Ambaricho and Shonkolla
From Local Independent Church to the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia
The Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya
AMBARICHO AND SHONKOLLA

From Local Independent Church
To the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia
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ABSTRACT


This thesis is a contribution to the scholarly debate on how African Independent Churches (AICs) relate to outside partners. It is a case study from the perspective of the periphery of Ethiopia, which explains the origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya.

The diachronic structure of the study with a focus from 1944 to 1975 highlights how a group of Christians reacted to cultural pressure and formed a local independent church, the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2). The KEC-2 established relations with external partners, like a neighbouring mainstream conference of churches, a neighbouring mainstream church, an international organisation, and a mainstream overseas church and its mission. These relations influenced the KEC-2 to develop into a synod of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). The diachronic approach is augmented by synchronic structural analyses, illustrating how aspects in the independent KEC-2, like polity, worship, doctrine and ethos were changing.

The study contends that “Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity” was a crucial factor in the development of the independent KEC-2 into a synod of the EECMY. As this factor helped the Ethiopians to transcend barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism, it is not unreasonable to assume that the study has relevance for a wider African context.

This thesis builds on material taken mainly from unpublished printed sources in various languages from archives in Ethiopia, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. These are supplemented by interviews made by the author.

Keywords: Ethiopia, Kambata, Hadiya, Indigenous, Revivals, African Factor, Worldly Practices, Drinking, Dissonance, Independent Church, Ethos, Kambata Evangelical Church 2, Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity, Ecumenical, Comity, Mainstream Churches, Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, Kambata Synod, South Central Synod.

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Cover photo by Staffan Grenstedt: Abonsa Sebaka (Kambata) leader Ato Tarekegn Handaro and Badowacho Sebaka (Hadiya) leader Qes Wagalo Wayinio preaching and translating the Message.

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To My Wife Ingela
Preface

It was a bewildering experience to come to Ethiopia in 1983. After a year at language school, I started to work as an adviser on the local church work in the southeastern district of the South Central Synod in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) stationed in Durame, and I started to pose questions.

Why was an Ethiopian veterinarian working in the room next to mine at the local church office? Why was a poster of the former Soviet General Secretary of the communist party, Leonid Bresjnev, hanging on the facade of the church office? Why was it possible to sell Bibles openly at the market in Durame in 1984, when it was prohibited to sing Christian hymns at funerals in Wolayta just south of the border to Sidamo? What was the history of the Kambata and Hadiya ethnic groups? What was the history of the EECMY Synod where I was working? The result of my curiosity and longing to understand is presented in this book.

I would like to express my warm gratitude to local Christians in the Kambata/Hadiya region and in Ethiopia at large for the sharing of fellowship and experiences. My understanding of God’s Church has indeed been broadened by the encounter with the EECMY members and many other Christians in Ethiopia.

For the scholarly part of my thesis I am especially indebted to my committed supervisor, Professor Carl Fredrik Hallencreutz. His genuine interest in African Church History has been contagious and inspired me to develop my work. I should also like to thank my current Professor Alf Tergel, Professor Sigbert Axelson and Professor Axel-Ivar Berglund for their continuous encouragement and support. I should also like to thank my colleagues at the Higher Seminar of Missiology in the Faculty of Theology at Uppsala University.

Ethiopia has been on my mind since my childhood through the missionaries of the Swedish Evangelical Mission and the Church of Sweden Mission. I especially want to thank the late Rev. Per and Mrs Valborg Stjärne, the late Dr Gustav Arén and his wife Rigmor, the late Rev. Manfred Lundgren and Dr Nils-Olof Hylander. Many other missionaries have inspired me, not to mention all the Ethiopians. I feel a humble gratitude at being part of a network larger than I am able to fathom.

I should like to express my appreciation of my family. My mother Margit and my father Ulf have encouraged me constantly, with the wisdom of two she-magleoch (elders). My three lovely children Mikael, Hanna and Elisabet and my wife of 25 years, Ingela, have shared my experiences in Ethiopia for six years and helped me to fulfil my ambitions with great enthusiasm.

Lastly I thank God on whose Grace everything depends.

Staffan Grenstedt
Västerås, October 2000
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Spelling
It has proved difficult to spell words from Amharic or other Ethiopian languages according to a ready-made set of rules into English. My ambition has been to spell them so as to give the English reader an approximate idea of the pronunciation.

