ ግንኙ፣ አቶ፣ ጥሪ ይገኝ፣ ወኑ ድግሳኝ ገን፣
 እንደ ትሰጥህ፣ ስነ በታቸሁ፣ ስለ፣ በሰላም፣ በአገዛዚ አብሐር
 ሕይወ፣ በደህኖ፣ ተመሰገኜ፣ ከቤቲ፣ ገባሁ፣ ፈረሰ፣ ስቸን፣ ነገር
 ፣ የነበሩ ትግ፣ ልቀባል፣ ሂድ፣ ነበረ፣ እሁንም፣ አገዛዚ አብ
 ሐር፣ በጠጥ፣ ከወደ ጆቸ፣ ከኖንተ፣ ጋራ፣ ለመገኘት
 ደብቃኝ፣ ፊት፣ ለመገኘት ደቀው፣ አስራ አቸው፣ ለነበር
 ሁሉ ሰዎች፣ ከኖንተ፣ አከቲገኖቻልኝ፣ ድረከ፣ ከፈጣሪ
 አቸግ፣ ጠጥ፣ ሠጥተህ፣ አቶ ርሥወኝ፣ እያልሁ፣ እስ
 ምን፣ ነበረ፣ ዛሬ፣ ግን፣ ከሳይ፣ ሰንግሥቲቱ፣ በወደ
 ጆ፣ ከዚህ፣ የደሥታ፣ አበባ፣ ሰደዛችሁ ልኛ፣ ሰኖንተ
 አቶ ጠጥ፣ ሠጥተኝ፣ እያልሁ፣ እለም ናለሁ፣
 ፣ እኔን፣ የሚወደበት፣ ልቦኖ፣ ሠጥተኝ፣ እያልሁ
 አለም ናለሁ፣ ፈጣሪ አቸ ነገ፣ እኔ ግን፣ እንግሊዝ
 ዘቸን፣ እወደ ጆቸሁም፣ እጠላችሁም፣ በየሐገህ
 ኖ፣ በቡሳዲን፣ ጠይቃችሁ፣ አግኙት፣ በተቻለኝ፣
 እንደገራ፣ እንደቀሚ፣ ማቆሳመጡ፣ ሙወደዲን፣ አል
 ተውሁም፣ ነበረ፣ እኔ ያን፣ ሙወደዲ፣ ማቆሳመጡ፣
 የንግሥቲቱን፣ የኖንተን፣ ጭቀሮ፣ አገኝ፣ ሠል፣ ነው
 ፣ አሁንም፣ ወቅሮ፣ እፈልገው፣ የነበረ፣ ጭቀሮችሁ
 ተገኘልኝ፣ ሙከራኝ፣ በፈጣሪ አቸን፣ ሕይወ፣ እጅግ
 ደከ፣ ብሎ ኖሮ፣ ታግ ከኖች፣ ሠድ ጆሳችኋለሁ፣ ከ
 ሰቃ፣ እንግዲ፣ ጋራ፣ ኑኖ፣ እንደ ግንኙ ስሮ፣ እኔ ከንቲ
 ባም፣ እኖንተም፣

በመጋቢት በ፲፭ቀን ፋርብ ተጠፈ።



Written on Friday, the 15th day of Meggabit.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 47, Amharic original; fol. 99r, English translation. Aleqa Ingida was Tēwodros's chief secretary, entrusted with the royal seal and the king's papers. According to Rassam he was "a man of undoubted integrity", "implicitly trusted" by Tēwodros, (Rassam, II, pp. 55-56). The kentiba referred to was a former mayor of Gonder regarded as the foster-father of the king, who made him the baldereba of the Europeans at Gefat (Rassam, II, pp. 16-17, 56).

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

By the power of God, I have returned home safely. I had gone to take delivery of horses of mine, which had been in the countryside. And now may God enable us to meet you, my friends, in health. As for the people whom I did not like and whom I had earlier imprisoned, I used to pray to the Creator to keep them in health until they would be reunited with you. But now I pray for my friend the queen over there [and] for you here who have brought me a flower of happiness, saying, "Give them long life and health for my sake." I petition our Creator, saying, "Give them a mind with which to love me."

But whether I love you English or not, find out by inquiring into the affair of John (Yohannis) and Plowden (Buladin). I had not ceased to cherish them and to love them according to my ability and my country's means and my own. I loved them and cherished them so that I might obtain the queen's love and yours. And now, feeling that I have obtained your love, which I have always sought, by the power of our Creator, I am very happy. I have sent you boatmen, so come with Aleqa Ingida, both the kentiba's party and yourselves, so that we may consult.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 28 March [1866]

ደህና፡ ገባችሁን፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ ደህና፡ መግባታችሁን፡ ጤና፡ ማግኘታችሁን፡ ያሉሎ፡
 ላኩኝ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ ስመጋቢት፡ በ፳ ቀን፡ ረቡዕ፡ ቀጠሏ፡

Have you arrived safely, by the power of God? Write (lit. send) to me at once, by the power of God, about your safe arrival and whether you are in [good] health.

Written on Wednesday, the 20th day of Meggabit.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 90r, Amharic copy; fol. 99v, English translation. This is another of the brief notes (see nos 180 and 181) of which Rassam did not preserve the original. In his translation Rassam has added "at Korata" in parenthesis after the word "arrival".

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 30 March [1866]

በስሙ፡ አብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመኅረት፡ ቀዱስ፡ ስፊስ፡ ስምላክ፡
 ንጉሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ደረሰ፡ ነቶ፡ ህርሃዎ
 ገዢ፡ ለእኛ፡ እንዲት፡ ስንበትህ፡ እኔ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ርደመከገን፡ ደህና፡ ነኝ፡ ህኪሃም፡ ብሎ፡ ገን፡
 እቶ፡ ጥሪ፡ ይኑ፡ ወንድሞችኸን፡ እንዲት፡ ስንበ
 ታችሁ፡ እሱ፡ በሰልጣን፡ ሰጠክትና፡ ደህና፡ መግ
 በታችሁ፡ ሆሚጠይቅ፡ ደብዳቤ፡ ሠደጁ፡ ነበረ፡
 ኋላ፡ ገን፡ እንደጅ፡ እባተ፡ ደህና፡ መግባታችሁን፡
 መጥተው፡ ነገሩን፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ እ
 ጅግ፡ ይሰ፡ አሰኝ፡ ሆነክን፡ ቲባ፡ ደይ፡ ያዘከኝ
 ቸው፡ ደርሰላቸው፡ እንደሆነ፡ እንደት፡ ስናበ
 ቸ፡ ተሰናድታችሁ፡ ቆይ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃ
 ይል፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prido), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

The day before yesterday I sent a letter inquiring about your safe arrival. Afterwards *Lij* Abate and his companions came and told me that you had arrived safely. By the power of God, I am very pleased. In the matter of the *kentiba* and his companions, if what I ordered them [to do] has been completed by them, then be prepared to take your leave, by the power of God.

Written on Friday, the 22nd day of Meggabit.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.



በመጋቢት፡ በ፳ ርቀን፡ ለርብ፡ ተጠሏ፡

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 48, Amharic original; fol. 99v, English translation.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 4 April [1866]

በሐዎ፡፡ብ፡ ወ ወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ተዳሱ፡ ፊት፡ ስም፡ ስም፡ ስም፡
 ንጉሠ፡ ገሊጠት፡ ጉዳይ፡ ርስ፡ ደድረስ፡ ካቶሎክ፡ ህ
 ርዳዎዝ፡ ረስ ስም፡ አንዲት፡ ሰነበት ህ፡ እኔ፡ እግረ
 እብሔር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይህ ና፡ ነኝ፡ ፡፡ ሀኪም፡ ብ
 ሱ፡ ግን፡ ስቶ፡ ፕረድ፡ ወንድሞቻችን፡ አንዲ
 ት፡ ሰነበተችሁ፡ አሰ፡ በልልኝ ፡፡ ለጋ፡ ትቻ፡ ስ
 ጠፎ፡ ባጅቻ፡ ትንሣኤ፡ ብርሃኑን፡ እስታይ
 ፡ ድረስ፡ ቻኩሮ፡ አለሁና፡ ጸህኖ፡ አድርሰው፡
 ብለህ፡ እዘንፈኝ፡ በእግረ እብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ እኔም
 ስኖንተ፡ ገቢኖ፡ ለሆነልኝ፡ ብደ፡ እዝንሳቸኝ ለ
 ሁ፡

በመጋቢት፡ በጳጳሱ ጊዮርጊስ፡ ረቡዕ፡ ተጠፈ

27



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prido), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

I have refrained from meat, [and] while fasting I have become very tired, so I am eager to celebrate Easter (lit. see the light of His Resurrection). By the power of God, pray for me, saying, "May he arrive [there] in good health." And I shall pray for you, saying, "Give them health for my sake."

Written on Wednesday, the 27th day of Meggabīt.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

National Library, Addis Abeba, no number, Amharic original; IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 90r, Amharic copy; fol. 100r, English translation. How this letter came to be separated from the the king's other letters to Rassam and ended up in the National Library in Addis Abeba was not known to the library staff when they were consulted in 1990. The letter was omitted in Girma-Selassie, Appleyard and Ullendorff's *Amharic Letters*, apparently because it was available only in copy at the IOL.

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 7 April [1866]

በከሙ አብ ወወልድ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ ስእምላክ
 ንጉሠ ነገሥት ቴዎድሮስ ጌድረስ ክቶ ህር
 ምዝ፡ ረስ አም፡ እንዲት ሰነበት ህ፡ እኒ፡ እግዚአብ
 ሔር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይህኖ፡ ነኝ፡፡ ሀኪም፡ ብሉግ
 ን፡ አቶ፡ ፕሪደን፡ ወንድሞችኸን፡ እንዲት ሰ
 ነበቷቸው፡ እለ፡ በልልኝ፡፡ እግዚአብሔር፡
 ብርሃነ፡ ትንሣኤው፡ እውሎ፡ ለመገኘት
 ያብቃነ፡ ከወደጅቶ፡ ጋራ፡ የሠደድ ህልኝ፡ የፍቅ
 ር፡ በረከት፡ ሣጥኒ ቱን፡ ተቀብሎ፡ እጅግ፡ ደስ፡ እለ
 ን፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይስጥህ፡ ይኸውል፡ አብተው
 ከብታችሁን፡ አከቦ፡ በደምቢያ፡ ይዘላችሁ፡ ይሰፍ
 ፡ ከገብ፡ ኃይሉ፡ ነቶ፡ ሣሙኤል፡ እኖንተን
 ይዘው፡ ይምጡ፡ ወደኔ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይ
 ል፡፡

በመጋቢት በግብርና ተጣፈ፡፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

May God, having let us celebrate Easter (lit. see the light of His Resurrection), grant us to meet our (lit. my) friends. I have received the friendly gift, the nice little box which you sent me. We are very pleased; thank you. Now, let *Lij* Abitew take care of your animals and take them through Dembiya. Let *Kentiba* Haylu and *Ato* Samu'el bring you to me, by the power of God.

Written on the 30th day of Meggabīt.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 50, Amharic original; fol. 100r, English translation. This letter was accompanied by an oral message that Rassam should bring all the Europeans with him. This is of course implied in the letter as well: *Lij* Abitew was to take charge of the pack animals and proceed through Dembiya; no persons are mentioned. Rassam was well aware of this. As late as 23 March (no. 182) Tēwodros had specified that he wanted to have a meeting with the foreigners, *Kentiba* Haylu's party and Rassam's (*innkentibam innantem*). Nevertheless Rassam decided not to heed the instructions in order to avoid bringing the released prisoners face to face with the king. Instead he sent *Lij* Abitew to Tēwodros and asked him to give up the idea of meeting them. In so doing Rassam persevered in a policy he had followed ever since the prisoners had arrived from Meqdela, and that in spite of the king's repeated requests to see them in person (Rassam, II, pp. 27, 76-78).

This letter was written on Easter Eve according to the Ethiopian calendar. Easter according to the Gregorian calendar had occurred one week earlier (see no. 185).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 9 April [1866]

በከሙ ፡ አብ ፡ ወወልድ ፡ ወመንፈስ ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ ፊንቅ
 ስን ፡ ግድ ፡ ሠ ፡ ነገሥት ፡ ቴዎድሮስ ፡ ደድረከ ፡ ከአቶ ፡
 ህርምግ ፡ ረከአም ፡ እንዲት ፡ ሰነበት ፡ ህ ፡ እኔ ፡ እግዚ
 አብሔር ፡ ደመሰገን ፡ ደህኖ ፡ ነኝ ፡ ሀገረሁ ፡ ብሎ
 ግን ፡ አቶ ፡ ጥሪ ይገኝ ፡ ወጥቶ ፡ ሞቶኝ ፡ እንዲት ፡ ሰ
 ነበቻችሁ ፡ እስ ፡ በልልኝ ፡ ፡ በእግዚ አብሔር ፡ ኃ
 ደል ፡ የምሥራቅ ፡ ብርሃን ፡ ትግሥት ፡ ኢሳይያስ ፡ በ
 ደህኖ ፡ ዋልሁ ፡ ፡ እኖጥ ፡ ወደጀቶ ፡ እንዲት ፡ ህ
 ኖችሁ ፡ ዋላችሁ ፡ ደህኖ ፡ መዋላችሁ ፡ ግ ፡ ለግ
 ችሁ ፡ ግ ፡ ስንብ ፡ ፡ በእግዚ አብሔር ፡ ኃደል ፡ ፡

በግዛድ ፡ በ፪ ቀን ፡ ሰኞ ፡ ተገቢ ፡ ፡ ፡



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blog) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), on my behalf, "How have you been?"

By the power of God, good tidings! I have had a good Easter (lit. light of His Resurrection). How did you, my friends, spend it? Inform me, by the power of God, whether you spent it well, and how your health is.

Written on Monday, the 2nd day of Miyazya.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 51, Amharic original; fol. 100v, English translation.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

God's creature and slave, the son of David and of Solomon, King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach the queen of England, Victoria (Biktoriya), whom God has elected and exalted above all men and [whom he has] enthroned; who loves religion and friendship; who protects the oppressed [and] poor.

Concerning your servant Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam), of whom you told me that you had sent him on the matter of Cameron (Kēmiron), would I say no if you had sent me the slave of your slave? Very well, look, I have, by the power of God, released Mr. Cameron and handed him over to Mr. Rassam. By the power of God, I have released all the imprisoned Europeans whom you asked me to release for you, and handed them over together with all the Europeans who wanted to return to their country. Very well, by the power of God, I have handed [them] over.

The reason I have kept your servant Mr. Hormuzd Rassam is in order to correspond with (lit. send to) you, having consulted with him in accordance with what you said, "For all the things you want from us, consult with him." Since we, the people of Ethiopia, are blind, open our eyes for us, and may God give you light in heaven.

Written at Zegē in the year 7358 after the creation of the world, in the year 1858 after the birth of Christ, in the year of Mark, on the 10th day of Mīyazya.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

FO 95/725, no. 226 (no folio numbers), Amharic original, and English translation. The original was dictated to "the Chief Scribe" (*Aleqa Ingida*) by the king. Although the translation was also made in Ethiopia by Rassam and his staff in collaboration with Samu'el, the English text is not sealed as in the case of Tēwodros's letter of 29 January 1866 (no. 162). Several copies of the English text exist: FO 1/17, fol. 407–408; IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 5. It was first published in Rassam, II, p. 100, and in *Correspondence 1846–68*, p. 468. Rassam explains that the letter was dictated and translated word for word into Arabic in his presence at what he had hoped to be his last audience with Tēwodros. He was quite aware that the king was quoting a mistranslation of Victoria's letter (cf. no. 177), but once more decided not to raise the matter for fear of the king's wrath. See Rassam, II, pp. 99–101.

If we assume that Tēwodros was honest in his letter dated 10 April (no. 189), something must have happened that made him change his mind not later than the 13th, when he arrested Rassam and his two companions at Zegē (Blanc, pp. 153–155), and instructed *Bitwedded* Tedla to arrest the earlier prisoners and bring them back (no. 190).

Tēwodros to the relatives of the prisoners [17 April 1866]

በሰሙ እብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወሰን፡ ልክ፡ ቀዱስ፡ ፊርድ፡ አምላክ፡ ንጉሠ
ነገሥት፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ደድረሱ፡ ካዘገተኛቸው፡ ሁሉ፡፡
እንዴት፡ ሰጠታቸው፡ እኔ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይመስገን
ኅ፡ ይህኖ፡ ነኝ፡፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach all [of you] who are in distress. How have you been? I am well, thank God.

ያዘገተኛቸው፡ ሰጠታቸው፡ ታላቅ፡ ገብረ፡ ደሳለኝ፡ ሁሉ፡ ስለእኛ
ደረሰሁ፡ ርዕይ፡ በግግሥት፡ ተጠቢኝ፡ ነኝ፡ ወደጌ
የተፈቀደኝ፡ ሰጠኝ፡ ህርምት፡ ረከኝ፡ ሠጠሁ፡ ሰጠኝ፡
ጌ፡ ይጠሩ፡፡

As for the persons (lit. those) of whom you people in distress have said that they are imprisoned at Meqdela, I have released them, by the power of God and in friendship to Queen Victoria, and have, for your sake, handed them over to Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). Rejoice!

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.



FO 1/17, fol. 403, Amharic original; fol. 404, English translation. The Amharic original is undated, but the English text (*Correspondence 1846-68*, p. 466) has "Dated at Zegay, Anno Mundi 7358, and Anno Domini 1858, in the year of Saint Mark, and the 10th day of the Month Mazia (corresponding to the 17th April, 1866)." This agrees with the way Tēwodros's letter to Queen Victoria (no. 191) is dated, and there is no reason to doubt that they were written and dispatched at the same time (see also nos 193 and 195). Girma-Selassie, Appleyard and Ullendorff (*Amharic Letters*, no. 18) on the contrary assume that it was written in March.

The letter was written in reply to one from the relatives of Cameron and Stern, dated 30 July 1865 and given to Dr. Beke (see no. 195) to be handed over to Tēwodros (*Correspondence 1846-68*, pp. 371-372). It was forwarded to the Foreign Office on 18 April together with the letter to Victoria (*ibid.*, p. 466).

Tēwodros to Charles Beke, 27 May 1866

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God.

From the King of Kings, Theodorus, to Doctor Charles Theodore Beke. How are you? Thank God, we are quite well.

We have received your letter of the 3rd of April. We are sorry for what has befallen you at Hallai. Why did you go up there, when you knew there were disturbances in the country, without first asking us permission?

I have ordered the Chiefs in that neighbourhood to send you back to Massowah in safety; and if any accident happen to you, I shall hold them responsible, and I shall punish them according to their deserts.

I have already answered your first letter by Mr. Flad, and in my reply directed you to come viâ Matamma; but now on your return to Massowah, you are to remain there until I shall inform you what route you are to take. The prisoners, from whose families you brought a petition, I have released for the sake of my friend the Queen, and have made them over to Mr. Rassam, to take out with him when he leaves Abyssinia.

