

Appendix 5. Snapshot of foreign intervention in Ethiopian affairs: From Gragn to Zeanwi

Let us view this issue in parts.

1) The Sultan of the Ottoman Empire lived in Turkey, while governors and pashas of other regions lived in different countries including in Egypt. The Jihad movement by the Ethiopian Ahmad Gragn against the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia was supported by Ottoman Kingdom. The Ottoman Empire had a bogus claim over Ethiopia because it supported the Jihad. Turkish and Egyptian forces of the Ottoman Empire landed in the Ethiopian territories of Massawa and Sawakin. Ethiopian emperors, Zerse Dengel, Fassilidis, and later during the Reign of Princes (Zamana Masafint) Governors of Tigrey and Hamasen such as Ras Wolde Selassie, Dejazmatch Sabagadis, and Ras Wube, and subsequently Emperor Tewodros and Yohannes have ruled over Hamasen and its coastal and Maritime territories. However, before the ascent of Emperor Yohannes, **as was the custom of Ethiopian rulers, any kinds of people including Turkish and Egyptians were allowed to work and serve as administrators provided they paid tribute to the Ethiopian governor or emperor.** Such ancient Ethiopian practices were changed during and after the reign of Yohannes IV, as European colonization began to take territory away from Ethiopian rule. Sawkain and adjoining regions were taken away from Ethiopia. The Europeans extended southward their snatching away of Ethiopian maritime and coastal regions.

About the time of European colonization of Africa, enamored by the commercial opportunities of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Egypt, which was a vassal of the

Ottoman Empire, took over Turkish claims over Ethiopia. Military expedition of Egypt impoverished it, and Britain colonized Egypt in 1882, and essentially took over the Turkish claim over Ethiopian territories.

In 1868, Great Britain sent an expedition to attack Emperor Tewodros, who was very unpopular at that time. Tewodros killed himself instead of surrendering. The British forces ransacked the city at Maqdala and its finest library, gave arms to a person who later succeeded to become emperor Yohannes IV, and quickly withdrew from the highland region of Ethiopia.

3) Italy was not a united country before 1870. Before then parts of current day France, Austria, and other countries had colonized Italy. Italy was invited by Great Britain to take over Massawa in 1885 against the spirit and the letter of the treaty of 1884 that Britain entered with Emperor Yohannes IV of Ethiopia.

4) Massawa was an Island at that time and was not connected to the mainland by filling the shallow waters with rocks and mud. In 1887 Ethiopians fought and removed Italians from Dogali, about 16 miles from Massawa. In 1888, Emperor Yohannes marched to the coastal plains to dislodge Italians from a fort at Saati, about 26 miles from Massawa. Unfortunately, he returned to the plateau and then marched to fight the Dervish and died in Matama in 1889. In the wake of Yohannes' march to Matama, and his subsequent death, the Italians advanced to the pleasant northern plateau of Ethiopia (now Erirea highlands). The succeeding emperor of Ethiopia, Menelik II, dislodged Italia

n forces from their outposts of Amballege and Mekele, routed Italian forces at the battle of Adwa, stopped their advances and signed with them the 1896 Treaty, and the subsequent notes and conventions of 1900, 1902 that explained the root treaty of 1896. Though all conventions and agreements stipulate that boundaries would be surveyed on the ground by a mutually agreed upon committee comprised of Italians and Ethiopians, Ethiopians did not participate in any ground survey of boundaries. They never intended the boundaries to be lasting. In any case, Italy abrogated earlier agreements when it occupied the whole of Ethiopia in 1935, and later when it abrogated its colonies in the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947.

Ethiopia regained its coastal territory in 1952, after Britain, which had colonial aspirations over the whole of Ethiopia, was removed. The reunification of the coastal regions with the rest of Ethiopia was done by the volition and the struggle of Ethiopians of that region. The tyranny of Mr. Zenawi and Afeworki stands in sharp contrast to such history. Their 2000 Algiers agreement does not have any historical or legal foundation. The UN Sponsored EEBC (Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission) is bestowing an international boundary within Ethiopia de novo.

5) When Zenawi ascended to power in 1991, the Eritrean Administration did not include the Administration of Assab and Awusa. Mr. Zeanawi threw away the existent Ethiopian constitution, and gave his own constitution with Article 39 that allowed secession. Mr. Zenawi was not mandated

either to give a constitution or to participate in the placement of an international boundary within Ethiopia. On the basis of a referendum that asked if they wished to live under slavery in Ethiopia or in freedom within Eritrea, the inhabitants of the Eritrean Administration elected freedom, which led to their secession. However, the Afar Ethiopians of Assab and Awussa Administration have not been given a referendum to determine their wishes. Hence, there is no basis for the subjugation of the people of Ethiopians of Assab and Awusa region by the tyrannical administration of Afeworki even on the basis of the Zenawi's constitution. The 2000 Algiers agreement between Zenawi and his friend Afewroki has no historical or legal foundation within the new Ethiopian constitution. Clearly, what Zenawi committed is a crime of treason. Instead of being punished for his crime and treason, since Zeanwi stays as the ruler of Ethiopia, the tribulations of Ethiopians (includes the Eritrawi) have no end. Though he received only about 85 of the votes out of a possible 547 seats, Zenawi stays in power by intimidating the population.

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