Calendar
The Ethiopian year numbers 365 days divided into 13 months: 12 months of 30 days and a 13th month of 5 days (plus an additional 6th day in leap years). The Ethiopian year begins on September 11 (the 12th in leap years). From that day to the end of the Gregorian year the Ethiopian calendar (E.C.) is seven years behind the Gregorian calendar. For the rest of the year (January 1 - September 10) the difference is eight years. The months, starting with September 11, are Meskerem, Tiqemt, Hedar, Tahsas, Tir, Yekatit, Megabit, Miazia, Ginbot, Sene, Hamle, Nehase and the “miniature month” Pagumen.
General Introduction

A. My Focus in Its Context

My Focus

Ambaricho and Shonkolla are two significant mountains in the Kambata/Hadiya region in the south central part of Ethiopia. In my study they represent the local Kambata and Hadiya peoples as loaded symbols of Ethiopian independence and initiative.¹

Ethiopia is referred to as “the Roof of Africa”, owing to its numerous impressive mountains.² Long before, but also under the time of Ahmed Granj’s invasion in the 16ᵗʰ century, they served as fortresses (ambaoch) and refuges, which were hard to conquer. Mt. Ambaricho in Kambata is an example of such a mountain, a place to where the local elite withdrew. It is considered as the cradle of the Kambata ethnic group.³

The mountains have been looked upon as holy places where heaven and earth meet. They have often served as centres of the local folk religion and were shown reverence. Mt. Shonkolla in the area of Soro-Hadiya is an example of such a mountain. In the morning, when the Soro-Hadiya woke up it is said that they turned to the mountain and bowed down, thanking for protection in the night.⁴

From the history of the Kambata/Hadiya region there emerges a challenging perspective of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) going back at least to the early 15ᵗʰ century.⁵ In the time of Menelik II at the end of the 19ᵗʰ century the EOC initiatives were reinforced and linked up with its old legacy.

My primary focus, however, relates to a local independent church movement in the Kambata/Hadiya region and its relationship to the wider Evangelical fellowship in Ethiopia, which can be summarised briefly in the following words.

The “Kambata Evangelical Church” (KEC) was a mainstream Protestant church with origin in the work of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) and the indigenous

¹ Mt. Ambaricho is situated in the Kambata part and Mt. Shonkolla in the Hadiya part of the region. See below, Map 3, p.44.
² The Semien Mountains in the north of Ethiopia are the most impressive. See Nicol 1971.
³ Braukämper 1983, chap. 2, 3.8-3.8.5. As indicated by its name Ambaricho was regarded as an Ethiopian local amba, the famous flat-topped mountain of Ethiopia, functioning as a fortress. The name “Ambaricho” meaning “the fortress of the sun” refers to the Kambatissa language. SG-A: Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1995.10.23.
⁴ Peter 1999, p.92. In Tigray the famous Debre Damo and in Shoa the volcano Zukwala can be mentioned as impressive holy mountains of the venerable Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) with monasteries.
⁵ See below, pp.41, 51f. The Amharic name of the EOC is “Ye-Ityopiya Tewahedo Bete Kristiyan”. The word tewahedo emphasises the one united nature of Christ. EOC 1996, pp.7, 27 (Amharic); Forslund 1993, p.49.
revivals in the late 1930’s and in the 1940’s. “The Kambata Evangelical Church 2” (KEC-2) seceded from the KEC in 1954. While the former became a new local independent church, the latter preserved its relationship with the SIM.6

In the early sources there is no consistency in the use of their different names. The KEC is sometimes called the Kambata Mahiber, the Kambata Evangelical Church, the Kambata Church, the Kambata Christians and SIM-Christians. Some of these titles are also used of the KEC-2. The KEC-2 is furthermore nicknamed in a pejorative way, e.g., “the Seli-Menna Church”, which means “the Drinking Church”.7 In order to show their common origin and chronological order I call the two local church movements the Kambata Evangelical Church and the Kambata Evangelical Church 2.

In tracing the development of the KEC-2, I will give special attention to the role of what I call “Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity” as a dynamic and long-lasting factor. It had deep roots in the diversified church history of Ethiopia. From the mid-1940’s the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) evolved as a new institutionalised expression of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.8

With the increased denominationalism in the 1950’s Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity, too, was diversified. The KEC-2 was step by step integrated into the evolving Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY, also referred to as the Mekane Yesus Church). In 1969 the KEC-2 became one of the synods of the Mekane Yesus Church. It was called the Kambata Synod (KS). In 1977 its name was changed into the South Central Ethiopia Synod (SCES), which later on was amended to the South Central Synod (SCS).9

It is this development of the KEC-2, which I characterise by my sub-title: From Local Independent Church to the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia. The Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya.

The Appeal of Ethiopia in Africa

In a wider African context Ethiopia is appealing. This can be illustrated by a quote from the political field. In his autobiography Nelson Mandela states that:

Ethiopia has always held a special place in my own imagination and the prospect of visiting Ethiopia attracted me more strongly than a trip to France, England and America combined. I felt I would be visiting my own genesis, unearthing the roots of what made me an African. Meeting the emperor himself would be like shaking hands with history.10

In African church history, too, Ethiopia has a characteristic appeal. Ethiopia, through its unique political independence and its venerable indigenous Ethiopian

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6 See below, pp.18ff. For definitions of ecclesiastical terminology see below, p.23. When SIM missionaries started work in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1929 it was called “The Kambata Province”. Braukämper 1983, pp.89ff.
8 See below, pp.25ff.
9 See below, pp.19f.
Orthodox Church, represents an impressive continuity in the history of the church in Africa. Moreover, familiar texts in the Bible like the story in the Acts of the Apostles about the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8: 26-39) and the promise proclaimed in the Psalms “. . . Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God” (Psalm 68:31), offered points of identification for African Christians.