Dated at Zagay, on the 20th day of the month Ginbot, in the year of Saint Mark, 1858, corresponding with the 28th day of May, 1866.

LS

Beke, pp. 396–397. Beke felt “quite convinced” that this letter “never had an Amharic original, but was indited by Mr. Rassam and sealed with the Emperor’s seal.” He even ventured to guess that the handwriting was that of Lieutenant Prideaux (*ibid.*, p. 218). In fact Rassam reports that Tēwodros had asked him to arrange for the translation of the letter into English, and that he had passed it on to Prideaux (Rassam, II, pp. 110–111). The calculation of the date is wrong by one day, 20 Ginbot being 27 May.

The letter from Beke, to which the above is the reply, had arrived in the king’s camp on 27 April. Beke decided to be satisfied with the information that the prisoners had been released and returned to England, promising that the gifts which he had brought would be sent up with Flad on the latter’s return (*ibid.*, pp. 397–398).

This letter is reproduced with the orthography of the printed version.

ብቻ፡ ገባሮቻ፡ ቀሩ፡ በረሀብና፡ በደዌ፡ አስቁ፡ ተረጎሙ።
 በደ-ገሰ፡ ስው፡ የሰም፡ ጥቂት፡ ፍቸው፡ ዘር፡ እግዚእ፡ በጌ
 ለመገም፡ ሞተ። ሙረታ፡ ስበኔ፡ እገሳ፡ ሐመሐ፡ በረሀብና፡
 በሽፍታ፡ ጠፋ፡ ስው፡ የሰበትም። የጎንደር፡ ነገዳ፡ በሰራዊ፡
 ወደ፡ ሞተ፡ ይወርዳል፡ እንኛ፡ እገዳ፡ ቀድሞ፡ በዘበ፡ ጉዝ
 ደ፡ መገንደ፡ ለይወር ይሞ። ቀመኛ፡ ሽፍታ፡ በትግራይ፡
 ጅግ፡ በዘ፡ በሰዘ፡ እገዳ፡ ነገዳ፡ ባለገር፡ ከሀሳድ፡ ወደ፡ ተገደ
 ገዳ፡ ወደ፡ ሱመዳና፡ መሄድ፡ እያችሞ። ጉልበት፡ ምው፡ ሆ
 ሱ፡ በመቀመጥ፡ በተር፡ ሴባ፡ ጉዳይ፡ የሰው፡ ም። ። ።
 ። ። ። ። ።
 ተግራይ፡ ሳክታ፡ ሞገም፡ ሽፍታ፡ በሰዘበት፡ በደደገመገማ
 ቻ፡ ጎበዜ፡ የተያዘ፡ ይመስላል። ሐመሐ፡ ስራዌ፡ የሳባል
 ሳይሱ፡ ነው። ሽራ፡ የቴዎድሮስ፡ ነው። ከደለምት፡ ጀም
 ሮ፡ ነሐዘ፡ እርመጃ፡ የገሰ፡ ጎበዜ፡ ነው። በገምድር፡
 የቴዎድሮስ፡ ነው። ጎጃምና፡ ዳሞት፡ የተደሰ፡ ጊሱ፡ ነ
 ው። መገጨና፡ ዘጌ፡ ጠፍ፡ ነው። ደገቢያ፡ ከፍርታ፡ እስከ
 ደገገል፡ በር፡ ጠፍ፡ ነው። ወሎ፡ ከበሽሱ፡ ጀምሮ፡ እስከ፡
 ሸዋ፡ የገሰቶ፡ ነው። ከመሬ፡ ሳይገት፡ የትኩ፡ ብርሱ፡ ልጅ፡
 ነው። ሸዋ፡ የምገቢል፡ ነው። ሸዋ፡ እጅግ፡ ተገጥሞል፡ ስ
 ው፡ ሆሱ፡ ወደ፡ እርሱ፡ ስደት፡ ሚሂዳ፡

ይዘ፡ ደምና፡ ጅው፡ ተረክ፡ ነው።

fol. 195v

ተጽሕፈ፡ በሀሳድ፡ እምልደተ፡ እግዚእ፡ በገደገ፡
 ሳይገ፡ ጭቅት፡ በሐሰበ፡ እትዮጵያ፡

ይቤ፡ እስጋሽኛ፡ ዘብሐረ፡ ቀድባ፡

fol. 196r

Earlier, there were 360 tenants (*gebbar*) at Halay; but today only 60 tenants remain. They perished and were finished off by famine and disease. At Digsä there are no people; they are extremely few. Zera Igzi'i died from illness. Mereta Sebenē [and] Igela Hames have been destroyed by famine and bandits. The merchants of Gonder go down to Massawa via Serawē. They do not go down by the route of Akkele Guzay as before.

Robbers and bandits have become very numerous in Tigray. Because of this [even] the farmers, let alone the merchants, cannot go from Halay to Tehonda [and] Shumezana. All who are strong do nothing but rob (lit. have no other business than robbing).

Though there are many *shifṭa* there, Tigray and Lasta seem to be controlled by (the hand of) *Dejjazmach* Gobezē. Hamasēn and Serawē are Habal Haylu's. Shirē is under Tēwodros. Starting from Ṣelemṭ up to Armachiho is under Ṭiso Gobezē. Begēmdir is under Tēwodros. Gojjam and Damot are under Tedla Gwalu. Mēṣha and Zegē have been deserted. Dembiya, starting from Firqa up to Dengel Berr, has been deserted. Wello, starting from Beshilo up to Shewa is under the Galla. Amara Sayint is under the son of Tikku Birillē. Shewa is under Minilik. Shewa is prospering. Everyone is moving there.

This is the history of last year. Written at Halay in the year of Our Lord 1858 according to the Ethiopian calendar.

[So] says Asseggaheñ of the land of Wadla.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 195–196, Gi'iz/Amharic original; fol. 197, French translation (with omissions) by Antoine d'Abbadie. He has annotated "reçu 1867, Juin 9"; the letter was not written earlier than 18 April 1866 (Flad's departure for England) and most probably close to the end of the Ethiopian year. In Conti Rossini's text ("Epistolario", pp. 455–457) the word *lij* is omitted after Tikku Berillē. Asseggaheñ writes Minbīlik for Minilik to suggest an etymology for the name. He also spells Qwerāta rather than Qorāta. The letter follows up no. 160 with the attention to detail which is characteristic of *Debtera* Asseggaheñ.

Rufa'el Amarē to Antoine d'Abbadie [Sept. 1866]

ወ-ታ-ታ-ታ : ጸግግ : ገታ :
ከገጠኔወሰ : በሀገረ : ጾፊክ ጊዳ. 1866-
ገታዬ : ሆይ : ገታዬ

የሆዴገገ : ነገር : ሁሉ : ለሰው : ክንገረዋለሁ :
ገታክ : ሆይ : ሁሉን : ይኔገ : ነገር : ሁሉ : ለሰው :
ሰጥቼዋለሁ : ክገረ : ክዳ : መሰለሰ : ይዳገግ : ገታ :
ታዋ : ሆይ : ክዳ : በምዳር : ክዳ : በሰጣይ :
ገታዬ : ሆይ : ገታዬ : ክዳ : በሆኑ : ነገር : ገ :
ይ : መክረው : ገታዬ : ገታዬ : ገታዬ : መክረው :
የነገነገር : ገታዬ : ሆይ : ይዳ : ክንገረዋለሁ : ክን :
ምን ክንገረዋለሁ : በገዳም : ነገር : ይከገሩ : ገታዬ :
ም : ክገታ : የውቃት : ክንገረ : ይከገሩ : ይዳ : ክን :
ለሰው : የጠፋኑ : በገታ : ምንገታ : በዚህ : ግንባ :
የገንጠላ ሰጣ : የዚህ : ክን : ክገረዋለሁ : ለሰው :
በሁሉ : ነገር : ምንገር : ክገረዋለሁ :

May this letter reach Master Antoine (Inጥጥ) in the city of Paris.

O my master! How are you? I will tell you, O my master, all that I have in my heart. I have entrusted all my matters to you. Please, my master, arrange for me to return to my country. O my master, please on earth, please in heaven! Please, my master, consider everything.

Consult with Petoral about my affairs. My master, you say, "What have I to do with the affairs of the monastery? The abbot knows." But I am writing to you because no one here understands my language. This is why I ask for your advice in everything.

Abba Rufa'el Amarē, the Abyssinian.

I have written in haste, [so] my handwriting is bad.

ክገ : ገታዬ : ክገጠኔወሰ : ክገጠኔወሰ :
ታዎይ : ክገጠኔወሰ : ክገጠኔወሰ :
ክገጠኔወሰ :

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 184, Amharic original. This letter from Abba Rufa'el to Antoine d'Abbadie was most probably written in September 1866. Antoine replied on 15 September, and Rufa'el wrote to thank him for whatever assistance he had received on 23 September 1866 (no. 202).

Chiefs of Bogos to Edward Stanton [Oct.? 1866]

Mr. Consul General,

May the letter of the people of the Bogos country reach our master, the consul general of England at Alexandria. How are you? Are you in good health?

After the Egyptian troops of Kassala, together with the people of Barka and the Barya, had pillaged us, Mr. Plowden (of happy memory), the British consul at Massawa, helped us by having all the individuals and the cattle which they stole from us restored to us; and since that time we have lived in peace. After the death of Mr. Plowden, Captain Cameron arrived. He visited us, and he promised us that he would have the former protection continued for us. At present we have found ourselves for some time without protection, and we beg you, Mr. Consul General, to be our father. For two years the people of Barka and Barya, [who are] Egyptian subjects, have pestered us; they steal the children and our cattle from us, and we beg you to help us to get our stolen people and cattle back. Besides we seek and desire with all our heart that our country should belong to England, and we will not acknowledge any other master than you. The bearer of this letter knows our thoughts and our country very well.

Giyorgīs, chief of Keren

Berih, chief of Jufa

Yimer, chief of Tantarwa

Derar, chief of Kodi

Adig, chief of Ashala

Gondar, chief of Degī

Bereq, chief of Ferrahen

Albekīt, chief of [Bēt] Abrahē

Gelawdēwos, chief of Ona

Amaray, chief of Bijuk

Nessur, chief of Adi Gebsha.

FO 401/2, p. 436, printed French text. It is difficult to determine if the original was written in French or this is actually a translation. At any rate it can be assumed that Stella, "the bearer of the letter", was involved in the drafting. The orthography of both personal and place names is confusing, for instance "Claudiss" for Gelawdēwos and "Asirala" for Ashala. We have compared with the other documents from Bogos in this volume (nos 119, 144, 145) and made some corrections to bring the spelling in line with the orthography used there.

Stella went to Egypt on 15 October 1866. The letter was forwarded to London by the British consul general on 3 December. Stella had by this time broken off all relations with his former co-missionaries and set himself up as a colonizer and businessman (see O'Mahoney, II, pp. 44, 63–64). His dominant position in this matter of pleading for a protectorate is evident from the ease with which he re-directed the pleas or alleged pleas for protection to the British when he and Lejean did not find ready listeners in France (see no. 145 in particular).

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie, 23 Nov. 1866

ታብጻጵ : ነቢ : አቶ : አንጦገዮስ : ዘአበዲዮ : ዘደሀ
ብሙ : ለሉቃውንት : አውሲኦተ : ርቱዓ : ወደልወ :

አጅጉጉ : አገዲት : አቡ :: ጌታችን : ክቡገ : ኢፕሮስ ::
ቢል : ኤጲስ : ቶኦስ : ዘኢትዮጵያ :: ሽብር : ስጦት :
ሰ. ሰጡትም : የአንጦገዮስ : ዘአበዲዮ : ብር : የው
ብሰው : ሰጡት ::

ደረሰኝ : ተቀበልሁ : ሽብር ::

በአክሱም : የሚገኘውን : የቀድሞ : ዘመን : ግርሽ :
አደድልኝ : ብለውሀል : አሉት : ከዚህ : በፊት : የአክ
ሀባቶች : ስሞች : ሆኑ : ምክክ : አልሰጡኝም : ዋጋ :
ባደኖረኝ :: እኛ ግዲህ : ገን : በዋጋ : አልገለገሁ :: ሽፍ
ታ : በገንዱ : ሆኑ : በዝቅዋል : መገንዘብ : አገዢ : ቶ
ሎ : አገዳያቸው : ጸኩት : ያከፈልጋል ::

ተኔስል : አመ : የወጅሰኛ ግር : በሀሳይ : አምልደት : አ
ገቢአነ : በየወገኑ : ሃወህ አመት : በኅሰበ : ምሥራ
ት ::

ደቤ : ደብተራ : አሰጋኸኝ : ዘጥድቅ :

May it reach Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥoniyos Ze'abediye), who gives to scholars the right and appropriate answer.

How are you, really? Our master, Bishop Pierre Bel (*Abune Pētros Bēl*), the bishop of Ethiopia, has given me twenty thalers. When he gave it to me, he gave it to me saying that it was Antoine d'Abbadie's money. It has reached me. I have received twenty thalers.

He said to me that you had told me to send you ancient coins (*yeqedmo zemen girsh*) which are found at Aksum. As if I were worthless, none of all the people to whom I wrote (lit. sent) before have given me a reply. Nevertheless I will try to buy [some].

Since the *shifta* have grown numerous on all the roads, prayer is needed that God may soon make the roads safe.

Written at Halay on 15 Hidar in the year of Our Lord's birth 1859, according to the calendar of the East.

[So] says *Debtera* Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

BN, Orient. Abb. 254, fol. 192, Gi'iz/Amharic original. This brief letter is not included in the "Epistolario" of Conti Rossini. Antoine d'Abbadie has annotated it "reçu 1867 fevrier 6".

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam [Dec. 1866]

በ ስሙ ጳጳሱ ወወልድ ወመንግሥት ጳጳሱ ልምላክ፡
 ጥጉ ሠ፡ ነገሥት፡ ተዎ ድር ስ፡ ይድረ ስ፡ ክቶ፡ ጌር
 ምዝ፡ ረከስም፡ እንዲት፡ ሰነበት ህ፡ እኔ እግዚአብሔር
 ሔር፡ ይህ ሰገን፡ ይህ ና፡ ነኝ፡ ሃቢ ም፡ ብሎ ግን፡
 ስቶ፡ ጥሪ ይን፡ እነሱ ስህተት ስህተት ስህተት ስህተት
 እንዲት ሰነበት ቸሁ፡ ስለ፡ በሰው ስህተት፡ ለሁሉ ህግ
 ምተሳ፡ ሠደድ ልኝ፡ ደ ልክ ኝን፡ ሠደድ ሁሉ ልህ፡
 እስተ ወህኒ ፡ በግመል ፡ ከዚ ደ፡ ወዲህ ፡ በሰው ፡ ተ
 ሼ ከማቸሁ ፡ አምላኩ ልኝ፡ ሳይ ፡ ስዝገባ ሠደድ ስለ
 ሁ ፡ በእግዚአብሔር ፡ ኃይል ፡ ፡ ስቶ ፡ ፍላጎት ፡ ተ
 መልሱ ፡ መጥቶ ፡ ምጥጥ ፡ ላይ ፡ ሁኖ ፡ ይህ ነኝ ፡ ደብ
 ዳቤ ፡ ሠደድ ልኝ ፡ ስይተህ ፡ ስንግብ ህ ፡ ቆየኝ ፡
 ፡ ስኔ ም፡ በእግዚአብሔር ፡ ኃይል ፡ ልመጣ ፡ ነኝ
 ተሳካ ስረን ፡ ምላሹ ፡ እንድንልክ ፡ .

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam).

How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to Dr. Blanc (Blong) and Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), Mr. Cameron (Kēmiron) and his people, and Stern (Kokeb) and his people, on my behalf, "How have you been?"

I have dispatched the servant of yours whom you had asked me to send to Metemma for you. By the power of God, I have sent orders, that [your goods] be brought to me by camel as far as Wehnī, and from there by porters. Mr. Flad (Flat) has returned and is at Massawa. He has sent me this letter. Look at it, read it, and then wait for me. By the power of God, I am about to come so that we may consult and send the reply.



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 20, Amharic original; fol. 83, English translation. This letter was written between 19 and 28 December, when it was received at Meqdela. The letter referred to and enclosed with the above was almost certainly a letter from Victoria dated 4 October and sent with Flad on his return to Ethiopia. See Rassam, II, pp. 231-234.

የኖንተን፡ ወደ ጅጎታ ፍ፡ ፍቅር፡ እስታ ገኘው፡ ብዬ፡ ሆኔን
 ታራ፡ እንዲህ፡ ብዬ፡ እምልክኩን፡ ካቶ፡ ፍላጎት፡ ድረስ፡ እን
 ተረ፡ ዝምድናቸውን፡ ወደ ጅጎታ ተረ፡ እንዲገኘ
 ሙ፡ እርገሰ፡ እንዲላካክህ፡ ላክልኝ፡ በእግዚአብሔር
 ሉር፡ ሕይወት፡ የምትሰደው፡ ሰው፡ ደብዳቤክን፡ ጨ
 ምረህ፡ ቶሎ፡ ክኔ፡ ድረስ፡ ስደድልኝ፡ እቶ፡ ፍላጎት
 ትሰጡ፡ ደዘት፡ እንዲደርስ፡



fol. 21v

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

friendship. We do not love those who slander and hate England, so do not on your part favour those who slander and hate Ethiopia. I have accommodated Mr. Rassam and his companions, whom you sent to me, comfortably in my house, in my city (*ketema*) at Meqdela, until I obtain your friendship and love."

It is along these lines (lit. saying like this) that I am about to send my message to Mr. Flad.

And you, by the power of God, send word on my behalf in the way you use to write, and arrange so that I obtain your love and friendship. Send the man whom you are going to dispatch to me at once with your letter, so that he may bring Mr. Flad [here] at once.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 21, Amharic original; fol. 104, English translation. This letter was most probably written on one of the first days of January, since it was received at Meqdela on 7 January, when *Ras* Ingida arrived there from the king's camp, while the following letter, dated 5 January, arrived there on the 8th (Rassam, II, pp. 236–237).

The third paragraph of this letter is quite clearly a paraphrase by Flad of Queen Victoria's letter dated 4 October 1866 (FO 401/2, pp. 400–401). The queen is referred to as "they" (polite form). The following paragraph is the king's answer, also in direct speech. Rassam immediately wrote the requested letter to London, asking his government to "lose no time in acceding to his wishes" (IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 5).

አንተ፡ ስቶ፡ ረከ አም፡ ቀጥሎ ህ፡ ከንግሥቱ ተ፡ ተ፡ ሰ፡ ስለሆነ
 ፡ ብላ ህ፡ መጣ ህ፡ እኔ ፡ ብዬ ፡ በተቻለኝ ፡ ጉልበቴ ፡ በጭቆና
 ፡ ተቀበልሁ ህ፡ የሠጠኻኝ ጥን፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ ገደ ፡ ያወጣ
 ጸገ፡ ሰዎች ፡ ሁሉ ፡ የተሞላ ላላቸው ጥን፡ ደሠርሃቸውን ፡
 ፍታልኝ ፡ መርገ፡ ለሚል፡ ቋል ፡ አገኘሁኝ ፡ እኔ
 ም፡ ካንተ ፡ ፊት ፡ ፈቀጥ ፡ ማላ ማድረግ ፡ እኔ ፡ ብዬ ፡ ስለ
 ኪ ፡ አከራካቢ ፡ አመጣሁ ስለሆነ ፡ በረገጥ ረከኝ ፡
 ኃይል ፡ ከኔ ፡ ማደድ ስሉ ፡ አስመጥቻለሁ ፡ ሉንተ ፡ ስጠ
 ሁህ ፡ ወደጀጅን ፡ ከንግሥቱ ፡ ከነመኪን ፡ ካንቶቻቸው ፡
 ደስ ፡ ደበል ም፡ ብዬ ፡ አንተ ፡ ግን ፡ ምን ፡ ስንባቸው ፡
 ነው ፡ የታሰሩ ፡ ሆኑ ፡ ብላ ህ ፡ ማትገባ ፡ ይቃቸው ፡ በድ
 ዩ ፡ ተገኝቻል ፡ እንደሆነ ፡ ማልክሱ ፡ ተበድዶ ፡ ተገኝቻል ፡ እን
 ዩ ፡ ከንግሥቱ ፡ ወረታ የገኘ ፡ እንደገኘ ፡ ማት
 ፡ ገኘ ፡ ከኔ ፡ ማትገኘኝ ፡ ሠደድ ላቸው ፡ ቀጥሎ
 አንግሊዝ ፡ ገ፡ ተርክ ፡ ፊት ፡ ወ፡ ጠሉ ህ ፡ ብላ ሰው ፡
 ስመጣሁ ፡ በዚህ ፡ አዝኜ ፡ ገ፡ ብዬ ፡ ተቃዋሚ ፡
 ማለሁ ፡ ስቶ ፡ ፍላጎጥ ፡ ለደስታ ፡ የጭቆና ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡
 ላከክኝ ፡ አሁን ምን ፡ ስሉ ፡ ምን ፡ በጭቆና ፡ ከኪራ
 ሪ ፡ ጭረጭ ፡ እንደደሠ ፡ ለሆነ ፡ አኔ ፡ ከአገሪ አክሱ ፡ በ
 ታች ፡ ከንግሥቱ ፡ ከመኪን ፡ ሆኑ ፡ ከወደጀጅ
 ም ፡ ሁሉ ፡ ጭረጭ ፡ ወድቋ ፡ አለሁ ፡ የጥበብ ፡ ብል
 ላት ፡ እንደ አላቸው ፡ በመተማ ፡ እንደሚመጡ ፡ ስለ
 ገኝ ፡ አርገህ ፡ ላክ ፡ ይህ ፡ ከሆነ ፡ በኋላ ፡ ደስ ፡ አሠ
 ገኝ ፡ እኔ ፡ ገኝ ፡ እስደቻል ለሁ ፡ በእግሪ አክሱ ፡
 ኃይል ፡

ጭረጭ ፡ ሉቃ ፡ ከ ፡ በ ወር ፡
 ታሪክ ፡ ማህ ፡ በ ጥንት ፡ ቅዳሜ
 ተገኘ ፡



fol. 22v

sented and received you with friendship to the best of my ability. When I saw the letter you gave me, I found the following words: "Release and pardon for my sake all the Europeans with whom you have quarrelled and whom you have imprisoned."

Without letting a single day pass, I agreed in your [own] presence, sent word and had them released and brought to you, by the power of our Creator. Before they presented themselves to me, I arranged to bring them and handed them over to you in order to please my friend, the queen, together with her officers. You, however, sent them off, without asking them what offence they had committed that they should have been imprisoned, before I could make amends if I were found to have done wrong, or before you could arrange for me to obtain redress from the queen if I were found to have been wronged, and before you would let them meet me.

Subsequently I heard rumours (lit. it said) that the English and the Turks had become allies and were hostile to me. When I was saddened at this but remained quiet, Mr. Flad sent me an encouraging and friendly letter (lit. letter of joy and friendship). And now, just as Solomon fell at the feet of Hiram, so have I fallen at the feet of the queen, all her officers and her friends. In order that they show me the skills of craftsmanship, please send word and arrange for them to come to me via Metemma.

Once this has been done, by the power of God, I shall make you happy and send you back with an escort.

Written on Saturday, the 28th day of the month of Tahsas, in the year of Luke.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 22, Amharic original; fols. 83 and 105, English translations. Rassam reports that he received this letter on 8 January and replied the same day.

Tēwodros to J.M. Flad [9 Jan.] 1867

In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God.

This letter, which is sent from the King of Kings, Theodorus, may it reach Mr. Flad. How have you spent your time? God be praised, I am well.

On the 29th of December your three different messengers you had sent to me from Massowah arrived here. Tell those men, who arrived with you, who are the people of my friend the Queen, and Colonel Merewether. How are you? From me, Mr. Rassam, Mr. Cameron, with the rest of the Europeans, are, by the power of God, all well.

Mr. Rassam sends a letter by his servant. We are waiting for the arrival of all of you. I, a poor man, am waiting for the word (will) of the great Queen of England and Ireland, Victoria, my friend, who is a friend of faith and love (friendship). On this account I keep them (Mr. Rassam, &c.) waiting here. If Her Majesty send me a sign of friendship, bring it to me, and after I have seen it, I will send them in a friendly, honourable way (manner) home by the way of Matemma.

Written January, in the year of our Lord, 1859 (Abyssinian year).

FO 401/2, p. 512, English translation. It has not been possible to locate the original of this letter. The above is the version of the letter as attached to a report by William Merewether to the Foreign Office dated 30 March 1867. Flad had received it while on his way from Massawa to Debre Tabor. He forwarded it to Merewether, who treated it as if it had been addressed to him, which led to its being listed and printed as a letter from Tēwodros to Merewether. The exact date of the letter is stated as 9 January.

The letter is reproduced here with the orthography, including the punctuation and the glosses, of the printed version. In the paragraph with the greetings, "from me" would seem to belong to the preceding question rather than the following sentence.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu, 9 Jan. 1867

በሰሙ ጸብ፡ ወ ወ ልዩ፡ ወ መገፈኩ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ፊደላት፡ ስምላክ፡ ግጥሙ
 ነገሥት፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ደድረኩ፡ ከሰቲ፡ ይተመጥ፡ እንደ
 ት፡ ሰነበት፡ ስለ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ይመስገን፡ ይህኛ፡
 ነኝ፡ ከግጥሙ፡ ከተለየሁ፡ እስቲሁን፡ ጤናዬ ግጥሙ፡ ሰውነ
 ቲግም፡ ይህኛ፡ ነኝ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ሕይወ፡ እንዳለ
 ፡ የሌቲን፡ ሰዎች፡ ሁሉ፡ ወዳጆቼን፡ እንዴት፡ ሰነበታ
 ችሁ፡ በሱልጣን፡

ጌታችን፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ከሰቲ፡ ክርክቶስ፡ በተወለደ፡ በሽ፡
 ተሰምንት፡ መቶ፡ አምሣ፡ ዘጠኝ፡ አመት፡ በዘመነ፡ ሉ
 ቃስ፡ ጥር፡ በበተ፡ በሁለት፡ ቀን፡ ተጣፈ፡



*Order with Seal of Herodrot Emperor of Abyssinia
 Taken at Magdala April 13th 1866
 R. P. F.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.
 King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God. Since I parted from you until now I have, by the power of God, been well, both in (my) health and (my) person. Say to Lawo and his companions, the people of my household and all my friends, on my behalf, "How have you been?"
 Written in the one thousand eight hundred and fifty-ninth year of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year of Luke, on the second day after the beginning of Tīrr.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

Bankfield Museum, Halifax, Amharic original, published with English translation by Richard Pankhurst, *EJAS*, vol. 5, 2, pp. 18–19. This is one of seven (not six as Pankhurst states) preserved letters from Tēwodros to *Itēgē* Yetemeññu, apparently one of the king's acknowledged wives, as indicated by his use of the title *itēgē*. By Europeans Yetemeññu was in 1866–68 referred to variously as the king's *itēgē* and his "favourite" or "concubine". She was still at the side of the king when the members of the British mission and the earlier prisoners were sent to Meqdela in July 1866 (Rassam, II, pp. 106, 117, 123, 129). Whether she had been sent to Meqdela by the time this letter was written or went there later in the year is uncertain, but she was at Meqdela by September at the latest, when the only other dated letter (no. 219) was addressed to her. The remaining five (nos 228–232) were probably written later in the year and/or in early 1868.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. King of Kings Tēwodros.

May [this letter] reach our friend Ja'far *Pasha* (Jafer *Basha*), the servant of His Highness (lit. the great man) Ismā'il *Pasha* (Isma'el *Basha*). How are you? I am well, thank God.

By the power of God, the letter which you sent me by the hand of *Shaykh* Jima has reached me. [As for] the man of whom you said that he pillaged and was killed, I do not know of the existence of such a man. Since I have a problem with the people of my country, we are destroying each other. When God solves the problem here for me, I shall in friendship communicate with you, my friends.

Written in the year of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Our Lord) 1859, in [the year of St.] Luke, on the 5th day of Meggabit.

Seal (illegible)

The Institute of Royal Engineers, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, no 4901-39, Amharic and Arabic original. We are indebted to Dr. Girma Kīdane, curator of the IES, for having brought this document to our attention. The above is a translation of the Amharic text. Two words are used in the date, "gētachin" and "igzi'ine" (Amharic and Gi'iz respectively), both meaning "Our Lord". The Arabic, which is dated 4 Barumhāt corresponding to Ethiopian Meggabit, does not differ from the Amharic except that the invocation "Praise and glory be to Him for ever" has been inserted, as has the most complete set of titles: "the Negashite king of kings (*malik al-mulūk al-Najāshiyya*), *Sultān* Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia (*malik of Habasha*). See document no. 158, which seems to have been written by the same scribe, for a discussion of the title. The seal follows the Arabic text.

The question whether this document is a copy or the letter was never dispatched cannot be answered with certainty. For this issue and the events and correspondence immediately preceding the letter, see Rita Pankhurst, "An Unpublished Letter of King of Kings Tēwodros II to the Egyptian Governor of the Sudan", *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies*, Moscow, 1988, 4, pp. 167-176.

Ja'far *Pasha* Mazhar was vice-governor general of the Sudan 1865-66 and governor general 1866-71. For *Shaykh* Jima, see no. 102.

Document no. 211

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 14 March 1867

Your servants have brought your things from Matamma. As I found them too bulky, I divided them into light packages in the presence of Mr. Waldmeier and his party. I now send them to you in small parcels, because I want you to receive them speedily.

Dated 6th of the month Magabit, A.D. 1859.

Rassam, II, p. 238, English translation. This letter was brought to Meqdela by *Ras* Ingida, together with supplies for the British mission. Rassam's account of the letter is confused. He writes "on the 19th of that month [*i.e.* March] he sent me the subjoined note", but has translated 6 Meggabit as 2 March. The letter is reproduced here with the orthography of the printed text.

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie, 15 April 1867

፳

ገበ: ከቶ: አገምገሞስ: ዘለበዲሃ: ዘየአምር: ልብ: ኢትዮ-
ጵያ: ወዘይመያገ: ስ-ሙ: በቤታውንት: ርቱዳ: ወድልግ: ፲
17፮: በአምላክ: ጸገሊል: በይ: ስጅ-ጉን: አገዲት: አሱ: :

አጽሐፍ: ታሪክ: ኢትዮ-ጵያ:

በሳዳር: በ፲ ቀን: ዝዋህብት: ሁሉ: የረገፉ: መስከረም: ታ-
ዮ: ዘዘሊ: በኋላ: ገጉ: ሆ: ቴዎድሮስ: ጎገዳርን: አታጠብቁ-
ያቡንና: የእጩሊ: ቤት: እልቀረም: ቤተ: ዝርስቴየም:
ሁሉ: ተቃጠሰ: አቦራና: በዓታ: አጸባባይ: አቡ: ተህሉ: ሃጂ-
ማናት: አምቤ: ብሰው: ተሩ: ሰው: ሁሉ: ገን: በተአምራ-
ት: ተሩ: ይባል: አዘዘና: ልጅታ: መጥምቅ: የሐገህ: ቤ-
ስታምንና: ቅህ: ኪየሱስ: አባታጠቡ: ሞቸውም: በገጉ-
ሌ: ለታድ: ተሩ: ሰውም: በጎንደር: የሰም: አውፊራ: ፡
ብቻ: ደውልግታል: ከገደ: ኢየሩሳሌም: በናቡብጎር: ጊ-
ዜ: ሆነች: ጎንደር: ገገዲውንም: ሁሉ: ዘረፉት: አሠሩ-
ት: ደብረ: ታቦር: አዲስ: ጎንደር: ይባል: ብለው: አዋቅ: ፡
፲፯: ከተማ: በደብረ: ታቦር: ሆነ: ገደምሳ: ሰዎች: ስቴ-
ዎድርስ: ዘኩ: መድፍ: ሲሩ: ገገደሞች: ጎበዜ: ባክባጊ-
ዛይ: ገብረ: መድግን: የሚባል: ሁሉ: ሸሙ: ፡፩ ከገ-
ቲቦች: ያዘ: ያክስ: ጊዛይ: ከገቲቦች: ፍቸው: አሥ-
ሮ: አስገብቶ: ገደባቸው: ሁየደጃዝማች: ጎበዜ: መል



fol. 198r

[No.] 5.
To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥ-
niyos Ze'abedīye), who knows the
language of Ethiopia, who, like Da-
niel, gives the right answer to scho-
lars. How are you, really?

I [shall] write the history of
Ethiopia.

On the 6th day of Hidar it ap-
peared as if all the stars were fall-
ing. Then Tēwodros set fire to
Gonder. The residences of the *abun*
and the *ichegē* were not exempted.

All the churches were burned
down. Abora, Be'ata and Adebab-
bay Abune Tekle Haymanot did
not catch fire (lit. refused), but
everyone says that they escaped by
a miracle. He did not burn down
Azezo and Lideta, John the Baptist,
Qwisqwam, and Qiha İyyesus.
They remain by the wish of the
king. There is no one in Gonder;
only beasts live there. As Jerusa-
lem in the days of Nebuchadnezzar
(Nabukedenezor), [so] has Gonder
become. He plundered and impris-
oned all the merchants. He pro-
claimed that Debre Tabor be called
the New Gonder. The capital has
been established at Debre Tabor.
Austrians have made many guns
for Tēwodros.

Dejjazmach Gobeze appointed a
person named Gebre Medhin over
Akkele Guzay. He captured five
governors (*kentiboch*). They were
(lit. are) the governors of Akkele
Guzay. He kept them in prison for
a while, and [then] killed them. A
messenger from *Dejjazmach* Go-
bezē, a monk called *Abba* Gebre
Mika'el, came to Gebre Medhin.

ከተኛ፡ አባ፡ ገብረ፡ ሚኒኤል፡ የሚሚባል፡ መነሱ፡ ወደ፡ ገብረ፡
 መድኅን፡ መጠ፡ አባይ፡ ነፃ፡ ብሎ፡ ያነው፡ አሥር፡ አስገብቶ፡ በጠበ
 ገኛ፡ ገደሰው፡ የገብረ፡ መስፈት፡ በኬህ፡ ጊዜ፡ ታወቀ፡፡ ደኛ ገሳማ
 ቸ፡ ጎበዜ፡ ወደ፡ አከሰ፡ ጉዳይ፡ ገሠገሠ፡ ገብረ፡ መድኅን፡ ወደ፡ ሀላ
 ደ፡ ወጣ፡ የደኛ ገሳማች፡ ጎበዜ፡ ጦር፡ ደርሎ፡ ብዙ፡ ሰው፡ ፈጅቦት፡ አ
 ርሱ፡ ገገ፡ አመለጠ፡ ወገኖቻቸው፡ ሞተ፡፡ ወደሐማሌ፡ ሂደ፡ በጎባ
 ል፡ ተደሎ፡ ክስ፡ ነገረው፡ መቶ፡ ወታደር፡ ተቀብሎ፡ መጣ፡ ሳል
 ጎደብች፡ ሲገኝ፡ ሆነው፡ ገጠሙት፡ ሳልጎደቦ፡ ዩል፡ አደረጉ፡ ከግናኦ
 ገደም፡ ጀምሮ፡ አስከ፡ ሰራዊ፡ አበረገዱ፡ ብዙ፡ ሰው፡ ፈጅ፡ ጀጃነኛ
 ፍ፡ አገደ፡ ተለገ፡ መው፡ ሳይተኩስ፡ ማረኩ፡ ገብረ፡ መድኅን፡ አመ
 ለጠ፡ የገብረ፡ መድኅን፡ ተው፡ ሁኔታ፡ ከደቅ፡ ይህብ፡ ነው፡፡ ሀገሩ
 ም፡ ጦር፡ በሆነ፡ ጊዜ፡ እጅግ፡ ተጨነቅኝ፡ አገዛዜብሎ፡ ገገ፡
 ካደነ፡፡ ብላታ፡ ተደሎ፡ የሚባል፡ አገው፡ በረ፡ ደኛ ገሳማች፡
 ጎበዜ፡ ባዘሰ፡ ጉዳይ፡ ሸመት፡ ተደል፡ ነው፡ ረጅም፡ ነው፡ ገዙፍ፡
 ገው፡ ሳልጎደቦ፡ ከገብረ፡ መድኅን፡ የማረኩት፡ ርጅገ፡ ሰጠ
 ት፡፡ ሳልጎደቦ፡ ስሙና፡ ገገ፡ አስከተት፡ የእገሰ፡ ሐመስ፡ ስ
 ም፡ ባህር፡ ነጋህ፡ ወልጸ፡ ሥላሴ፡ የሚባል፡ ጨምሮ፡ ወደ፡ አድ
 ሞ፡ ጻደ፡ የደሀ፡ ሹማምት፡ ጸጉ፡ ሠርጉ፡ ልጆች፡ ክርሱ፡ ጋራ፡ ሆ
 ኑ፡፡ በመጋራ፡ ጽምሬ፡ ጀምሮ፡ አስከ፡ እዳ፡ አባ፡ ገሪማ፡ አረፈው፡፡
 የቴዎድሮስ፡ ሹማምትም፡ መሆኑ፡ ጀምሮ፡ ሥነደህ፡ ገገር፡ ወ
 ልጸ፡ ስደወት፡ ደህሰኑ፡ ገገር፡ ባርደሮ፡ የዳሞ፡ ገሊሳ፡ ገገር፡፡ የአ
 ሬ፡ ገገር፡፡ ያስገዳ፡ የባርኪ፡ ያዮያሮ፡ የእድ፡ አርባራ፡ ገገር፡
 ቸ፡ ሆኑ፡ ተሰበሰቡ፡ በተደሰ፡ ገራ፡ ተዋጉ፡ ብላታ፡ ተደሰ፡ ሞ

Believing him to be a spy, he arrested him and after a while shot him. Gebre Medhin's insurrection became known at this time. *Dejjazmach* Gobeze marched to Akkele Guzay. Gebre Medhin went to Halay. The army of Gobeze caught up with him and killed many [of his] men, but he escaped; his brothers were killed. After going to Hama-sen and receiving 1,500 soldiers from Habal Haylu, he came back. The people of Salgodibo, 500 [in number], clashed with him. The people of Salgodibo won. They chased them from Ona Andom to Serawē. They killed many people. They captured 200 rifles, which had been loaded but not fired. Gebre Medhin escaped. Gebre Medhin's descent is from the Deq Iqub. When the battle took place at Halay, we were very worried, but God saved us.