Especially in South Africa and Nigeria relevant examples can be identified of how indigenous Christians reacted against ecclesiastical colonialism and formed independent churches from the end of the 19th century. Such churches in many cases included Ethiopia in their names. Both as a historical example of African independence and as a Biblical symbol in Africa, Ethiopia, thus, inspired local independent church ventures.

The Ethiopian Centre and Periphery

In terms of the history of religion, Ethiopia creates a unique scenario in Africa. The EOC originally had its base among the Amhariniya/Tigriniya speaking people and their ancestors in northern Ethiopia. It has been competing with Islam in a more than millennium long struggle of Christianising and re-Christianising versus Islamising and re-Islamising.

The expansion of the Amhara Christian Kingdom since 1270 was mainly from a north to a south-west direction. The Muslim expansion, on the other hand, moved mainly in a direction from east to west. Later on, from c.1800, the direction from north to south played an important part in the spread of Islam, too, when mainly Ethiopian Muslim traders, known as Jabarti, brought Islam to the Oromo Gibe states by means of the caravans heading south.

At the end of the 19th century King Menelik II, who subsequently became the new Emperor in 1889, extended the Ethiopian Empire extensively. This expansion can be interpreted in light of the “scramble for Africa.” Menelik took advantage of his purchase of European weapons in a double sense. In the first sense he used them as a means to crush local resistance and extend his own Empire.

His rule introduced the much hated gabbar system in the conquered areas. This made peasants tenants of the land and to a large extent into serfs of the new landowners. The EOC supported this development and was considered as the partner of the neftiyaoch (riflemen) and landlords. This would have repercussions for later

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13 Sundkler mentions that the Ethiopian victory at the battle of Adua and the Italio-Abyssinian war of 1935 were inspiring independent churches in South Africa. Sundkler 1961, p.57. See also Sundkler & Steed 2000, p.426.
16 Oliver maintains that Menelik’s conquests “. . . made Ethiopia almost a participant in the scramble for Africa”. Oliver 1994, pp.40ff.,118. For another “scramble”, see below, p.87.
religious developments especially in the peripheries in the South and to a certain extent in the West. There, peasants in various measures lost their right to own land or were forced to pay heavy taxes for it. This was particularly true in the South.\textsuperscript{18}

I identify the two main institutions in the Ethiopian society of 1889-1974 as the ruling “Amhara” elite embodied in the Emperor and the EOC embodied in the Abuna, from 1959 entitled the Patriarch of Ethiopia. These institutions constituted the Ethiopian political and religious “centre” and were intertwined.\textsuperscript{19} The strong link between the central “Amhara” state and the EOC is highlighted by the renowned Ethiopian historian of the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century Aleqa Taye Gebre Mariam:

Since ancient times the Amaras have been Christians, so when a Galla or Muslim takes up Christianity it is said he has become an Amara.\textsuperscript{20}

To become a member of the EOC meant more than a change of religion. It meant a change of status in society and becoming a full member of the “Amhara” State.

“The Lion crushed the Wolf” is an Ethiopian proverb in the classic Wax and Gold style,\textsuperscript{21} pointing to the second sense of how the European arms were used: to defend Ethiopia’s independence. In Ethiopia it means that Menelik II defeated Italy in the battle of Adua 1896.\textsuperscript{22} Again when “the Wolf”, in the shape of Benito Mussolini had occupied the country in 1936-41, he was cast out. The importance of Ethiopia’s independence can hardly be exaggerated, though it has to be borne in mind that the dominance of the Ethiopian centre and the maintenance of its privileges continued in the peripheries after the Italian occupation.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{Early Missionary Ventures, Revivals and Schisms}

The Sudan Interior Mission started its work in the Wollamo (Wolayta) region in 1928 and among the Hadiya around Hosanna in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1929.\textsuperscript{24} In 1933 a station was built in Durame among the Kambata. The missionaries were forced to leave the two regions due to the Italian occupation in 1936 (Kambata/Hadiya region) and in 1937 (Wollamo region). When they left Ethiopia in 1937-38 just c.10 converts from the Kambata/Hadiya region had been baptised by the SIM missionaries. Another c.20 had been baptised by Ethiopians.\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{19} Here I follow Eide, 1996, pp.6f. As a term for the political administration in this time, I use “the Central Government”. For the Emperor Haile Selassie’s Government from 1930, I will apply the term “the Imperial Government”. I use “Amhara” as a short term for these entities
\textsuperscript{21} Levine 1965, pp.5ff.; see Forslund 1993, p.40.
\textsuperscript{22} Rubenson 1976.
\textsuperscript{24} See below, pp.60ff. Wolayta is from 1976 the name for the former Sidamo sub-province of Wollamo. Before this year I use the latter name. \textit{Ethiopian Herald} 1976.03.10.
\end{flushleft}
When the SIM missionaries resettled in Wollamo (1945) and in Kambata/Hadiya (1946), they recognised that there in the meantime had been a remarkable church growth of approximately 15,000 baptised members (adults), in what I hereafter call “the Wollamo Church”, and approximately 10,000 in the Kambata Evangelical Church.\(^{26}\) The remarkable revivals were led by indigenous Ethiopian Christians in the densely populated regions in southern Ethiopia.\(^{27}\)