There was an Agew called *Blatta* Tedla. *Dejjazmach* Gobeze appointed him over Akkele Guzay. He is strong, tall and heavily built. The people of Salgodibo gave him the 200 rifles which they had seized from Gebre Medhin. After mobilizing the people of Salgodibo and Shumezana and, in addition, taking with him the chief of Iggela Hames, called *Bahr Negash* Welde Sillasē, he went to Adwa. The chiefs of Yiha, the sons of *Ato* Sergu, joined him. He plundered from Mugara Şemrī to Inda Abba Gerīma. Then Tēwodros's officials arrived. The governor of Amba Sineytī, Welde Hiywet, the governor of Ahsi'a, Barya'u, the governor of Damo Galīla, the governor of Shirē, all the governors of Asgedē and Barkwa, of Adiyabo and Addarbatē gathered and fought Tedla. *Blatta* Tedla died. *Bahr Negash* Welde

fol. 198v

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie, 15 April 1867

ኃይለ ሥላሴ፡ አገጣጥሞታዬ፡ ዝኣበደሃ ፡ ዛይሁብ ፡
በኪ ቀውንት፡ አውስኦተ፡ ርቲዓ ፡ ወጽፊወ ፡
በተሰይገተ፡ ፓሪስ ፡ እጅጉን፡ እንዲተ፡ አሉ፡፡

ኸብር፡፡ የተጠረዘኛ ፡ የተፈፈ ፡ በውስጡ፡
፪ ስራታት ፡ ያገኙሉት ፡ ወረቀት ፡፡ በተረከ ፡
ሲኖ ፡ ያሰ ፡ ቀበጦ ፡ ያረሰኝ ፡፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ያ
ከኖዎ ፡፡

በአቡ-፡ ያልሞገቴ ፡ አጅ ፡ ያረከኝ ፡



ተጽእኖ ፡ አመ ፡ አመተ ፡ በሚያዝያ ፡ አም ፡
ልደተ ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ በ፲ ወ፲፮ ፡ ፶ ወ፱ ዓመት ፡ በ
ኃይለ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡፡

አሲንኸኝ ፡ ዘዋጽባ ፡

To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጅ-
niyos Ze'abedīye) in the city of
Paris, who gives scholars the right
and appropriate answer.

How are you, really? I have re-
ceived twenty thalers, a bound and
trimmed booklet (lit. a paper), with
two pictures, and one tin of paint
(lit. the paint which is in a tin). May
God reward you.

They reached me by the hand of
Father Delmonte (*Abune Delmon-
tē*).

Written 8 Mīyazya in the year of
the birth of Our Lord 1859, accord-
ing to the Ethiopian calendar.

Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 193, Gi'iz/Amharic original. This letter is not included in Conti Rossini's "Epistolario".

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie [15 April 1867]

ነበ : አቶ : አገሮቻቸው : ዘላለፈዋል : ማለፊያ : ልዩ : ዘላታ
 የጽሑፍ : አጭግ : ጉዳይ : ለገላገሎች :
 የሰነድ : ስራ : የቀረበ : ምሳሌ : : የቀኛ : አጭግ :
 አገረ ህግ : ሰው : ለሌላ : ተላለፎ : በሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ገንዘብ : ሰው : ተላለፎ : ተላለፎ : ተላለፎ : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ወገን : ሰው : ለሌላ : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወገን : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ገደብ : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወገን : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ለሌላ : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወገን : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ገንዘብ : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወገን : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ
 ተላለፎ : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወገን : ሰው : ላይ : የተደረገ : ወ

Asseggaheñ, 15 April 1867, June 9

ደቤ : አሰጋሽኝ



To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inጥoni-yos Ze'abediye), the master of the language of Ethiopia.

How are you, really? The answer to the language [question] which you sent me: the correct Amharic is like this:

“You said; you will say; say (*alih; tilalleh; bel*).” This is the active form. “You were told; you will be told; be told (*tebalih; tibbalaleh; tebal*).” This is passive form.

“If I am well, or if it is so that I am well; if I enthrone, or if it is so that I enthrone (*melka[m] bihon, wey melkam yehonhu indehon; baneges wey yaneggesihu indehon*).”

Bishop Massaja's book is Gojjam Amharic.

“You said (*alih*)” is past tense; “you will say (*tilalleh*)” is future tense; “say (*bel*)” is imperative; active form. “You were told (*tebalih*)”—past tense; “you will be told (*tibbalalleh*)”—future tense; “be told (*tebal*)”—imperative; passive form.

[So] says Asseggaheñ.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 194, Gi'iz/Amharic original; not included in Conti Rossini's "Epistolario". This little grammatical exercise is undated, but annotated "received 9 June 1867", i.e. the same date as nos 213 and 214 were received. It can therefore be assumed that it was dispatched with the other two.

It is interesting to note how Asseggaheñ organized his correspondence: the comprehensive account of the historical events in one letter, the business about money and goods received in a second, and the reply to Antoine d'Abbadie's grammatical queries in a third. He also seems to vary his "signature" according to the importance of the letters.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

May [this] message sent by King of Kings Minilik reach the queen. How are you, really? I am well, thank God. In the eleventh year after being exiled I have, by the power of God, attained my father's throne. Thank God, since I returned to my country, my people, my country and myself are well. As for you, how are you, your country and your people? Are they well?

I am sending this letter in the interest of good relations and friendship. Like my grandfather Sahle Sillasē, I desire (lit. intend it for) friendship. I want it to be as it was then, as [when] you sent your people. I have heard that people said that later they left disappointed. When I heard this, I felt much regret and was very sad. [The reason] why your people left disappointed is that there was a prophecy that foreigners would destroy Shewa. What friend would destroy a friend to whom he gives rifles and cannons? The conceited elders of Sahle Sillasē, advising and disappointing him, made them leave. If my grandfather had done no wrong and had not displeased your people at that time, all this oppression and destruction like this would not have happened in our country. If we had not wavered in our friendship for you, and if you had remained with us, our country would not have been destroyed. Do not let the country where you planted your flag be destroyed again. Protect it in friendship. With friendly relations, my country is your country and your country is my country.

Be my friend, and forget the earlier mistake of my grandfather. For God's sake, be like a mother, since God has bestowed [power] on you and has not taken it from you. Forget the earlier ill-treatment [and] be reconciled with me from your heart. [I have sent] two silver bracelets, one silver knife, one leather bag, one richly decorated shield, one two-pointed spear, one armlet, one lion [cape], one leopard [cape], and one panther cape, one embroidered shirt, one lady's dress, and one *shemma* of eight layers. As soon as you have heard of my well-being, let my servant at once, in Meskerem, bring [news of] your [well-being]. He should not waste time. I am sending these things so that you may know that I have reached my country and that I am well.

Seal: King of Kings Minilik of Ethiopia.

FO 1/20, fol. 215, Gii'z/Amharic original; fols 217–218, English translation. Colonel W. Merewether inclosed this letter with a report to London dated 20 July 1867 (FO 401/2, pp. 641–642). An answer was forwarded from Aden on 28 September (*ibid.*, p.839).

The size of this letter is 330x765 mm. The drawings were most probably intended to be completed in colour.

Document no. 217

Minilik to William Merewether [July? 1867]

Sent by Sultan Negoos Menelek. May it arrive at the ruler of Aden!

We salute you. We are well. After having been eleven years absent from our country, we returned, and took our father's place. When this happened I was much pleased and rejoiced; you also rejoiced on our account. We have sent our servant; he has some work; when it is finished please send him back without fail. For God's sake do what he desires. His name is Mekeb. We have sent with him presents for you, a horse and a mule.

Negusa Negesh Menelek.

FO 1/20, fol. 219, English translation, certified by the Merewether. This letter was a covering letter for the above to Queen Victoria. Mekeb seems to be an error for Mekbib. The letter is reproduced with the orthography, including the punctuation, of the English translation, as forwarded by Merewether.

Minilik to Guglielmo Massaja [July? 1867]

ይህች፣ መልእክት፣ ትድረስ፣ መደ፣ አባ፣
መስያሕ፣።።።
ተጻፈች፣ ባኮበር፣

ጠማር፣ ዘንጉሠ፣ ነገሥት፣ መንገድ፣ ትብ
ደሕ፣ ኃበ፣ አባ፣ መሳያሕ፣ አንዴት፣ ነህ፣
እጅጉን፣ ደህና ነህ፣ እኔ፣ ደህና፣ ነኝ ሲሰ
ጭም ደህና፣ ነው፣ የላከህልኝ፣ ደብዳ
ቤና፣ በርኖስ፣ ደረሰኝ፣ አንተ አንደናፈቅ
ኸኝ፣ እኔም፣ ፍፍጭሃለሁና፣ ትሎ፣ ፍ፣ ለ
ሃጂ፣ አቡበከር፣ ልኬበታለሁ፣ ትሎ፣ ሰደ
ድልኝ፣ ብዬ፣ አግዚአብሔር፣ በደህና፣ ቢ
ያገናኘን፣ ተዚያ፣ ወዲያ፣ ሁሉንም፣ እና
ግዘራለን። አሸካሪን፣ ልኬዋለሁና፣ ወ
ዳ፣ በህር፣ የኔንም፣ የሰጭንም፣ ወሬ፣ ተሱ
አፍ፣ ተገኘዋለህና፣ እሱን፣ ጠይቀው፣
ሁሉንም፣ ያወራልሃል።።።
አግዚአብሔር፣ ጤና፣ ይስጥህ።።

May this message reach Father Massaja
(Abba Misiyas).

Written at Ankober.

May this letter from King of Kings Mini-
lik reach Father Massaja (Abba Misiyas).

How are you? Are you very well? I
am well, and my people are well, too. I
have received the letter and the burnous
you sent me.

As you are longing for me, I am also
longing for you; come at once. I have
written (lit.sent) to *Hājj* Abū Bakr (Abu-
beker), to send you to me at once. If God
lets us meet each other in safety, then we
shall discuss everything. Since I have
sent my servant to the coast, you will
find out the news about me and my
people from him. Ask him; he will tell
you everything.

May God give you health.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 1080, printed Gi'iz/Amharic and Latin translation. Citing Catholic sources, Harold Marcus dates this letter September or October 1867 (*The Life and Times of Menelik II*, Oxford, 1975, pp. 28-29), but this is clearly too late. Massaja had been to Zeyla in Feb. 1867 and had written to Minilik from there before returning to Europe (*Lettere*, IV, p. 27). The above reply was received in Rome before 8 August (ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fols 69-70), and reportedly made a great impression there (*ibid.*, fols 74-75). For relations between Minilik and Massaja, see also Coulbeaux, II, p. 442.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu, 9 Sept. [1867]

በስሙ እብ ወወልድ ወመገረኩ ቀዳሴ ፊንዳላ ገዳጃ
 ገጥሠነገሥት ቴዎድሮስ ጊዮርጊስ ክስቲህጊ
 ተመኑ እገዳቶ ክረምኩ እኔ ስገዲ እብሔር ይመ
 ስገን ይህኛ ነኝ እና ትኩረት ለእኔ ይዘርግህ
 ይታገሙ የቤተኛ ሰዎች ሁሉ እገዳቶ ክረምኩ
 ሁሉ ስለሰይጣን እሁንም ስለዘኩ በእገዲ እብሔር
 ርጋ ይልጋል ስጋ ርጋ ካሰጠሁ ሃሳዬ ስለሰጣሁ
 አቶባቢ ተዋግቶም ከገደጃቸው ገሰሱ ሲወጡ ከገደብኝ
 አሲጋገኑ ከዋጁ ጳጳሩ ስለሰጠሁት ነው አሁንም ጳጳሩ
 ርጋ ይልጋል ነው ነገር ስኛ ለሠጋዬ ካሰተሰደዬ የ
 ላገሰቀርበኩ ለላገረዬ ነው።

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been all this time? I am well, thank God. Say to your mother, and to *Weyzero* Senayit and her friends, to all the people of my house on my behalf, "How have you been?"

Now, do not fear; by the power of God, unless I am dead and buried, nothing will prevent me (lit. I will not refrain) from seeing you. Do not worry. I left Tewabech in Qwara when I was fighting *Dejjach* Goshu and his men, and when I was fighting Birru Aligaz and his men. And now Meqdela is Qwara. It is my home, from which I shall not stay away, unless my body and soul be separated.

Written on the 5th day of Pagumē.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

በጳጳሩ በጳጳሩ ተገቢ ፈ።



BL, Orient. 829, fol. 28, Amharic original. English translations of this and five other letters from Tēwodros to Yetemeññu (nos 208–212) were first published by Haile Gabriel Dagne ("The Letters (1) of Emperor Teodros to Itege Yetemegnu", *EO*, VII, 2, pp. 115–117). His conclusion that the letters were written between 1855 and 1856 (not later than 1858) is clearly an error based on a misunderstanding of this letter. In all other sources, Yetemeññu's name appears only towards the end of Tēwodros's reign, and the fact that the letters were preserved and found at Meqdela supports a late date. In all probability the remaining undated letters were written later in the year or in early 1868. Tēwodros's statement about leaving Tewabech, his first acknowledged queen in Qwara, while fighting against Goshu Zewdē and Birru Aligaz in the early 1850s, is meant to comfort Yetemeññu. As Tewabech had been safe in Qwara, so would Yetemeññu be safe, for Meqdela was now what Qwara had been in his early days. The last two sentences seem to reveal that Tēwodros was reflecting on the course of his life, and on the possibility that it was probably approaching the end.

Both the Amharic originals and English translations of this and the following five letters to Yetemeññu were also published in Appleyard, Irvine and Pankhurst, *Letters from Ethiopian Rulers*, pp. 161–183.

እዚርኩኝ፡ ከወደጅት ሞ፡ ሁሉ፡ ጸሎት፡ ያስደርገረኝ። ~~የላቲንኛውን ገጽ በሰው እይታ በጽሑፍ~~
የሚሰጠው፡ የሞጽ ሞጽ፡ ከሌሎች፡ ስለ ሆነው ገጽ።

ተጽፎት ከሙ፡ ሰጠኝ ለመሰንጠጥ፡ አሞልጻል፡ ከሚኒስ፡ በገደብ ሰጠኝ ማመት፡ በሀሳብ
እትዎኝ ሞ፡ ወገን ሰጠኝ ሞ፡ በገደብ ሰጠኝ ሞ፡ ማመት፡

ጸ-በተራ፡ አሰጋኝ ገ-ዘዋድሳ ።

ይህች ፡ ግርኝ ፡ ነገሠ ፡ ረጅም ሐይ ፡ ትላለች ፡

fol. 202v

To Antoine d'Abbadie, the scholar, well-versed in literature and source of profound knowledge. How are you, really?

The news about Tēwodros is as follows. The king is at Debre Tabor. *Dejjazmach* Gobezē is in Yejjū. The Gojjam soldiers who were with the king lined up and deserted him in [broad] daylight. In a single day the king massacred 870 Wadla soldiers who were with him, saying, "I heard that you were about to desert me." Many important people perished. They were executed. Within an hour, he slaughtered them with rifle and sword. For this reason there was much mourning among all [the people]; there was weeping everywhere. Because of this Begēmdir has rebelled. On the *amba*, on Meqdela, disease has killed many prisoners; 83 dignitaries died of disease. It is rumoured that the remainder will perish of famine. They guard *Abba* Selama in a safe (lit. strong) place, but he has not been put in chains.

Delanta, Dawint [and] Wadla have rebelled. They say that the prisoners are about to die of starvation because of this. Amarē Kinfu is still in prison; he has not been released. The son of Līben is governor of Wello. His mother is called Mestawat. She is growing very powerful. The governor of Gojjam is Tedla Gwalu. The governor of Amhara is the son of Tikku Birillē. The governor of Simēn is Ṭiso Gobezē. The governor of Lasta is *Dejjazmach* Gobezē. He is an Agew. The governors of Tigray number six. Year after year Tigray is being devastated by locusts. Because of this there is always famine. *Shifta* are always plundering there (lit. it). In Shewa Minilik is king. He has been crowned. He rules as a king (lit. has ruled through the crown). He has become a great king. They say that all the Europeans who were at Debre Tabor have been imprisoned by Tēwodros. It is reported that they have arrived at Meqdela. The ones who were there before, the commander and his companions, and Cameron and his companions, are living at Meqdela since quite some time. There is not a single soul (lit. person) at Gonder; Dembiya is a little better. There some people are found here and there.

Everything you sent me by the hand of Joseph (Yosēf), the Frenchman, has reached me. The spectacles, however, were broken at Massawa. It is not known who broke them. Since I know that

they cannot, when broken, be repaired in Ethiopia, I have sent them back to Joseph, the Frenchman, to hand [them] over for me (lit. saying, "Give for me"). He is the messenger who received them from you. Joseph is living with his friends in Bogos—so I have heard—but I have not met him.

A new Ethiopian coin has been found in someone's possession. It is a bronze coin with a drawing of a figure (lit. picture) wearing a crown, holding a staff with (lit. having) a cross engraved on it, and sitting on a chair. Around it [something] is written in the Gi'iz language. I had great trouble finding it. Then I got it through the help of many friends. Now here [it is], receive it. I have given it to the bishop Mgr. Pierre (*Abune Pēṭros epīsqoppōs*). Now, the like (lit. it) will not be found [again]; it was not found earlier. It is something new.

Secondly, I have sent you a complete verb which I have written and conjugated. Thirdly, I have sent a history book. Accept it. When it has come into your hands, send me a note which informs me of its arrival, so that I will not worry.

When I asked the abbot of Bizen to give me the book called *Ṣedale Ṣehay* to copy, he refused, though I sent a man from the area (lit. countryside), though I sent an intermediary and said I would pay the cost. Therefore it is necessary to be patient for a little while. Do not forget me. Have all your friends pray for me. Do not be angry with me because the writing of the verb is bad. It is because I am the only one to do the thinking and the writing.

Written 11 Meskerem, in the year of the birth of Our Lord 1860 according to the Ethiopian calendar, and 1867 according to the Roman calendar.

Debtera Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

[The legend of] this coin reads "King Remhay".

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 202, Amharic original; fol. 203–204, French translation. This letter, which would be no. 6 in Asseggaheñ's sequence of accounts of the situation in Ethiopia, is no. 5 in Conti Rossini's "Epistolario" (pp. 460–462). Conti Rossini's rendering of the text contains a few minor errors: 860 Wadla soldiers killed instead of 870 in the beginning of the letter; *adersuñ* for *ayriṣuñ* and *weddajachin* for *weddajochin*, and the two letters, *mek*, which have been struck out in the original, all in the last paragraph before the date.