After the return of the SIM missionaries in 1946, however, there occurred schisms within the KEC. In 1951 a group of 17 churches broke away from the KEC. In 1952 the two dissenting groups were reconciled. Again, in 1954 another group broke away. It is this latter group I identify as the independent KEC-2.

**Evangelical Church Formation**

As hinted at above, annual conferences called the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) were arranged by Ethiopian Evangelicals from various parts of Ethiopia in 1944-63. They were signs of the ecumenical climate, which prevailed among Ethiopian Evangelicals after the Italian occupation. Owing mainly to later missionary influences, causing a growing denominationalism, the importance of the CEEC decreased. From 1957 the SIM-affiliated groups stopped attending the CEEC meetings in Addis Abeba. This is a clear indication that the Ethiopian Evangelical movements went in different directions.\(^{28}\)

Instead of firmly establishing one united Ethiopian Evangelical church or a federation of Ethiopian Evangelical churches the road to establish confessional churches was set. The evolving Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, which traces its roots via the CEEC to the “Evangelical Pioneers” from the 19\(^{th}\) century and to even earlier influences, established itself in 1959.\(^{29}\)

SIM missionaries and SIM-related churches, like the KEC and the Wollamo Church, met in May 1956 and founded “the Fellowship of Evangelical Believers” (FEB). The FEB, which from its inception had a doctrinal statement, started to meet annually and was later joined by churches connected to the Baptist General Conference Mission.\(^{30}\) The Fellowship of Evangelical Believers was registered

\(^{26}\) Counting 100 members a church. Cotterell 1973, pp.27ff., 170; Braukämper 1983, p.103; Balisky 1997, p.190; Duff 1980, pp.243, 327. See below, p.67. When speaking of baptised members, it should be remembered that the SIM did not acknowledge the EOC baptism. A number of the converts were thus “rebaptised”, from an EOC point of view. SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1995.06.25.

\(^{27}\) The revivals in southern Ethiopia and in Wollega under and after the Italian occupation support the theory that the main agents of Africa’s Christianisation were the Africans. See Sundkler 1987, pp.75ff.; Sundkler & Steed 2000, pp.2f.; Walls and Bediako in Bediako 1995 pp.204f.; Ogbu U. Kalu quoted in Verstraelen 1996, p.325; see below, p.64. A pertinent example in southern Ethiopia is the Wolayta evangelists. Balisky 1997.

\(^{28}\) See below, pp.89ff., 121ff.

\(^{29}\) By “even earlier influences”, i.e., the 17\(^{th}\) century Peter Heyling. Arén 1978, pp.34ff., 409ff.

with the Ethiopian Government in 1964.\textsuperscript{31} From 1969 the name “the Kale Hiywot Churches” (KHC) began to be used by members of SIM-related churches.\textsuperscript{32}

The Presbyterian Bethel Church, which was initiated by the American United Presbyterian Mission (AUPM), preserved its Ethiopian Evangelical legacy and attended the CEEC until 1963. In 1974 it became a part of the EECCMY.\textsuperscript{33} A common experience which both the EECCMY and the KHC share, as the two dominant Evangelical churches in Ethiopia, is a long felt critique from the venerable EOC.\textsuperscript{34}

After breaking away from the SIM-related KEC, the KEC-2 found a platform in the CEEC from 1955 onwards. When the EECCMY was founded in 1959, one of the big challenges of this church became how to relate to the KEC-2. Describing its engagement in the KEC-2 as a “Home Mission”, the EECCMY deliberately bypassed missionary comity principles and involved itself in the Kambata/Hadiya region. In 1962 the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) was launched. It was mainly financed by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). As already mentioned, the KEC-2 gained a new status as the Kambata Synod in the EECCMY in 1969 and the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) became its supporting mission. As mentioned, the Kambata Synod changed its name to the South Central Ethiopia Synod (SCES) in 1977. It was later amended to the South Central Synod (SCS).\textsuperscript{35}

It is against this background that I have formulated the title of my study:

**Ambaricho and Shonkolla**

**From Local Independent Church**

**To the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia**

**The Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya**

Having introduced my subject matter I will now continue to present my interpretative perspectives. Before I go on with this procedure, however, let us enjoy the wit and humour of an Ethiopian proverb which comes to mind:

“Step by step the egg starts walking on its own feet.”