The first part of this letter is an important account of the situation in Ethiopia on the eve of the British campaign. Although Asseggaheñ can be expected to be biased against Tēwodros, the information he provides is factual, and gives a clear picture of the turmoil and disintegration in the country. The Ethiopians mentioned were all well-known chiefs during the later years of the reign of Tēwodros, except Amarē Kinfu, a Catholic who was imprisoned for several years. The stress on the legitimacy of Minilik's rule in Shewa is an interesting reflection of the good relations that existed at that time between the king of Shewa and Massaja (see no. 218).

The second part of the letter shows how close the cooperation between the writer and Antoine d'Abbadie was at this time. Apparently Asseggaheñ had received no reply to his letters dated 15 April (nos 213–215), and wanted d'Abbadie to acknowledge that they had been received.

Abune Pēṭros was Bishop Pierre Bel, and the intermediary called "Joseph, the Frenchman" was in all probability the Catholic missionary Joseph Horkultel. They arrived in Ethiopia in March 1866; Joseph was repatriated in October 1867; Mgr. Bel died in March the following year. See O'Mahoney, II, pp. 35–77.

ለእኔ ተገኝ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ነገረኛ ስለ፡ አጠቃላይ ሁሉ፡ ጸዕኔ፡ ጸዕኔ፡
 አድርገው፡ ደብረ፡ ተቀር፡ ተቀምጠዎል፡ ሁሉ፡ ስራ ተ
 በቶው፡ በጌ ለጌ ጌ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ የቀበረ፡ ነገብቶ፡ ሁሉ፡ አ
 ርደው፡ ልጅ ተ፡ ተገደረ፡ ቀጠቶ፡ ፡ ጸዕኔ፡ ውቤ፡ ተመ
 ጩ፡ ሞቱ፡ ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ በገሬ፡ በቤቱ፡ ጸዕኔ፡ በሰጠ፡ ልቃ
 ድ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ተቀምጠው ለሁሉ፡ ስለዚህ፡ አገደ፡ ቤተ፡
 ክርስቲያን፡ ሠርጸ፡ የመኖር፡ ናኝኛ፡ ጸዕኔ፡ ጭክ፡
 መሠር፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡

የጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ መንግሥት፡ ቀኝ፡ ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ መዘርጋቱ፡
 ብቻ ልግ፡ ጌጌ፡ አሁን፡ ነው፡፡

ጸዕኔ ጸዕኔ፡ ነገብ ሊ ክ፡፡

fol. 309v

In the year 1860 after the birth of Our Lord, in the year of Yohannis, on 23 Meskerem.
 May this letter sent by Imnetu the priest reach the exalted and honoured head of all the most
 learned (*tebiban*), Antoine d'Abbadie (Intonyos Ze'abedi). Peace be to you and peace be to your
 esteemed wife and to all your brothers and all your household.
 I have received the picture of the city of Paris in great friendship together with the other pictures of
 saints. Your letter, however, I have not received. You always do what pleases me, but I am very sor-
 ry that I have not so far been able to do what pleases you. I shall look, and if I find a book which is
 missing in your list, I shall send it to you.
 Let me tell you some news. All the English are imprisoned and are at Meqdela. The king, who
 wants friendship with the French, has sent a message. But I failed to find the [recently] appointed
 French consul and kept quiet. From Čeçheho onwards *Wagshum Gobezē* rules. Minilik rules
 Shewa. From Firqa to here *Ṭiso Gobezē* rules. *Tedla Gwalu* rules Gojjam. The Tigreans have fought
 against each other, and *Ras Welde Sillasē's* side has prevailed. *Dejjach Haylu* is the only one loyal to
 the king. The king has brought together [the altars of] Mother Mary and Child Mary and placed them
 in an enclosure (lit. having made an enclosure) in Debre Tabor. Everyone is rebelling. He slaughtered
 all the cattle which were in Begēmdir and Dembiya and finished them off. Gonder was lost. *Dejjach*
Wibē fell ill and died.
 I am living quietly in my house in my country with the permission of the bishop. Since I have
 therefore built a church in which I can stay, I beg you to send me the utensils, censer (*ṣahil*) and cup
 (*siwwa*), for a priest. If the French government wants to reach out its right hand, the time is now.
 Imnetu the Catholic.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 309, Gi'iz/Amharic original. For earlier correspondence between Imnete Maryam and
 Antoine d'Abbadie, see above nos 72, 100, 150. The *Ras Welde Sillasē* referred to here is most probably Welde
 Sillasē Welde Kīdan from Simēn, an early supporter of Gobezē, also known as Wereñña.

Haylu Tewelde Medhin to Ismā'il Ibrāhīm [14 Nov. 1867]

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, may it be so.

Sent by *Dejjazmach* Haylu, king of Hamasēn, to our sovereign Ismā'il *Pasha*, the ruler (*azīz*) of Egypt. How are you? May God give health to our sovereign, to the princes of Egypt and to all the soldiers.

The frontiers of Egypt are near ours. Therefore friendship and treaty terms ought to exist between us and the ruler of Egypt. We wish for it and, to that effect, we are sending one of our very dear princes, who belongs to a noble family, *Abba* Imnetu(?), the priest, to whom we have given a mandate to conclude an agreement with His Highness, our sovereign, the ruler of Egypt. Every agreement concluded with *Abba* Imnetu(?) shall be acknowledged and accepted by us as if it had been made by ourselves.

The gift sent is not worthy of the high rank of our sovereign. It consists of an Abyssinian horse, an armlet of gold and silver, a jewel [set] in silver, and two silver-plated Abyssinian spears.

ENA, Carton 42 Maia Sanieh, no. 266, French translation. A note at the top of the translation states that the document received was a letter "in Abyssinian (with its Arabic translation)" dated 17 Rajab 1284. Both the Amharic original and the translation have been missing in the archives since their transfer from the Abdine Palace to the Citadel in the 1960s, and all efforts by the most cooperative staff of the archives to find the letter have failed.

Unfortunately this makes it impossible to establish with certainty who the emissary was. In the French version, on which the above is based, he is called "Abou Bent El Kassiss". Douin (I, p. 375) reproduced the above letter *in extenso* but with the name "Abou Abtou". In the Arabic letter (no. 224) he is *Abūnā* أبنت, which can be read *Abune* Abinitu. This looks like a careless contraction of *Abba* Imnetu (cf. Bishop Biancheri's "Abnetu" in the footnote of no. 84). If this identification is correct, we once more find the well-known Catholic priest involved in diplomatic matters. However, it leaves Douin's "Abou Abtou" unexplained.

While the above letter introduces the writer and the emissary, the Arabic letter of the same date (preserved as no. 267 in carton 42) is more specific on the contents of the agreement to be negotiated, but omits the specification of the gifts (see no. 224).

Dejjazmach Haylu Tewelde Medhin, also known as Haylu Habal, of the house of Še'azega in Hamasēn (Johannes Kolmodin, *Traditions de Tsazzega et Hazzega*, Uppsala, 1914) is mentioned in other documents as one of the most loyal of Tēwodros's vassals in the north (nos 213, 222). But by late 1867 it seemed obvious that Tēwodros's authority there had been irrevocably lost, and Haylu's position was threatened by the king's rivals Gobežē and Kasa Mirča. Khedive Ismā'il on the other hand was well aware of the British plans to invade Ethiopia and was eager to safeguard and increase Egyptian influence as far as possible into the hinterland of Massawa (Douin, I, pp. 361–374).

Haylu Tewelde Medhin to Ismā'il Ibrāhīm [14 Nov. 1867]

المريض للأغشاب الحميري
 قدم هذا عبدكم دجزمات حيلو حاكم الحماشي بالجيش وما تعرض عنه لسعادة اندينا ابي مجاور الحكومه
 الحميري ولي عدوي من حشني جيران بالحشه ورايما يتعدوا علينا ويريدوا هلاكنا نحن نرجو ان نحل
 في حماية حدودنا اندينا بطلب صافي لاجل حمايتي من العدويين وارغب تعيين جانب عساكر يحموا
 بيمنا في راس حدودنا الحميري بجمارتنا في محل موافق لهم لاجل يكونوا عيون لي في حمايتي من العدو
 عند الزوم وتداير جيش الجيش علي واحد يكون صديقي لي يكون واسطه في تبليغ سعادته اندينا عني وتذويت
 حامل هذا عبدكم ابونا البنت والتزيف بالأعراض للأغشاب الحميري نرجوا قبولنا وادخالنا في حكومته اندينا
 رحماننا من العدويين وقوام للأغشاب جانب هديه علي قدر حالتنا من الموجود ببلاد الجيش نرجوا
 من سعادته اندينا قبولنا منه واذا وافق ذلكي ربي اندينا نرود صدور الأوامر الكريمة بذلكي لمن نرود
 اذركم اندينا بال ١٧ رجب ١٢٤٥
 دجزمات
 حيلو حاكم
 الحماشي

The petition to His Highness the *khedive*.

The one who dispatches [this] is your servant, *Dejjazmach* Haylu, the governor (*hākim*) of Hamasēn in Abyssinia. What we are making known to His Excellency, our *effendi*, is that we are a neighbour of the domain of the *khedive*. I have enemies among my people, [my] neighbours in Abyssinia, and they always attack us. They desire my destruction. We sincerely (lit. with a sincere heart) want to place ourselves under the protection of the government of our *effendi* in order to be protected against the enemies. I want you to assign some soldiers to come and live in our neighbourhood on the frontier of the *khedive's* territory in a place suitable for them, so that they will be my helpers and protect me from enemies when necessary.

I have been looking for someone to be my confidant and to be an intermediary in informing His Highness, our *effendi*, about me; I found the bearer of this, your servant *Abba Imnetu* (?) (*Abūnā Abinitu*) and I made up my mind to turn to His Highness, the *khedive*. We trust that we will be received into the domain of our *effendi* and be protected from our enemies.

What is being sent to His Highness are some gifts such as our circumstances [can afford] from what is available in the country of Abyssinia. We trust that His Excellency our *effendi* will accept them from him.

If it agrees with the opinion of our *effendi*, we want him to issue a generous order about this to whom it is necessary. This decision is yours in the first place.

17 Rajab 1284. Greetings.

Dejjazmach Haylu, the ruler of Hamasēn.

Seal: *Dejjazmach* Haylu. [12]82.

Elders of Halay to Robert Napier, 16 Nov. 1867

May this letter dispatched by Kantiba Radu and Kantiba Tasfay and Ato Selassie reach the honourable Sir Robert Napier head of the British Army.

How are you, very well? With great love we have received the letter you sent to us by Amanu, son of Kantiba Walda Ghiorghis and now we send (to you) Lidj Madhani, a Dāla Gamis of Dedjadj Gobaze, the son of Shum Gadai, with a letter. As for us, we will not fail in doing all in our power and you, may you not fail to do for us all what we will ask for. If news reach us or any one comes (against us) saying, I am the King's, we will send a letter, or we will come ourselves with all speed, Sālugodbo and we, we have all the same mind, the letters you send us we will forward them all to all.

Written the 7th of Hadār (16th November) at Halai.

IOL, AOC. I, p. 1555, translation enclosed in Merewether to Marriott, Mulkutto, 23 Nov. 1867 (pp. 1537–1553). According to Merewether the letter “comes from a chief portion of the elders of the large district of Okule Kussai, and is the first satisfactory result of his Excellency's proclamation”. The proclamation referred to was issued throughout northern Ethiopia on Napier's arrival at Mulkutto, encouraging the people to rise against the rule of Tēwodros and to support the British. In a letter dated 25 November Merewether states that “Eighty-three villages of Akkolo Kussai . . . have tendered me their services (FO 401/2, p. 913).

The letter is reproduced with the orthography and punctuation of the English copy in the India Office records. “Dala Gamis” is obviously “*bale qemīs*”, i.e. an appointee of the king, “the bearer of a shirt (or gown)”.

Kasa Mirča to Robert Napier, 26 Nov. 1867

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God; letter sent by Dejasmach Kassai, Head of the Chiefs of Ethiopia, to reach the Chief of the English soldiers. How are you, very well?

By the Christ's grace, I have recovered the throne of my ancestors, of Mikael, of Walda Selassie, of Sabagadis. Of old we are house friends, from Consul Salt till down to Plowden. I expected to receive a letter from you, but as it has retarded I have sent myself. I know not what you have come for; if I knew it, it would please me. We are house friends. I am sending Lej Murcha, the son of Atu Wurke, who knows my language and yours. I am sending (what I have in) my heart, and you, too, send to me (what you have in) your heart.

In the year 1860 from Ch. N. in the time of John the Evangelist, in the month of Hadar, the 18th, written Wednesday.

T.J. Holland and H.M. Hozier, *Record of the Expedition to Abyssinia*, London, 1870, I, p. 320. By stating that he had recovered the “throne” of his ancestors, *Ras Mika'el Sihul* (18th century), *Ras Welde Sillasē* (ACTA, I, nos 2–5) and *Dejjasmach Subagadis* (ACTA, I, nos 21–23), Kasa Mirča does not necessarily claim the throne of Ethiopia. Apparently he felt concerned about the arrival of a foreign army on the Red Sea coast without his having been informed beforehand. Merewether, however, replied that the British had already sent him two letters and were disappointed that they had not reached Kasa. He then asked to have the proclamation about the purpose of the mission published throughout Kasa's domains, and to be supplied with grain and other provisions, including mules. For Kasa's messenger Mirča Werqē, see ACTA, I, no. 89.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu [1868?]

በሰሙዳን፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመሃረረ፡ ቀደሰ፡ ፊርድ፡ ስምላክ፡ ነገሠ፡
 ነገሠተ፡ ቲዎድሮስ፡ ደድረከ፡ ከእኩረ፡ የተመኙ፡ እግደት፡ ሰነ
 በተሺ፡ እኔ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ ደመስገን፡ ደህና፡ ነኝ፡ እናተገ
 ግም፡ እነወይዘሮ፡ ሠናይተ፡ ግም፡ የቤተግ፡ ሰዎች፡ ሁሉ፡
 እግደት፡ ሰነበተችሁ፡ አለ፡ በደልኛ፡ እደዘኸ፡ እኔ፡ የጉ
 ደሰሺ፡ ጉዳይ፡ ሁሉ፡ በእግዚአብሔር፡ ኃይል፡ ደህ፡ ጉ
 ደልኛ፡ ብላኩ፡ ላኪብኛ፡ እግዚአብሔር፡ እኩረ፡ ስገናግን
 ፡ ፍረስ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your mother, and to *Weyzero* Senayit and her friends, and to all the people of my house on my behalf, "How have you been?"

Do not be afraid, my sister. Whatever you need, by the power of God, until God brings us together, send to me saying, "This I lack."

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.



BL, Orient. 829, fol. 27, Amharic original. This letter and the following four were written most probably towards the the end of the period September 1867 to March 1868, when Tēwodros was marching the remains of his army from Debre Tabor to Meqdela. Rassam notes on 4 January that "the King was able, for the first time after a long interval, to re-commence employing his regular couriers . . . he sent to request his favourite wife, Itamanyo, to prepare some good dishes and dispatch them to the camp . . ." (*Narrative*, II, pp. 256–257).

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu [1868?]

በአዎ፡አብ፡ወወረድ፡ወመገጥሙ፡ፊት፡ዳብ፡ፊት፡አዎሰኝ፡
 ንጉሠ፡ነገሥተ፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ደድረኩ፡ከአቴ፡
 የተሞቻ፡አንዲት፡ሰነበት፡አይ፡አገዚአብሔር፡
 ይመስገን፡ደሳኛ፡ነኝ፡አናትሽንም፡አነወ፡
 ይዘር፡ሠናይትንም፡የቤቴን፡ሰዎች፡ሁሉ፡
 አንዲት፡ሰነበተችሁ፡አሰ፡በይራኝ፡
 አይዘኸ፡■አገዚአብሔር፡ባለ፡ቀን፡አንገናኛለን

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your mother, and to *Weyzero* Senayit and her people, and to all the people of my household on my behalf, "How have you been?"

Do not be afraid. We shall meet on the day God permits.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.



BL, Orient. 829, fol. 29, Amharic original. For date see no 228.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu [1868?]

በገሙ፡ከ፡ብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመንግሥት፡ከ፡ቅዱስ፡፩፡አምላክ፡ጥጉሠ፡ነገሥ
 ቱ፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ድፍረት፡ከለ፡ቴጊ፡ፎተመኙ፡እጅግ፡ደግሞ፡አገሩ፡አገሩ፡
 እግረ፡ክብሩ፡ይመስገን፡ደግሞ፡ነገ፡በእግረ፡ክብሩ፡ኃይል፡
 ደግሞ፡ነገ፡አይዘረ፡እናት፡ሽንግሥ፡እናወደዘሮ፡ሠናይግሥ፡የቢ
 ቴግ፡ሰዎች፡ሁሉ፡እንደቶ፡ሰነበታችሁ፡አሰ፡በይልኝ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.
 King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God. By the power of God, I am well. Do not be afraid. Say to your mother, and to *Weyzero* Senayit and her people, and to all the people of my household on my behalf, "How have you been?"



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

BL, Orient. 829, fol. 30, Amharic original. For date see no 228.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu [1868?]

በገሙ፡ከ፡ብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመንግሥት፡ከ፡ቅዱስ፡፩፡አምላክ፡ጥጉሠ፡ነገሥ
 ገሥቱ፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ድፍረት፡ከለ፡ቴጊ፡ፎተመኙ፡እጅግ፡ደግሞ፡አገሩ፡አገሩ፡
 እኔ፡እግረ፡ክብሩ፡ይመስገን፡ደግሞ፡ነገ፡በእግረ፡ክብሩ፡ኃይል፡
 ደግሞ፡ነገ፡አይዘረ፡እናት፡ሽንግሥ፡እናወደዘሮ፡ሠናይግሥ፡የቢ
 ቴግ፡ሰዎች፡ሁሉ፡እንደቶ፡ሰነበታችሁ፡አሰ፡በይልኝ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.
 King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your mother, and to *Weyzero* Senayit and her people, and to all the people of my household on my behalf, "How have you been?" By the power of God, I am well. Do not be afraid. Now I shall be coming to you.



Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

BL, Orient. 829, fol. 31, Amharic original. For date see no 228.

Tēwodros to Yetemeññu [1868?]

በከመ አባ ወወልድ ወመሳፊስ ቅዱስ ስም ላክ፡፡ ገገሁ፡፡
 ነገሥተ-ቴዎድሮስ ይደረክ ከኦቲጊ የተመኙ፡፡ አንዲት-ሰ
 ነበትኪ እኔ፡፡ አገዛክ-በሐረ ይመከገን፡፡ ይገናኝ፡፡ አይዘሉ፡፡
 እቲ የኖቲ ልጅ ነፍስና ሥጋ የ ካልተለዩ የ ሳይሉ ስል
 ቀርቦ፡፡ በአግዚአብሔር፡፡ ኃይል፡፡

አናትሺን እነወይዘሮ ሠናይትን፡፡ አንዲት ሰነታችሁ አሉ፡፡
 በይልሻ፡፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Itēgē* Yetemeññu. How have you been? I am well, thank God.

Do not be afraid, my sister, my mother's daughter. Unless my body and soul be separated, by the power of God, it shall not happen that I shall not see you.

Say to your mother, and to *Wey-zero* Senayit and her people, and to all the people of my household on my behalf, "How have you been?"

BL, Orient. 829, fol. 32, Amharic original. For date see no 228.

To Mr. Antoine d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyos Ze'abediye), scholar of the Gi'iz and Latin languages.

Last year in Meskerem, I left Halay. I looked (lit. asked) for *Meṣhafa Mahiyewī* and *Hohite Birhan* at Gundigundī [but] I did not find them. I did not find them at Çheleqot. I did not find them at Zhemedo, at Lalibela [or] at Gennete Maryam. But then at Yeneja I found *Ichegē* Mahṣentu's *Hohite Birhan*, *Meṣhafa Mahiyewī* [and] *Misṫire Ṣigēyat*. While I was copying, Tēwodros came.

When I was copying this, having fled to a safe wilderness together with my friends, I found a white stone which was round like an egg. Inside there was a sound. When I crushed it, I found many transparent stones, which cut glass. Enclosed I am sending you one small stone as a specimen for you to look at. Open the enclosed and look. The others, however, I have wrapped in paper and sent them to you. In Gi'iz it is called *bīrelē*, in European diamond (*dīmant*). It cuts the glass of spectacles. I have tried it; it cut. There is a lot in the place where I found this. Mineral coal has also been found. When I put it in the fire, it burned. Then it turned into white ashes.

Hohite Birhan, *Ṣedale Birhan* [and] *Ṣedale Ṣehay* are the same. *Meṣhafa Mahiyewī* [and] *Seyfe Sillasē* are the same. *Misṫire Ṣigēyat* [and] *Maryam Meseret* are the same, but they are called by different names in different countries (lit. by a different name in each country).

Give me credit for working hard. Do not disregard me. May God be your helper. Remember that I have no other helper.

Receive [this] from me as a gift according to the Ethiopian custom.

Debtera Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fol. 210, Amharic original. Antoine d'Abbadie has annotated this letter "reçu à Paris 1869 Janvier 26". It was clearly written before—but probably not long before—the fall of Tēwodros. In no. 160 Asseggaheñ mentions that he has found the books called *Meṣhafa Mahiyewī* and *Hohite Birhan* at Gennete Maryam. There seems to be some confusion, however, for here he says that it was only in Yeneja that he found the books. At any rate, since Asseggaheñ was back at Halay in January 1866, when he wrote no. 160, and left Halay in Meskerem "last year" according to the above, this could not have been written earlier than the year following the one beginning in September 1866, that is between September 1867 and March 1868.

What Asseggaheñ calls diamonds (*bīrelē* i GI'iz) is probably quartz crystals. When he calls the stones *ṫiru* (good, nice, clear) it is no doubt their transparency that he is describing; cf. *ṫiru wiha* (clear water).

Tēwodros to Hormuzd Rassam, 13 Jan. [1868]

በከሙ ለብ ወ መ ል ድ ወ መ ን ራ ስ ቀ ዱ ስ ስ አ ሃ ሀ ሳ ነ ።
 ግ ጉ ሠ ፡ ጎ ጉ ሠ ፡ ተ ም ድ ሮ ስ ፡ ይ ድ ራ ስ ስ ሳ ፡ ህ ር ም
 ዝ ፡ ራ ስ አ ሃ ሙ ፡ እ ጉ ዲ ት ፡ ሰ ጎ በ ት ህ ፡ እ ኔ ፡ እ ግ ዚ አ ብ ሔ ር
 ፡ ይ መ ስ ገ ግ ፡ ይ ህ ፍ ፡ ጎ ግ ፡ እ ጎ እ ፉ ፡ ኪ ም ሮ ን ግ ፡ ሀ ኪ ም
 ብ ስ ፡ ን ገ ግ ፡ እ ፉ ፡ ፕ ሪ ዩ ግ ፡ ወ ግ ድ ሞ ፍ ስ ግ ፡ ሁ ሉ ፡ እ
 ን ዲ ት ፡ ሰ ጎ በ ት ፍ ሁ ፡ አ ለ በ ሰ ሰ ል ግ ፡ እ ኔ ም ፡ በ እ ግ ዚ
 አ ብ ሔ ር ፡ ኃ ይ ል ፡ መ ጥ ፍ ሰ ሁ ፡ እ ግ ተ ግ ፡ ወ ዳ ጀ ግ
 ፡ የ ተ ጣ ሳ ግ ፡ እ ል ም ሠ ል ህ ፡ አ ደ ዘ ህ ፡ ባ ገ ር ህ ፡ ሰ ም
 ፍ ፡ እ ል ስ ፡ ጎ ሙ ፡ እ ግ ዲ ህ ፡ አ ድ ር ጊ ህ ፡ ይ ሰ ሁ ፡ ወ
 ት ሮ ፡ ከ ም ወ ድ ህ ፡ ፍ ቀ ሬ ፡ እ ል ስ ስ ል ል ሁ ፡ ብ ስ ም ፡
 እ ግ ዚ አ ብ ሔ ር ፡ ሰ ም ገ ፍ ግ ፡ ቢ አ በ ህ ግ ፡ የ ል ሳ
 ፍ ጎ ግ ፡ እ ግ ሞ ል ሰ ጎ ፡ እ ግ ተ ግ ፡ የ ም ጠ ሳ በ ት
 ል ብ ፡ የ ሰ ግ ፡ እ ግ ዚ አ ብ ሔ ር ፡ ይ ው ቃ ል ፡

በጥር በ፩ ቀን ተጣፈ።

1-2
1871



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God. King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to Mr. Cameron (Kēmiron) and his companions, Dr. Blanc (Blong), Mr. Prideaux (Pīdo), and all your brothers on my behalf, "How have you been?"

By the power of God, I have arrived. Let it not seem to you that I have a quarrel with you, my friend. Do not be afraid. It was because [I was] furious against your countrymen that I acted in this manner. I have not reduced the love which I have always had for you.

If God makes it possible for us to meet, we shall discuss what is in our hearts. God knows that I do not hate (lit. have a heart which hates) you.

Written on the 5th day of Ṭirr.

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 24, Amharic original. This letter followed a verbal message on 4 January about the mortar, to which Rassam replied at once. There were further verbal messages on 6 and 12 January. After the above letter the communication was only by verbal messages until the middle of March, when Tēwodros reached the foot of Meqdela and wrote what was probably his last letter to the British envoy (no. 238).

Kasa Mirča to Robert Napier [4 Feb. 1868]

The letter you sent me by Major Grant and Consul Münzinger has reached me. Your present having pleased me has been accepted by me. But I should like to see each other from eye to eye, and to speak together what is in our heart. I stayed here till to-day, waiting till we meet, and to receive you, to conduct you on, and to speak you my mind. I had no other business. Now I will start in two weeks. As to the markets you wish to have established in the places where you will camp, I will have proclaimed an arwadj (proclamation), and will help with all my power.

Holland and Hozier, I, p. 396, most probably the translation of an Amharic original, omitting the usual opening phrases. Unfortunately the originals of this and the following document were not preserved among the Napier papers deposited in the India Office Library in London, and we have failed to locate them elsewhere. Since Kasa's intermediary Mirča Werqē knew English, it is also quite possible that the message was oral, and was written down by Mirča in English. The date emerges from the context as described by Holland and Hozier. The text is reproduced here as printed.

Kasa apparently knew that his friendship and assistance were important to the British, and felt both suspicious and annoyed that they did not make greater efforts to come and meet with him.

Mirča Werqē was reported to be "the chief minister of Prince Kasai of Tigré, and proved the friend and help of the British army" (Theophil Waldmeier, *Autobiography*, London, n. d., p. 42). He continued to be an influential person at the court, particularly in foreign affairs, and was sent to England with his nephew to receive the ratification of the Adwa treaty of 1884.

Kasa Mirča to William Merewether [5 Feb. 1868]

The answer to my letter has reached me, and has pleased me. You know that I have waited till now, many days for you. Now don't begrudge to me for two weeks. It is you who are my first friend, make me now friends with Sir R. Napier. Manage it somehow, that we may see each other eye to eye, and may speak our hearts. I will proclaim a proclamation for establishing markets at the camps, and will help with all my power.

Holland and Hozier, I, p. 396, most probably the translation of an Amharic original, omitting the usual opening phrases; reproduced as printed. See above for date and context.

Catholic clergy of Ethiopia to Alessandro Barnabò [Feb. 1868]

ልዑል፡ ጌታችን፡ ሆይ፡፡
 አገታችን፡ አቡነ፡ ጴጥሮስን፡
 በፍቅር፡ ተቀብልነ፡ የሚገባ፡
 ትእዛዛቸውን፡ ሁሉ፡ ፈጸመ
 ነ። ፈላ፡ ገን፡ ትመሕርተ፡ ክ
 ርስቶስን፡ እትመው፡ የፊ
 ተኛውን፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ትታች
 ሁ፡ በዚህ፡ ብቻ፡ እስተመሩ፡
 ብለው፡ አዘዙን፡ አኛም፡ እ
 ገታች፡ አቡነ፡ ያሰቆብ፡ አሉነ፡
 ቢያንኤሪ፡ ያሳተመዋትን፡
 ትመሕርተ፡ ክርስቶስን፡ ት
 ተው፡ ሌላ፡ መጽሐፍ፡ ጽፈ
 ሙ፡ በዚህ፡ ብቻ፡ እስተመ
 ሩ፡ አሉን፡፡
 ዲግ መኛም፡ ከሞት፡ ጦ
 ቴት፡ ቀን፡ በፊት፡ በሁድ፡ ቀን፡
 በቤተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ ስብከት፡
 ሲናገሩ፡ አኔ፡ ያስተማርኋች
 ሁ፡ ቃል፡ ከቅዱሳን፡ መጻሕፍ
 ት፡ ከቅዱሳን፡ ቤተ፡ ክርስቲያ
 ን፡ የወጣ፡ ነው፡ አንድ፡ ክልቤ፡
 ያነቃሁት፡ አዲዱ ለመና፡ ስኔ፡
 በኋላ፡ የሚመጣ፡ ሰው፡ ይህ፡
 የያሰቆብ፡ ትመራት፡ ከገቱ፡ ነ
 ሙ፡ ሕልም፡ ነው፡ ክፉ፡ ነው፡
 የሚል፡ ቢመጣ፡ ሆነ፡ ክፉ፡

O Highness, our master!
 We received Bishop Pierre (*Abune*
Pētros) with love and carried out all ap-
 propriate orders of his.
 Later he printed a catechism (*Timhirte*
Kristos) [and] ordered us to abandon the
 earlier book and teach only with this one.
 And we [said how can we] abandon the
 catechism which our fathers Bishop De
 Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*) and Bishop
 Biancheri (*Abune Bīyankēri*) have pub-
 lished, and teach only with this other one
 which he has written?
 Secondly, a few days before his death,
 when [De Jacobis] was preaching on a
 Sunday in the church, he said, "The
 words I have taught came from the Holy
 Scriptures and the Holy Church, and not
 from what I have contrived in my heart.
 Therefore if someone who comes after
 me says that the teaching of De Jacobis
 is vain, fanciful and bad, do not listen, un-
 less Rome says it is bad. If, however, she
 says it is bad, may I be cursed (lit. I have
 cursed myself)".
 Because of this, when we wrote twice
 and asked him to give us permission to
 write to Rome, he prevented us, on the
 30th of Hidar, from taking the Holy
 Communion and from celebrating mass.
 Moreover, on the 26th of Tīrr he came
 to Halay and excommunicated eight of us
 priests, as Arius [was excommunicated].
 Your Highness! Now, since we and
 the people are worried concerning this
 matter, we beg you to send us the verdict
 (lit. response) of your judgement.
 The humble and obedient Catholic
 priests of Ethiopia, true servants of Your
 Beatitude.

fol. 1252r

ነው፡ ግለሌት፡ እትስሎ፡ ኦርስዮ
 ግዮ፡ ክፍ፡ ነው፡ ብትል፡ ክኑሞ፡ ኦ
 ራሌ፡ እረግሜ አለሁ፡ አለ፡፡
 ስለዚህ፡ ወደ፡ ሮማ፡ እንደ፡ ገደ፡
 ቶ፡ ይፍ፡ ቀደል፡ ብለ፡ ሁለት፡
 ጊዜ፡ ብንጽፍላቸው፡ ከትቀረ
 ቡ፡ እትቀድሱ፡ ብለው፡ በግደር፡
 አመጡ፡ ብለንሱ፡፡
 ደግሞኛም፡ በጥር፡ በኾኔ፡ ቀ
 ሃ፡ ወደ፡ ታላይ፡ ወጥተው፡ ለ፲
 ግህናት፡ አወገዙ፡ እንደ፡ አር
 ዮስ፡፡
 ልዑል፡ ሆይ፡ አሁንም፡፡ ክኛም፡
 ሐዘቡም፡ በዚህ፡ ነገር፡ ተጨ
 ጓቀናልና፡ የፍርድ ሥነ፡ ሥላ
 ሽ፡ ተሉ፡ እንዲሰዱልን፡ እንለ
 ሥናለን፡፡

ዘብዕዓገን፡ አግብርት፡ ጥቀ፡
 ትሑታን፡ ወቅኑደን፡ ግህናት፡
 ግብረግደድ፡ ዘኢትዮጵያ፡፡
 ተክለ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ጉላ፡
 ዮሐንሴ፡
 ተክለ፡ ሃይማኖት፡፡
 ገብረ፡ ማድሳን፡
 ገብረ፡ የሱክ፡
 ኪዳኑ፡ ማርያም፡
 ወልደ፡ አቡዮ፡
 ገብረ፡ አጋዕዝት፡፡

fol. 1252v

Tekle Haymanot Gwela
 Yohannis
 Tekle Haymanot
 Gebre Medhin (Madhin)
 Gebre İyyesus (Yesus)
 Kidane (Kidanu) Maryam
 Welde Abuyē
 Gebre Aga'izt.

ASCPF.SRC, Africa, vol. 7, fol. 1252, Amharic original. This letter demonstrates very clearly the problems which the new vicar apostolic, Mgr. Pierre-Louis Bel, known as *Abune* Pētros had to face when he took charge of the Catholic mission in northern Ethiopia. The great respect for De Jacobis personally, combined with the self-assurance which he had fostered, apparently provided his followers with sufficient courage to stand up against their new bishop.

On the crisis in the mission generally, see O'Mahoney, II, pp. 65–66, 70–72. His narrative, however, is based entirely on the correspondence of the foreign missionaries.

The eight priests who signed the letter represented Hēbo, Halay, Segeneytī and Aw-hinē. Their conflict with the bishop had become acute when they refused in writing to adopt his new catechism and, as the letter states, had been prevented “from taking the Holy Communion and from celebrating mass”. Now they had by their own account been excommunicated in the strongest possible terms, as Arians. The final break took place on 3 February 1868, and the letter was most probably written soon after. O'Mahoney describes these events as chronicled by Bel and Delmonte and does not mention excommunication, only Bel's threats of suspension and an “ultimatum that the dispute would be submitted straight to the Holy See”.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach Mr. Hormuzd Rassam (Hirmiz Resam). How have you been? I am well, thank God. Say to your brothers, Dr. Blanc (Blong) [and] Mr. Prideaux (Prīdo), Mr. Cameron (Kēmiron) and his party, and Mr. Stern (Kokeb) and his party, on my behalf, "How have you been?"

I have no quarrel with you, no grudge against you, my friend. Before, when I sent you to Meqdela and told them to guard you, they sent [word] back to me that they had put you in chains because they were afraid. But now, since God has brought me, your friend, to you, may the chains be removed from you and may you be released.

We shall watch you like that until we see the attitude of your masters. Mr. Flad (Flat) had brought your provisions from your country and given them to me. Since the country had rebelled against me I had no porters, and they were spoilt.

I have sent you two thousand thalers through Mr. Flad, *Aleqa* Ingida, and *Yeshaleqa* Liyih; accept them. Since your goods have been spoiled, I have sent you one hundred sheep and fifty heifers; accept them. By the power of God, if He grants me to arrive safely, we shall see each other face to face and talk together. Do not worry!

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

IOL, Eur F 103, fol. 106, Amharic original; fol.107, English translation. Tēwodros wrote this letter as he was approaching Meqdela, in reply to a letter from Rassam dated 16 March congratulating the king on his progress (Rassam, II, p. 273). It was received on 18 March, and Rassam's chains were immediately removed.

Tēwodros to Bīsewwir [March 1868]

በስሙ፡አብ፡ወወልድ፡ወመዓረኪ፡ቀዱስ፡፩፡ኢምሳክ፡ግጉሠ፡
 ነገሥተ፡ቴዎድሮስ፡ጌድረክ፡ከራክ፡ቢስውር፡ከቢትወደደ
 ቾ፡ከደጃዝማቻቹ፡ከምበሎች፡ከዩኦሎች፡ከሃላሎች፡
 ከሀላሎች፡ከሀላሎች፡አንደኛ፡ሰነበታቸው፡አይ፡አገ
 ዚአብሔር፡ይመስገን፡ደጃዮ፡ነኛ፡አቶ፡ፍላጎጥ፡አሰ
 ቃ፡አንግዳግ፡የሸሰቃ፡ፈይህግ፡ልኪባቸዒሰሁ፡አ
 ቶ፡ርሳም፡አገር፡ብረቱግ፡ፈታታቸው፡በግደደው፡ይ
 ጠባቅ፡ከከፍራው፡ሁኖ፡ካገሩ፡የመጣሰት፡ከግ
 ቅ፡ተበድረ፡አበላሽቸበት፡አሰሁኖ፡ሁሰት፡ሽብር፡
 ጸጡት፡መቶ፡በግ፡አምሳ፡ፍሪዳ፡ከጡት፡በነጻ
 ፍላጎጥ፡ፈታ፡ሽ፡ተመቶ፡ብርሳቸ፡ፍላጎ፡ሥጡል
 ሾ፡ግገዘቡግ፡ተበድረዋሰሁኖ፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach *Ras* Bīsewwir, the *bītweddeds*, the *dejjazmaches*, the captains, the lieutenants, the sergeants, the corporals, the lance corporals. How have you been? I am well, thank God.

I have sent Mr. Flad (Flat), *Aleqa* Ingida and *Shaleqa* Liyih to you. Release Mr Rassam (Risam) from his fetters; watch him like that in the place [where he is]. I borrowed the provisions sent for him from his country and they were spoiled (lit. I spoiled them), so give him in the presence of Mr. Flad and his companions two thousand thalers, one hundred sheep and fifty heifers. Give Mr. Flad one thousand one hundred thalers, since I have borrowed his money.



ከራክ፡ቢስውር፡

Seal: King of Kings Tēwodros of Ethiopia. He who is victorious (lit. the supported in victory), Tēwodros, king of Abyssinia.