---

\textsuperscript{31} Balisky 1997, p.256.

\textsuperscript{32} In 1974 all the SIM-related churches agreed on the name the Kale Hiywot Churches, translated as “the Word of Life Churches”. In Feb.1994 no official recognition had been received from the Government. SG-A: Balisky to Grenstedt 1994.02.17. In 1971 a crucial decision on forming a denomination with this name was made according to Fargher 1996, p.301.


\textsuperscript{34} Movements inside the EOC have often had more positive relations with Evangelicals than official attitudes may indicate. Arén 1978, pp.13ff., 409ff.; see below, pp.220f.

\textsuperscript{35} See below, Chapters 5-13. From 1984 the English name of the FMS is the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM). Forslund 1993, p.60. Throughout this study I indicate translations of quotations etc. from an original source in Amharic, Danish, Finnish, German, Norwegian and Swedish by putting this language in brackets after the source, e.g. (Amharic). These translations have been done by myself, except from the Finnish language in Part Three, where I have translated from Swedish to English. See below, p.194, n.1.
**B. Interpretative Perspectives**

**Purpose of Study Specified**

I see the issue at question as part of the broad scholarly debate on African Independent (Initiated) Churches (AICs). This discussion is today dominated by two recurring themes. One theme is the impact of Pentecostalism on AICs. The other theme is how many AICs on their own premises establish relations to external partners like neighbouring mainstream churches, local or international churches, the All Africa Conferences of Churches (AACC) or international organisations like the World Council of Churches (WCC) and others.

My study relates to the second theme, and should be seen as a deliberate attempt to contribute to the current debate on how independent churches relate to outside partners. As such it is a case study in Ethiopian church history spelling out the origins of the EECMY in Kambata Hadiya. A group of Ethiopian Evangelical Christians, the evolving KEC-2, broke away from a young mainstream Protestant church, the KEC, which was related to the SIM. After eight years of independence it was adopted as a “Home Mission” by another mainstream Protestant church, the EECMY, which was related to the Lutheran missions. After another seven years the KEC-2 eventually merged with the EECMY. Thus, the central question I seek an answer to is this: How has a local African Independent Church in Ethiopia related to Ethiopian mainstream Protestant churches and to the different external partners associated with them?

To be even more specific I will divide the question into five further questions:

- **How did the KEC-2 develop into a local African Independent Church?**
- **How did the KEC-2 function as a local African Independent Church?**
- **How did the KEC-2 develop into a synod of the EECMY?**
- **How did the Kambata Synod function as an EECMY synod?**

In relation to all these questions I am particularly interested in asking:

- **Who were the main participants at different levels in this process?**

It is impossible to identify all the factors that influenced the KEC-2 in developing into a synod of the EECMY. I will especially discuss three motivating factors, which I consider as crucial in this process: **Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity, External Financial Support** from EECMY partners to the KEC-2 and a **Desire** in the EECMY to become an All-Ethiopian Church.

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38 In so doing I give due attention to Max Weber, who maintained that religion is not only a dependent variable but contains creative elements and is therefore also an independent variable. For a discussion, see Tergel 1973; Baum 1975.
Different Perspectives

In accordance with my fellow researchers Øyvind Eide, Arne Tolo and Finn Aasebø Rønne, I highlight the issue at question from a local perspective, the geographical periphery. I see developments from the Kambata/Hadiya region alluded to in the title *Ambaricho and Shonkolla*. I intend to spell out how Christians from this region interacted with outside Ethiopian Christians and with other Christians. My ambition is to let local Ethiopian voices, both male and female, be heard.

Moreover, my ambition is to relate a story with a chronological structure in such a way that my findings can be identified and digested by local Ethiopians. The Western scholarly community is therefore not my only target group. I will thus give some detailed information and the form of my study will be a narrative with analyses and explanations. I readily admit that Dr Gustav Arén’s style of writing has been an inspiration.

The SIM historians primarily describe the Evangelical revivals in southern Ethiopia and the SIM-related churches’ contacts with each other and the SIM. In my own study I relate the KEC-2 to its background in the KEC/SIM but try to interpret what the KEC-2 experienced, and yet keep an analytical distance. I am, however, aware of the impossibility of keeping a strict objectivity and aware of the influence of the perspective taken on the scholar. After all, the questions you pose to your sources will to a great extent determine the answers you get.

As a comparison of different perspectives I will give one example. Cotterell focuses on the SIM General Director’s role in solving the 1951-52 conflict in the KEC, while Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie is just mentioned in a footnote. According to my sources, Ato Emmanuel is the key-person in the reconciliation process in 1952. The SIM General Director’s role is less important.