National Army Museum, London, 5910-71-1, Amharic original and English translation. The translation is quite literal, except that “the Governor of Magdala” and “my secretary” are added to explain who *Ras* Bīsewwir and *Aleqa* Ingida are. “*Bītweddeds*” is translated literally “my beloved people”, although it is quite obviously used as a title in the letter. The purely military titles are also translated literally as “commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, of tens, and of fives”. At the bottom of the translation the writer has added that the letter was found “in the record hut in the Arsenal at Magdala on the 15th April 1868”. There is also a letter (no. 87-2 in the same file) from a participant in the campaign, Captain F. James, to his mother, stating that his loot included two Amharic bibles and two very interesting letters from Tēwodros to the governor of Meqdela. One of these is obviously the letter published here. The other is quite possibly no. 227 above. Two letters in the museum’s collections (nos 86-1 and -2), written in March 1900 by Rassam, deal with the question of Tēwodros’s letters. In one of these Rassam writes that he has in his possession a letter addressed to himself about the opening of his fetters (see also Rassam, II, p. 273). This is no doubt no. 238 above.

Tēwodros was dissatisfied with *Ras* Bīsewwir’s handling of his command at Meqdela (no. 227) and after the king’s arrival there he was immediately replaced (Rassam, II, pp. 280-1, 283).

Minilik to Robert Napier [March? 1868]

Having heard that you have come to Abyssinia, I was first willing to send to you in a suitable manner, but my enemies who are between us are stopping the road, and divide us, and so it became difficult to send a person of note, together with a man knowing the country.

Now I send you one of my servants with this letter, to make acquaintance with you. Far from being the enemy of the Queen of England, I am her friend. Before, I had intended to liberate the captives and come very near Megdala; but as the business seemed impossible, and my Army had no more provisions I returned to my country. Now I am far off, but I have no hesitation (to help). I like to help you, and want in no wise to trouble you.

As to my friendship to the Queen, it is not a matter of to-day. I had sent to London, and have received a friendly answer; perhaps you have read it.

May God give you full welfare.

(L.S.)

Holland and Hozier, II, p. 451, incomplete English translation. The original is unfortunately not preserved among the Napier papers in the India Office Library, nor have we been able to locate it elsewhere.

Minilik had made an appearance with his army near Meqdela in November 1867, but had withdrawn without attempting to attack the fortress (Welde Maryam, p. 42 of the Amharic text). This could be the action referred to as an attempt to liberate the captives. In March 1868, however, following a discussion with Cardinal Massaja about the prospects of the Napier expedition, Minilik took a new initiative to march on Meqdela; but it was called off, reportedly because his men wanted to celebrate Easter at home (Marcus, p. 29). It was in this context that the above letter was most probably written. The "sending" to London referred to is the letter to Queen Victoria (no. 216).

The letter is reproduced with the orthography and punctuation of the printed text.

Tēwodros to Robert Napier [11 April 1868]

በሰላም አብ ወወልድ ወመኅራ ከቅዱስ ልሳን ልሳን በሰከትነት ባንድነት በነርከቶኩ
 ያመነው ካሳ፡ መቼም ያገራ፡ ሰዎች በእግዚአብሔር ኃይል እኔ ካልወረድሁ ሰዎች
 ሁሉን ተቆይተዋል፡ አቶተውም፡ ክርቲ ደኑን ሁሉን ልበት፡ አሰኝሁ ስላኝ ካረመ
 ራ እገር፡ አብብቸው ወገድ ይሰላቶ ቆንጆ፡ አሰኝ ወገድ ይሰላቶ ቆንጆ፡ ነበረች
 ትላንትናም የሞተ ባት ትኖራለች፡ ሽማግሌ፡ ልጅ ይሰላው ባልቲት ልጅ ይሰላ
 ሰት፡ እኔ የምዘውራቸው ብዙ በከተማ ይሰላ፡ እግዚአብሔር ከሠጣችሁ ፍ
 ቀድሞ አቸው ይረመኑ እገር ነው ነ፡ ያገራ ሰው ገብር ሠራት ግብ ብደብሰው
 እሞቢ ብሎ ተጣለኝ፡ እናንተ ግን በሰላቶ በተገዛ፡ ሰው አቸንቶች ሁኝ፡ እኔ
 ን፡ ወደጤኝ የተከተሉኝ፡ ሰዎች አንድ እርሱ ልርተው ሰላላኝ ሼሹ፡ ብ
 ትቃጡ አቸው ከርጡ፡ ሰዎች ጋራ አልነበርቱም፡ ጌታነኝ ሰላላኝ ባልሰላ
 መድፍ ሠታገል፡ ውድነው፡ ያገራ ሰው የረረኝ ጅሃማ ምት፡ ይዞ አል፡
 አከልሞ አል፡ እደሰ፡ አከፍኝ ምክንያት፡ ይሰጣኝ ነበረ፡ እኔ ከከፍ ሁበት
 እግዚአብሔር መልካም ይሠጡ ስኝ ይደውደድ ይሁኑ፡ እግዚአብሔር
 ቢሠጡ ሁሉን ልገዛ፡ አሰብ፡ ነበረብኝ፡ እግዚአብሔር ቢነሣኝ ልሞት
 አሳይ ይህ ነበረ፡ ከተወልድኩኝ እከታሁኝ ወገድ እጅግ ልረኝ ብዙ ትልቅ
 ወትሞ ነበረ፡ ሰዎች ሳይሆኑ ተነከቸ፡ ማራጋት ልማድ ነበረኝ፡ ርረሰማ
 ከሰከለኝ፡ ትላንትና በደከታ ይደራችሁ ሰዎች እግዚአብሔር፡ እንደ
 እደድርጋችሁ እንኳን የሀበክ፡ ጠላቲን ሊያሩ ሰላም ዘምቸ ተሰኝ
 ን፡ አከሰቅቃለሁ፡ መከራኝ ነበር፡ ወገድ ይቀራ ወገድ ተመልሱ፡ እደ
 ታቀፍሃም፡

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God in Trinity and Unity (lit. Oneness).

Kasa who believes in Christ.

Well then, my compatriots, will you not stop your running away unless I, by the power of God, attack (lit. come down) together with you. Believing that I had power, I brought all the Christians to the land of the heathen. There are young women who have no husbands, and there are (lit. were) young women who [once] had husbands, and there may be those who lost their husbands yesterday. There are many childless old men and childless elderly women, who live in my camp, and for whom I provide. Provide (lit. allow) for them from what God has given to you, for this is a heathen land.

When I used to tell my countrymen, "Submit to taxation and discipline," they refused and quarrelled with me. But you have defeated me through men obedient to discipline. The people who loved me and followed me fled, abandoning me, because they were afraid of a single bullet. When you attacked them, I was not among the people who fled. Alas, believing myself to be a great man, I kept on fighting with worthless artillery.

My countrymen were giving ten reasons [for opposing me] saying, "He has adopted the religion of the Europeans, or he has become a Muslim." Out of the evil I have done to them, may God bring (lit. give) good. Let it be as He wishes.

If God had allowed me, I had planned to rule all; if God prevented me, [my intention was] to die. This was my plan. From when I was born until now, no man knew [how to] take hold of my hand. When people fled, I used to (lit. it was my habit to) rise and reassure them. Darkness prevented me.

You people who passed yesterday [night] rejoicing, may God not make you like me. Let alone my Abyssinian enemies, I had thought of marching to Jerusalem and driving out the Turks. He who has subjected men will not in turn be subjected by [other] men.

National Library, Addis Abeba, Amharic original. This letter was written the day after the disastrous battle of Arogē on Good Friday the 10th of April.

An English translation was published at the time, *i.e.* in the official account of the expedition (Holland and Hozier, pp. 40–42). Though not a literal translation, it is substantially correct with one exception. Instead of Tēwodros's kind words of farewell to his enemies, "You who passed yesterday [night] rejoicing, may God not make you like me", the translation implies that Tēwodros, in a vindictive spirit, wrote, "may God do unto you as He has done to me". It was only recently that the original of the letter turned up at an auction (together with no. 242) and was purchased for the Ethiopian government. A new translation with a comprehensive annotation was then published by David Appleyard and Richard Pankhurst, "The Last Two Letters of Emperor Tewodros II of Ethiopia (April 11 and 12 1868)", *JRAS*, 1987, 1, pp. 23–42. The only important difference between their version and the above is that they translated *tilantinna* in the fifth line "tomorrow" instead of "yesterday", which caused Pankhurst to speculate that Tēwodros was thinking of further fighting and bloodshed.

The letter shows signs of mental confusion. The first sentence after the invocation is clearly directed to the king's own people and expresses his deep disappointment over the outcome of battle; he regrets that he did not personally lead the attack. The remainder of the document is directed to Sir Robert Napier, the commander of the invading army. Fearful that the surrounding Muslim Oromos might take revenge for earlier defeats and cruelties, Tēwodros hands over the responsibility for the defenceless women and old people in the fortress to the victor.

Then his mind turns to what he perceived as the causes of his political and military failure, the problems of establishing law and order among his people and of modernizing his army, both in terms of discipline and armament—the "worthless artillery" which had kept him from leading his warriors against the invaders. He blames his opponents in the country for having undermined his authority with accusations of apostasy—becoming a Protestant or a Muslim.

Finally he considers his personal fate. He is fully aware that he has lost his royal position; he styles himself "Kasa" and not "King of Kings Tēwodros". And he has made his choice: suicide rather than the ultimate humiliation of surrender. Thus the letter is a kind of testament—a message intended not only for Napier, but for posterity.

Tēwodros's accusation against his warriors that they had behaved like cowards, "afraid of a single bullet" is grossly unfair. Before even getting within range with their inferior matchlocks, they were met by a barrage of fire from the latest quick-firing Snider rifles of the Europeans, which permitted 6–7 volleys a minute and were effective up to 500 meters. The encounter in fact turned into a massacre with 700–800 Ethiopians killed and 1200–1500 wounded against only 20 wounded on the British side. See Markham, pp. 320–321; Rubenson, *Survival*, p. 264; Darrell Bates, *The Abyssinian Difficulty*, Oxford, 1979, pp. 183–185.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God.

King of Kings Tēwodros. May [this letter] reach the friend of the great queen of England. I have sent to you through your servant. Because we have met unexpectedly over a matter that I had not foreseen, I was prevented from writing your name as “such-and-such”. [The reason for] the letter which I sent with Mr. Flad (Flat) and his companions yesterday, [was] that I had quarrelled with you, my friends, and secondly, that I had seen the discipline of the warfare of your country, and so, seeing that my countrymen were becoming lawless and that they refused to relent (lit. return to me) though I killed them and punished them when I became furious and vehement, Satan awakened (lit. placed) in me the thought that I should die by my own gun.

O! realizing that I ought not to leave, abandoning this whole army without a provider, and that God would turn against me, I wrote to you in haste, concerned that my words would fail to reach you when I was in the throes of death. But after I had written to you, when I cocked the hammer of my gun and put it into my mouth, though I pulled and pulled the trigger, it refused [to fire]. When people came running and tore it out of my mouth, it went off.

Since, however, it was the will of God (lit. God said to me) that I should not die but survive—aware that your heart would yearn [for him]—I sent Mr. Rassam and [then] passed the night. As (tomorrow) today is Easter, permit me to send heifers for you. When I sent your letter back, I did not think that we should meet on earth, but rather in heaven.

[The reason] why I passed the night without arranging to have [the body of] my friend *Fītawrarī* Gebriye [taken care of] is that I thought that if I were to die, they should bury us all together, but since I am still alive, permit me to bury him.

As regards what you have told me, [namely] that all the Europeans should come, let alone the others, if my friends Mr. Waldmeier and his companions want, all right, let them go (lit. come) to you. However, as I, your friend, am a lover of crafts, see to it that I am not left empty-handed (lit. without anyone).

National Library, Addis Abeba, Amharic original. This letter was written on Easter Day, 12 April 1868, after the king's first attempt to commit suicide had failed. Apparently he had started to hope that he would not have to surrender to the British general after releasing all the Europeans at Meqdela and escorting them to the British camp. In paragraph three the writer first wrote “tomorrow”, then immediately corrected himself without, however, striking out the wrong word.

The gift of the heifers was obviously intended as a peace offering. Whether they were accepted as such, conditionally or unconditionally, has been a matter of controversy. Napier reported that Rassam and some others had simply acquired the impression that he had accepted the gift, while Waldmeier recalled that the general had said that he would refuse to accept them *until* all the foreigners had reached his camp in safety. Part of the problem was that there were two translations of the sentence about the gift, one referring to “a few cows”—thus nothing to bother about—another with “1,000 cows and 500 sheep, as a breakfast for the troops”. See Sven Rubenson, “Meqdela Revisited” in *Kasa and Kasa* (eds: Taddese Beyene, Richard Pankhurst, Shiferaw Bekele), Addis Abeba, n. d., pp. 11–21, with sources cited there..

The Catholics of Agamē to Napoleon III [Sept. 1868].

ብሰ፡ፍፕልዮ፣ ግጉህ፡ ነገሥት፡
 ስለሆነ፡ ለክ፡ አክግዚአብሔር፡ ስለሆነ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ ህዳህ፡
 ሆሎክ፡፡ አሜ፣ ፡፡
 በሐብሽ፡ ሁሉ፡ በየ፡ ህይወጥ፡ ሲኖር፡ ከቶሊካውያን፡
 ብቻ፡ ብዙ፡ ግፍ፡ አግኝተዋል፡ አግኝተዋል፡ አሁንም፡
 ወደ፡ ጌታችን፡ ፍጥረት፡ ግጉህ፡ ነገሥት፡ ወደ፡ አባቶች
 ጌታችን፡ ከቶሊካውያን፡ ሁሉ፡ ለጥያቄችን፡ አግኝተዋል፡
 አለን፡ አግኝተዋል፡ መክራ፡ የበዘው፡ ሐው፡ ሁለ፡ ጊዜ፡
 ይጠራል፡ አሁንም፡ ስለ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ ብለው፡ ይጠራሉ፡

አሁን፡ ከቶሊካውያን፡



To King of Kings Napoleon (Napiliyon).

Peace be to you, our master (*igzi'ine*).

The peace of God be with you. Amen.

When everyone in Abyssinia is living in accordance with his respective religion, only we, the Catholics, are experiencing (lit. living in) great injustice. And now it is we who seek help; we weep and cry out to our master, King of Kings Napoleon (Napiliyon), and to our fathers, all the Catholics. A man who is afflicted by great hardship always weeps. So now, for God's sake, help us.

The Catholics of Agamē.

AEMD, Afrique 62, fol. 79, Amharic original; fol. 78, French translation by Antoine d'Abbadie.

Aregawī Subagadis to Napoleon III [Sept. 1868]

ተብዬሐ፡ ብሰ፡ ፍፕልዮ፣ ግጉህ፡ ነገሥት፡፡
 ስለሆነ፡ ለክ፡ አክግዚአብሔር፡ ስለሆነ፡ አግዚአብሔር፡ ህዳህ፡
 ሆሎክ፡፡ አሜ፣ ፡፡
 ክፍ፡ ከቀዳሚ፡ ጀምሮ፡ ወደ፡ አርሰም፡ ወደ፡ ጌታችን፡ ፍፕልዮ፡
 ልጌ፡ የደገ፡ ግጉህ፡ ወረቀት፡ ከጌታችን፡ ነገሥት፡ ስለሆነ፡
 ጌታችን፡ ፍፕልዮ፡ ወረቀት፡ ስለሆነ፡ ጌታችን፡ ፍፕልዮ፡
 ግጉህ፡ በግዚአብሔር፡ ሕዳህ፡ በለት፡ ህይወ፡ ወጣሁ፡
 አሁንም፡ የርሰም፡ የልጋም፡ ሆኑኝ፡ ከጌታችን፡ ፍፕልዮ፡

አሁን፡ አጋሜ፡ አሁን፡ ወልደ፡ ለሐባጋድስ፡

May [this letter] reach King of Kings Napoleon (Napilyon). Peace be to you, O my master (*igzi'iyē*). The peace of God be with you. Amen.

Having desired your friendship since a long time back, I had sent through Gilbert, the consul of Massawa, a letter asking for [your] attention (*yedejjīnat wereqet*). Before a letter reached me, I was imprisoned. And now, by the mercy of God and through your power, I have been released. Now, too, I am the protégé of your throne.

From *Shum* Agamē Aregawī, the son of Subagadis.

AEMD, Afrique 62, fol. 81, Amharic original; fol. 78, French translation by Antoine d'Abbadie.