The quotation of Mandela, above, highlights how Africans have looked upon Ethiopia as a genuine African country. The European approach, however, has tended to stress Ethiopia’s connection with the Middle Eastern sphere of culture and has thus primarily appreciated Ethiopia’s Semitic legacy. In my view such a perspective is too limited and does not give voice to essential aspects of Ethiopia and its different African peoples. Instead of an “either - or” perspective, I opt for a more inclusive one, that is, a historical perspective of Ethiopia that gives room for Semitic and Cushitic, and other perspectives.

As I have lived in the Kambata/Hadiya region for three years and in Ethiopia as a whole for six years, I hope to have gathered some “insider” experience of what I am writing about. A bit cautiously I call my study “participant observation”.

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41 For a discussion on objectivity, perspectives and paradigms in the writing of history I refer to Atkinson 1978 and Dahlgren Florén 1996. For a missiological approach to these issues, see Bosch 1991, pp.181ff.
42 Cotterell 1973, pp.134ff.; see below, pp.101, 103ff. Cotterell does not mention the CEEC, see Hallencreutz, 1976, p.266.
43 Ullendorf 1965 (1st ed.1960) is criticised for such an approach by Hassen 1994, pp.2f.
Ecclesiological Terminology

The term “church” can be used in various ways in Africa depending on different perspectives. I list some meanings relevant to my study:

1. An inclusive theological concept, the Church as the Body of Christ, which is a summary description of people who confess allegiance to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

2. A denominational concept related to Western churches and defined by missionaries and scholars. The wide description “Missionary Christianity” presupposes such a definition. The more elaborate “Mainstream Protestant Church”, which I make use of, is another. When church is used in the names of the EECMY (Lutheran) and the Kale Hiywot Church (Baptist), it can be defined in this sense.

3. A socio-religious concept, which highlights the factors which keep its members together. Some church movements are probably not focused on Western denominationalism but rather on common experiences and concerns among Africans. The “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” ("EEC") appears to have been such a church.

4. The church as an institution and administrative body.

5. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church can be characterised as an old independent church with historical links to the Coptic Church in Egypt. I will, however, use the concept “independent church” in Sundkler’s and Turner’s sense, below. In the same manner I will use the term “autonomous church” for an indigenous church that preserves its relations to a foreign mission.

Characteristics of African Independent Churches

In African studies, since Sundkler’s epoch-making Bantu Prophets in South Africa, the term African Independent Churches (AICs) has acquired a specific meaning. I understand his definition as referring to local Christian communities, which have made a point of pursuing their own affairs independently of missionary control and started a new church. Sundkler took a step further and suggested a rough classification of different local independent churches. He distinguished between culturally nationalistic and charismatic churches. With reference to current terminology in South Africa he called the first type “Ethiopian” and the second “Zionist”.

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45 By using inverted commas round the word “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” (“EEC”), I indicate the alleged difference of status of this church. See below, p.91.

46 Sundkler 1961, pp.38-64; Sundkler & Steed 2000, pp.423ff. When using inverted commas round the word “Ethiopian” I refer to independent churches of the “Ethiopian” type, otherwise to the country.
I find Sundkler’s classification thought-provoking. Independent churches of the “Ethiopian” type are keen on local initiatives and local leadership. Such churches, however, have preserved much of the ecclesiastical framework of the church they reacted against. An independent church of the “Zionist” type has additional African charismatic expressions among its characteristics. It has in general changed its inherited ecclesiastical framework more than the “Ethiopian” type.47

Sundkler’s context is South Africa with its special complexity of white racial domination. His concepts and types have, however, been used in a wider African context and the interpretations have been broadened.48 There are, furthermore, numerous distinctions and terms for different types of African churches in general.49

In 1968 Turner elaborated further on a “Typology of Modern African Movements” covering the whole continent. On historical grounds he distinguished between “older churches” and “independent churches”. Besides having separated from an “older Church”, an independent church, according to his definition, comprises three elements: it is founded in Africa, by Africans and primarily for Africans in a factual and historical sense. Turner furthermore notes that the independent church is often called “separatist” by those within the “older church”, which reveals a “... satisfaction with themselves as the only point of reference”. Independent is the better and preferable term, he suggests.50

By still using historical distinctions as to how they were formed, Turner identifies two main types of independent churches “Ethiopian” and “Prophet-Healing”. The “Prophet-Healing” type is called “Zionist” in South Africa and “Aladura” in Nigeria. Turner develops his classification of independent churches on a theological basis by an analysis of religious features or content. He applies Molland’s structural scheme for a comparison of churches’ polity, doctrine, worship and ethos.51 Turner finds that the emphasis on an “Ethiopian” church is on ethos, whereas its polity, doctrine and worship are quite similar to the church it has seceded from. Turner describes the “ethos” of the “Ethiopian” type as putting an emphasis on “spiritual independence”. This emphasis:

... may appear in the practice of polygamy as an assertion of freedom for Africa’s traditional patterns as against those of the West; or it may be represented by strong race-antipathy towards the whites, or be expressed in the form of nationalist or pan-Africanist ideas.52

The “Prophet-Healing” type, however, puts an emphasis on doctrine and differs more in polity, worship and ethos from the church it has seceded from than the “Ethiopian” church usually does.53

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50 Turner 1968, pp.10-34.
51 Ibid. For an explanation of Molland’s concepts, see below, p.28.
52 Ibid 1968, pp.22ff. For a definition of “ethos”, see below, p.28.
53 Ibid.
In 1978 Turner warned against over-simple theories of a direct relationship between colonial rule (or missionary control) and the rise of independent churches. He identifies, what he refers to as, “religious colonialism” in Liberia and Ethiopia, “. . . which have been outside the colonial situation in the usual sense”.  

Hastings identifies three waves of independent churches. The first at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, the second in 1910-30 and a third started in the late 1940’s. The contrast between the “Ethiopian” and the “Zionist” type should not be exaggerated he maintains. He, moreover, identifies “Ethiopian” churches in Kenya being formed in the 1940’s and 1950’s among the Kikuyu and as late as 1958 among the Luo.  

Hallencreutz identifies a type of “Ethiopian” churches, which were being formed in Harare in Zimbabwe in the late 1940’s and in 1956.  

Bosch, as referred to by Daneel, defines nine significant factors as reasons for the emergence of independent churches. The first is “poor communication”. Polygamy and beer-drinking are mentioned together by Bosch as general examples of areas where missionaries showed little understanding of the African context:

Thus polygamy which, within the context of African tribal life actually makes sense in many respects, was simply equated with unchastity. Beer-drinking was bluntly dismissed as “abuse of liquor” without any realization of its role in ritual or the fact that it symbolized fellowship and brotherhood.

From what I have referred to above, I find it possible to identify the KEC-2 as a new local independent church of the “Ethiopian” type. However, in order not to generate terminological confusion, I limit myself and describe the KEC-2 as a new local African Independent Church (AIC). I hope to be able to show that it continued being very similar to the KEC, which it seceded from. The KEC-2 thus was similar to the “Ethiopian” type, discussed above. I contend that it had many parallels with other churches in different parts of Africa.

**Characteristics of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity**

In the course of the Italian occupation in 1936-41, a sense of Ethiopian solidarity became a challenging experience of members from different Evangelical churches, who shared the same experiences of both hardships and oppression, and the rejuvenating experience of a more or less common Evangelical legacy. There evolved a sense of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity, which transcended barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism.

When speaking of **ethnicity** in general, I primarily refer to the consciousness of belonging to a group or clan with a common history and to a certain extent sharing a common language. For the Kambata and Hadiya the father’s descent is decisive.

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54 Turner 1978, p.44.  
55 Hastings 1979, pp.67ff., 78f., 127.  
57 Daneel 1987, pp.76f.  
58 For parallels of so-called “drinking churches”, see Barrett 1968, pp.140, 286, 294.
If your father is Kambata you are regarded a Kambata etc. This patriarchal way of looking at ethnicity is widespread in Ethiopia. Language seems less important.\textsuperscript{59}

By \textbf{social status} I mean wealth in money or kind, position in society and education. By \textbf{denominationalism} I mean an urge to cultivate one’s own ecclesiastical preferences at the expense of ecumenical relations.

With reference to Dr Gustav Arén, I suggest that the roots of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity can be traced back to the Evangelical Pioneers, who were sent from Eritrea to bring the Gospel to the Oromo at the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. They established a network of Christian fellowship, which functioned as the yeast of an expanding Evangelical counterculture in Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{60}

When trying to define this counterculture, I have to shortly analyse each of the three words in the concept I have coined: \textit{“Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity”}. \textbf{Ethiopian} relates to the national Ethiopian experience of independence and a belief in indigenous enterprises. This attitude was strongest among the people, who belonged to or were affiliated to Amhara culture. Others had more ambiguous experiences but were probably influenced by this mentality, too.\textsuperscript{61}

The word \textbf{Evangelical} in this context can not be explained by references only to Western categories.\textsuperscript{62} It brought at least three additional strands into a unique Ethiopian blend, which perhaps is best illustrated by a short presentation of three leading founding fathers of the EECMY.