ሰዎች፡ በረሀብ፡ ጎበዓ፡ የተወለዱ፡ ሳፃፃ፡ ስጋ፡ ማርያም፡ ልጅ፡ በረሀብ፡ ሞተ፡ የጎጎ
 ደርም፡ ሰዎች፡ ርሰምገት፡ ል፡ ስ፡ ሳይከብሉ፡ ስራቱታቸው፡ ተቀመጡ፡ በዚህ፡ በጌ
 ጎ፡ ልብሉ፡ ስጦታቸው፡ ተለግ፡ አጠገታቸው፡ ስጊውር፡ በኋላ፡ ሀሳብ፡ ገረፈ፡ ቸው፡ ብ
 ዙ፡ ሰዎች፡ ሌሊት፡ ሳያወጡ፡ ከዱ፡ የርሳዎም፡ ጸሐፊ፡ ደብተራ፡ ተስፋፋየ፡ ስጋ፡ ደብ
 ተራ፡ ጎብረ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ የርሳዎ፡ ጸሐፊ፡ የበረው፡ ተሰደ፡ ሞተ፡ የቤገምድር፡ በላ
 ገር፡ ሁሉ፡ ሸረቱ፡ የሚገኝ፡ ርጅጅጅጅ፡ ሳገደ፡ እግር፡ ወሰኖ፡ ከግብቶ፡ ዘገ፡ እ
 ህል፡ ውህ፡ ሰዎች፡ ከቦ፡ ሳፍጠኛ፡ ጠበቃቸው፡ ከጎታቸው፡ ከመጠጣት፡ ሳይሳሳ
 ሃ፡ ረቸው፡ ጎም፡ ለመጠጣት፡ ተጠሉ፡ እነሱ፡ ሻ፲ቀገ፡ እነሱ፡ ሰፊ፡ እጅሱሉ፡ በሻ፡ እነሱ፡
 በአርግ፡ ቀገ፡ ሞቱ፡ ልት፡ የሞተው፡ በኋላ፡ የተራቱ፡ ሰባት፡ ከሻ፲ቀገ፡ በኋላ፡ ስገው
 ብቻ፡ ቀረ፡ እግዚር፡ ሰለም፡ ራቸው፡ እዳገው፡ እገደግደ፡ ሆኑምድርስ፡ በገፋ፡ ገሃስ
 ው፡ የፋርሳግ፡ ቡተ፡ ከረሱ፡ ሳይሃ፡ ሁሉ፡ እሃረረስ፡ ማገሃው፡
 እምና፡ በሳዳር፡ ከደብረ፡ ታፋፋ፡ በር፡ ተገሳ፡ ጉናገና፡ ጋደገተኛ፡ ዘረረ፡ ጉቲት፡
 ሰዎች፡ እታጠሰ፡ ርመቲት፡ ሸዩዎኛ፡ ሞድግ፡ ዘረረ፡ ከታጠሰ፡ ሰው፡ ገገ፡ ከ
 ሳገም፡ ስታሳሳ፡ በገር፡ በሃገቲት፡ በደሳገታ፡ ተቀመጠ፡ መድፍ፡ አቀሰት፡ የ
 ማደወጣ፡ ሁኖ፡ እሳቸገረው፡ ደሳገታ፡ ዘረረው፡ ሰው፡ ገገ፡ እሳገም፡ በመጋቢ
 ተ፡ መቅደስ፡ ገግ፡ እገደህ፡ እያለ፡ ዘ፲፡ ብር፡ የሸቦ፡ ብር፡ የሸቦ፡ መጣልህ፡ ተከ
 ቦ፡ እያለ፡ ዘረ፡ በሳቲ፡ ቁጥር፡ በሚያገዝያ፡ በ፳ቀገ፡ ር፫፡ ገደል፡ ስሃሃ፡
 ሂ፫፡ እሳር፡ ልታ፡ ወደ፡ ገደል፡ የወሃቱት፡ ሳፍጠኛ፡ ስጊረሳቸው፡ በሻ፲ቀገ፡ የእ
 ገገ፡ ሰር፡ ከምገው፡ ስር፡ ስረረ፡ ልት፡ እውራሪ፡ ገብርየ፡ ከ፲፯ሽሐ፡ ሞፍ
 ራ፡ ጋራ፡ ከገምገ፡ ምር፡ ገጠመ፡ ገብርየ፡ በመድፍ፡ ሞተ፡ ከ፲፯ሽሐ፡ ወታደር፡ መ
 ቻ፡ ሰቻ፡ ተመሰሉ፡ ቴዎድሮስ፡ ገገ፡ ለሌሃ፡ ሁሉ፡ ከድቸ፡ ወሃ፡ እገገሉ፡ ገግ
 እስ፡ ኋላ፡ ገገ፡ የገብርየ፡ መሞት፡ ሰምቶ፡ እስተከ፡ እህል፡ ሳይበላ፡ እሃ፡ ራ
 በማሃገ፡ ሻ፲ቀገ፡ ስርቀ፡ ልልጎ፡ ሳውኢልገና፡ ፍግግ፡ እስታርቁኛ፡ እስ፡
 የታሰሩት፡ ከልታሰሁ፡ እናታረቅ፡ ብሎ፡ ሳገታቸው፡ ሰዎች፡ ገገ፡ ከልታሰህ
 ስርቀ፡ እገወዳለሃ፡ እሱ፡ እገገሉ፡ ከቸ፡ ቴዎድሮስም፡ እሳርቸ፡ ሁሉ፡ ልታ፡
 ከገገ፡ ከገቸው፡ ከጋራ፡ ከልጆቻቸው፡ ጋራ፡ ከሞሽቸ፡ ቻቸውና፡ ከሰሉዎቻ
 ው፡ ሁሉ፡ ጋራ፡ ሰደዳቸው፡ ሸሐ፡ ሳም፡ ሰራት፡ ሰደደሳቸው፡ ኋላ፡ ገገ፡ እገገሉ
 ዘቸ፡ ከዱ፡ እራት፡ እገረ፡ ገም፡ የሊትዮጵያ፡ መኪንገት፡ ሁሉ፡ ፍታ፡ ኢገተም
 ገገ፡ እሱት፡ በዚህ፡ ጊዜ፡ እጅግ፡ እዘ፡ ገብር፡ ወፍሃ፡ እደረ፡ ሻ፲፬ቀገ፡ የ
 ተገሳሉ፡ ሰታ፡ ሰው፡ ሰላምተ፡ ልጁ፡ ሰሃቀር፡ ወደ፡ እገገሉ፡ ገገ፡ ኋላ

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everything belonging to Miṭiraha. He made all go into houses and set fire to them. When the people burned, the stench reached [all the way] to Firqa. Children and women threw themselves into Lake Ṭana and perished. The merchants of Gonder and many *debtera* were set on fire on the island of Miṭiraha. The servant of Bishop De Jacobis (*Abune Ya'iqob*), Negedu Gebre Maryam, was burned [to death]. These were the people who had fled to the island of Miṭiraha.

Tēwodros ascended Amba Maryam. He looted many things, many books, a lot of grain [and] a lot of clothing, but he did not kill the people. He camped in Yifag. He burned many people in the church called Yifag Sillasē. He went to Qoraṭa and found great treasure, but he found no people [there]. He went to Mahdere Maryam. He set fire to the whole town. He killed all the men and took the women as booty. He made 50 monks stand naked with only their caps on their heads and had them shot (lit. killed them with a rifle). Then he marched to Dembiya, Foggera, Wido, Hamuz Wenz [and] Derra. He looted all the cattle. He gathered them on the plain of Debre Tabor. He killed all these cattle in one day. They remained for many days without being devoured by the vultures and hyenas. There was a stench in the whole country. In Tēwodros's camp the famine grew worse. A *qunna* of grain was sold for one thaler. One *amolē* was exchanged for one thaler. Many people died from starvation. Tewelde Hiṣan Kīdane Maryam's child died from starvation. The people of Gonder remained naked, having no clothes for three weeks. Then he gave them clothes, and linseed to drink. Two months later he returned and robbed them of their clothes again. Many men crept out during the night and deserted him. Your scribe *Debtera* Tesfaye deserted. *Debtera* Gebre Ḳyyesus, who used to be your scribe, died in exile. All the peasants in Begēmdir rebelled.

He placed three hundred soldiers from Mēḫa inside a fenced [area] and closed it. He did not allow them food or water. They were surrounded and guarded by soldiers. They quarrelled over their urine to drink and their excrements to eat. Some died in ten days, some in twenty, some in thirty, some in forty. Those who remained behind ate those who had died before. After forty days only one man remained. In order that it might not be said that God saved him by a miracle, Tēwodros killed him with a rifle. He pulled down all the churches of Farṭa and [used the materials] for making fences.

In November last year he left Debre Tabor. He sacked Guna and Gayint, and set fire to some people. He sacked and burnt down Meqēt, Shedeho [and] Wadla, but he found no people. He stayed in Delanta during Tahsas, Ṭirr [and] Yekkatīt. He had difficulties bringing the cannon up the slopes. He sacked Delanta, but he found no people. In Meggabīt he reached Meqdela. He was singing like this: "Wire of silver, wire of silver; it is coming, pulled to you." So (saying) he sang.

On the eighth day of Mīyazya in the Roman calendar, he threw three hundred prisoners over the cliff. He released two hundred prisoners. Those who fell over the cliff the riflemen finished off. On the ninth day the English army camped at the foot of the *amba*. *Fītararī* Gebriye descended from the *amba* with an army of six thousand, and engaged [them]. Gebriye died in the gunfire. Of the six thousand soldiers only one hundred returned. But Tēwodros said, "All my men (*lolē*) have deserted and joined the English." Later, however, he heard about the death of Gebriye and wept. He passed the night without food. On the tenth day of Mīyazya, he sent Samu'ēl and Flad (Flat) to ask for peace, and said, "Make peace for me. I shall release the prisoners. Let us make peace." The English said, "If he releases our people for us, we desire peace." Tēwodros released all the prisoners together with their property, with their children, with their wives, and with all their servants, and sent them away. He sent [the British] one thousand cows to eat (lit. for supper). But then the English went back on their word and said, "We do not want provisions (lit. supper); release all the noblemen of Ethiopia and surrender yourself." Then he became very sad, cancelled the feast, and went to sleep.

On the eleventh day, Easter Sunday, he dismissed [his] people. His son not excepted, they [all] went to the English. Then his courtiers begged him to celebrate the feast. He tasted a little food. That (lit. this) night he took his three wives and spent the night seeking a way to escape, but he found no way. The Galla had surrounded the *amba* at the bottom. When dawn came, he went to battle together

with ten *dejjazmaches*. The ten *dejjazmaches* died in the artillery fire. [Putting] his loaded gun in his mouth, he died by his own hand. Two bullets passed through the center of his head. All the English soldiers tore off the hair on his head and took it, packed in a bag. And a painter painted him as he lay fallen, but his head looked like tanned hide without hair. All Tēwodros's armllets and knives (*chufa*) of gold and silver, [his] gold and silver shields, gold knives (*shotel*) and swords, [his] lion cape, and [his] crown and lion's seal were seized. All the things from Gonder and Begēmdir, all the books were captured. The wife and children of Tēwodros were captured. They broke his guns and rifles to pieces; of the rifles they took the best. They buried his body in the church of Meqdela. Earlier this church (*meqdes*) was a Muslim mosque, and also now. They gave many rifles and the *amba* of Meqdela to Mestawat, the queen of the Galla. She made the church into a mosque. Tēwodros's tomb became a mosque. Tēwodros's wife fell ill; she came to Tigray, travelling with the English army. When she reached Çheleqot she died; she was buried at Çheleqot. Her illness, however, seems [to have been] like the illness of grief. The English gave five hundred books and three hundred thalers to the church of Çheleqot.

When they reached Shumezana, they met with *Dejjazmach* Kasa. They gave him many rifles, a great deal of gunpowder and thirteen cannon. It was agreed that all the noblemen of Tigray should hand over their children, and that the English should educate them. The English said, "Submit to Bezbiz Kasa; he who is subject to him is our friend." They gave all the noblemen rifles, embroidered cloth and gunpowder. And they said this to Abba Bezbiz Kasa, "If an enemy attacks you, inform us; we shall help you." [So] they said. They said, "Since Samu'el is our man, keep him for us, honouring him and giving him appointments." They(?) gave Samu'el Ga'iso and Desmo(?). And people say that Abba Bezbiz gave him Akkele Guzay, but no proclamation was issued. It seems as if the English have made Abba Bezbiz king and Samu'el consul. Seeing all this, the Catholics of Ethiopia said, "We have placed ourselves under the protection of the French government and the throne of Napoleon (Napiliyon)." The English have gone, leaving behind a railway at Zula. There is no one who fears the French king at present. All the Ethiopian people fear and honour the queen of England.

The second news: The English were [the ones] who wrote to Tēwodros. They wrote and said, "Release our imprisoned people for us; we will give gold until you are satisfied." Although they wrote three times, he refused. The fourth time they sent Flad (Flat) and Samu'el. Then he released the prisoners. This is the correct news.

News about *Abba Selama*. *Abba Selama* collected much gold, gave it to a goldsmith, and had a monk's belt (*qinnat Yohannis*) and a habit (*askēma*) made. But then, since he had contracted syphilis, his genitals swelled and became like a log. They seared it (with fire). Neither blood nor pus came out. So then he said, "Under threat of excommunication I order that my gold[-embroidered] habit and monk's belt shall be buried with me. On the third day after being seared, he died. They placed him in the coffin, dressed up with the gold[-embroidered] habit and monk's belt. They sealed the coffin with wax, placed it in a house, closed it, and left it [there]. When the English fired [their cannon], the house caught fire, and only the gold remained. The soldiers took the gold. Tēwodros threw Amarē Kinfu over the cliff. *Dejjazmach* Wibē died of illness last year. He died by the hand of God.

Written at Halay on 18 Hidar.

Debtera Asseggaheñ of Wadla.

BN, Ethiop. Abb. 254, fols 212–213, Amharic original; fols 189–223, French translation. This long letter appears as no. VII in "Epistolario". An Italian translation of all but the two last paragraphs was published by Carlo Conti Rossini in *Nuova Antologia*, 1935, pp. 453–458, under the title "La fine di Re Teodoro"; Fusella's "Le lettere" (pp. 94–95) has a translation of the two last paragraphs. Conti Rossini defines the reward given to Samu'el Giyorgis as "le tribù dei Gaaso e dei Rassamo". Though the verb is in plural, it could refer to *Dejjazmach* Kasa rather than the British, who had reportedly just asked Kasa to give Samu'el an appointment.

Asseggaheñ to Antoine d'Abbadie [6 Dec.? 1868]

ኃበ : ኢቶ : ኣገጦጥዮስ : ዘአበዲዮ : ምሑረ : መጻሕፍት : ወጥበባት : እጅጉን : እገዲት :
 እሱ : ወገድሞቺም : እቶቶም : እገዲት : እሱ :

የደጃዝማች : ጎበዜ : ወሬ :

አገገሊዮች : ወደ : ስስተ : ሲቀርቡ : ደጃዝማች : ጎበዜ : ወደ : ጎገደር : ዘመቱ : ከጥ
 ሱ : ጎበዜ : ጋራ : ተዋግተው : በቀሀ : ገደቡት : ስገገሊዮች : መሪ : ደጃዝማች : ወልደ :
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ኃበ : ኢትዮጵያ :



የተራ : እስጋዥግ

Objet: Walcha keros... (transcription of the handwritten note at the bottom)

To Antoine d'Abbadie (Inṭoniyos Ze'abediye), the scholar of literature and wisdom. How have you been, really? How are your brothers and sisters?

News about *Dejjazmach* Gobezē.

When the English approached Lasta, *Dejjazmach* Gobezē set out on a campaign to Gonder. He fought with Ṭiso Gobezē and killed him at Qiha. He gave *Dejjazmach* Welde Kīros and *Dejjazmach* Meshesha as guides to the English. But he did not meet the English. He found an Armenian in the camp of Ṭiso Gobezē. When he said to him, "Who (lit. what) are you?" he answered, "I am a bishop." When he asked him, "Who brought you [here]?" he answered, "Tēwodros." He asked the clergy whether an Armenian bishop used to come in the past. They told him, "We do not know." Then he ignored him.

He appointed as *ičhegē* a man called *İçhegē* Gebre İyyesus of *Abba* Selama's party. The *ičhegē* crowned him king. His name Gobezē was dropped and he was called *Aṣē* Tekle Gīyorgīs. After this, when a monk from Waldibba said, "I believe in the Three Births [of Christ]," he had him flogged. He issued a proclamation, saying, "Whoever does not adhere to the religion of *Abba* Selama should go to a country where I do not rule." Many monks from Waldibba went into exile, and *Dejjazmach* Farīs Alī of Lasta accepted them. The ruler of Lasta is Farīs Alī; the ruler of Dawint is *Dejjazmach* Yimam, the brother of *Ras* Alī. The ruler of Wello is Mestawat. The ruler of Gojjam is the son of Tedla Gwalu. Tedla Gwalu died of illness. Gobezē who is called *Aṣē* Tekle Gīyorgīs has imprisoned Birru Goshu. The ruler of Tigray is *Abba* Bezbiz Kasa. He has imprisoned Habal Haylu. The son of *Weyzero* Illēnī, Welde Mīka'ēl, is appointed over Hamasēn and Serayē. The king of Shewa, King Minīlik, rules as far as Kefa and Gudru. He has become very strong. It is said that Bishop Massaja (*Abune* Masiyas) has reached Shewa.

Written in the year 1861 of the birth of Our Lord according to the Ethiopian calendar.

Debtera Asseggaheñ.

BN, Etiop. Abb. 254, fol. 211, Gi'iz/Amharic original. Asseggaheñ has dated this letter 1861 only. The letter was received in Paris in January 1869, and it can therefore be taken for granted that it was not written later than December 1868.

Here Asseggaheñ provides a brief summary of the political situation at the end of 1868 with the names of surviving chiefs from the reign of Tēwodros and an additional name or two, such as the new chief of Hamasēn, Welde Mīka'ēl Solomon.

Zeneb to J.L. Krapf, 16 Dec. 1868

May this letter, which is sent by Alaca Saneb, reach Dr. Krapf!

God grant you health! Are you quite well? When I with Dedjadj Alam-Ayahoo came to Senafe, Mr. Hormoos Rassam wrote to say, that 8 men should accompany him (Alam-Ayahoo), whereas the other should return (to Abyssinia). But when Mr. Rassam at Zoolla took farewell and departed, advise was given, that 6 followers should remain, and they remained. And as Alaca Saneb and Gebra Medhen were told (ordered) to follow, we followed.

Before we arrived at Suez and when we were still at sea, they (Capt. Speedy) told us, he (Alam-Ayahoo) does not like you, remove, do not come near him. Then the next day they sent Alam-Ayahoo on shore. When we said, why do you separate us from the son of our Lord (Theodoros), Basha Falaka (the name under which Capt. Speedy is known in Abyssinia) replied: When man has too much blood, he dislikes his friend. When he (Dedjadj Alam-Ayahoo) has been 2 or 3 days on shore and has enjoyed the land-wind, he shall be well again, and afterwards you will be together with your Lord. And supposed all this were not the case, I shall buy a vessel and take you until his heart returns to you (and Alam-Ayahoo likes you again). And saying this Falaka took his oath by himself saying, may Falaka die!

On the following day Sir Robert Napier told us, that we should go to Massowa to Consul Munsinger, and he gave us the Captain of the vessel for our introducer. I (Sir Robert Napier) am going but Basha Falaka will come to you, to him you will tell all your concerns, and having said this he (Sir Robert) went off. Basha Falaka came and said: Give to me the baggage of Dedjadj Alam-Ayahoo. And when we were delivering it fully, we said to him, why, if we have offended, let us be judged in a judicial way, why do you separate us? And they (Capt. Speedy) said: tomorrow I shall come and ferry you over to Suez where you will have money, whether you go or remain.

Then I said to him, but perhaps if you will not take us (on shore), will you not take us out (of the vessel) and send us to Jerusalem to Samuel Gobat (the Anglican Bishop). He (Basha Falaka) said, in every case I shall come tomorrow, but he came not. We were much grieved and distressed, for we had no interpreter. We returned without having received from him any money and paper, we returned. We have been wrong treated with great injustice. Is it then right in your country to oppress a man by subtility? To be sure, the face of an Abyssinian is black, but has he not been created in the resemblance of the Trinity and been redeemed (sealed) by the blood of Christ?

In reference to our following—we followed the son of King Theodoros our Lord, because he (the King) had put us into the office and brought us up. Besides it is the good feeling of Mr. Rassam (which encouraged us to follow Alam-Ayahoo). And now, I have written this that the Christians (of England) might know it. Until now Consul Munsinger has been our relative (has been kind to us).

The news from Ethiopia is this: King Menelek is in Shoa, Dedjadj Gobassie is in his country, Dedjadj Kassa is in Tigre. Everyone is quiet in his country. During the rainy season a man has been hanged for having been seized in eating men and preventing people from taking snuff and brandy. Near Koofit (on the Egyptian territory in the north of Abyssinia) they have killed the European Petros (an Italian who was among the released captives at Magdala) besides a few men more. Some say, the Shankelas, other say the Muhamedans have killed them.

Written in the year 1862, on the 8th of December (Abyssinian era) at Massowa.

IOL, AOC 2, pp. 35–37, English translation with explanations in parentheses by Dr. Krapf, certainly based on an original Amharic letter written by *Debtera Zeneb*; reproduced here with the orthography of the preserved English text.

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