The \textbf{first} is Qes Badima Yalew from Gojjam, who as a former priest in the EOC represents continuity with the EOC, a Semitic legacy and Ethiopian independence among Evangelicals in Ethiopia. He had the integrity to challenge both the EOC and foreign missionaries with sentences like: “We are reformers but we are not a colony!” It is good to remember that he was visited by the EOC Patriarch Abuna Theophilos and the Emperor on what was expected to be his deathbed in 1969.\textsuperscript{63}

The \textbf{second} is Dr Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, an Eritrean born in Nakamte in Wollega to Eritrean missionaries. His parents were sent to bring the Gospel to the Oromo people first in Nejo (close to Boji) and then in Nakamte. He represents among other things the European Evangelical legacy of Pietism from the Bethel Congregation at Massawa, indigenised among Eritreans and Ethiopians.\textsuperscript{64}

The \textbf{third} is His Excellency Emmanuel Abraham, born in western Wollega in Boji, later on Minister in Haile Selassie’s Government. Being an Oromo, he represents a Cushitic strand in this African blend of Evangelicalism, which goes back to Onesimos Nesib, the translator of the Bible into the Oromiffa language.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{60} Arén 1978 and 1999.
\textsuperscript{61} I will use the term “mentality” in line with the “Annales School”. I understand the term as a half-conscious collective attitude, hard to change. See Le Goff \textit{et al.} (eds.) 1978 (Swedish).
\textsuperscript{64} For the background of these main characters in the CEEC, AAMY (Evangelical Congregation) and EECMY, see Arén 1978; 1999; see below, pp.69ff.
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Ibid.}
The term **Solidarity** stands for concern and mutual dependence. This is not the place to develop my analysis any further. At this stage it is enough to maintain that to be able to withstand centrifugal forces of the multiethnic legacies of Ethiopia there has to be a strong unifying centre.

As hinted at above, shared hardships of the Italian occupation welded Ethiopian Evangelicals together. This led to an Evangelical ecumenical awareness and made denominational distinctions less important. It was important to support each other as Ethiopian Evangelical brothers and sisters. The evolving leader of the early Wollamo Church, Ato Biru Dubale, was one of the men who were in contact with this Evangelical network. He was a pupil of the Rev. Karl Cederqvist’s “English” school.\(^66\) The embryonic KEC consisted of a small group of people of whom a few probably met with Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie in 1936-37.\(^67\)

By using a denominational language, which certainly was not employed by Ethiopian Evangelicals at that time, one can say that - Ethiopian “Presbyterian” pastors distributed the Holy Communion to Ethiopian “Lutherans” in Wollega, and Ethiopian “Baptists” from the KEC received support from the Ethiopian “Lutheran” Evangelical Congregation in Addis Ababa when approaching the Ethiopian Government in matters concerning religious freedom.\(^68\) Indeed there was an ecumenical atmosphere among Ethiopian Evangelicals at a time when the foreign missionaries returned to Ethiopia after World War II.

**Analytical Models and Concepts**

In order to generate as much knowledge and as many explanations as possible, I will adapt a comprehensive approach when trying to answer my questions. My subject matter seems to benefit from the use of different analytical models with their origins in different scholarly disciplines, mainly history, theology, psychology and sociology.

**A Socio-Psychological Model:** In order to capture the dynamics in the historical process, I will make use of the socio-psychological “Theory of Cognitive Dissonance” of the American scholar Leonard Festinger as one of my analytical instruments. In short it maintains that: dissonant or “nonfitting” relations may exist among cognitive (knowledgeable) elements. These give rise to pressures to reduce and to avoid dissonance. Manifestations of the operation of these pressures include behaviour changes, changes of cognition, and circumspect exposure to new information and new opinions.

When making decisions, dissonance is an inevitable consequence. Social groups can generate dissonance as pressure groups for behavioural change. After the

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\(^67\) See below, pp.71f. *Ato* is Amharic for Mr. See below, *Glossary*, p.283.

change, they can reduce dissonance and become groups to identify with. The dissonance experienced at behavioural changes is less if support is gained from social groups. A way to resist change and minimise dissonance is to actively make contact with like-minded groups in order to find support for one’s behaviour.69

A Theological Comparative Structural Model: I qualify my diachronic approach with synchronic, structural analyses of the characteristics of the KEC-2 at distinct stages of the local developments, i.e., in (1952-1954, which shows the still united KEC), 1957-58, 1961, 1962-63, 1965, 1967. In 1970 and 1973-75 I analyse the Kambata Synod. To avoid repetition these analyses in Chapters 6-12 (“A Picture of KEC-2 or the Kambata Synod”) replace the “Conclusions” of Chapters 1-5.

To be able to make a relevant comparison I take my starting point in the “Theological Typology” of the Norwegian scholar Einar Molland and elaborate it for my own purpose. Turner and Daneel have employed Molland’s typology for independent churches in a similar way.70

In order to characterise a Christian community Molland identifies four different basic aspects in his structural, theological analysis: **doctrine, polity, worship** and **ethos**.71 There is an organic correlation between these aspects but different communities display a characteristic emphasis on one of them. For example, **doctrine** is the dominating (and unifying) characteristic of Lutheran churches. Molland furthermore defines **ethos** as a characteristic lifestyle linked to a confession. It is thus wider than ethics. I elaborate Molland’s scheme as follows and identify the following categories well aware that they sometimes tend to overlap:

**Polity:** In this concept I include constitution, church order, ecclesiastical framework (synod, diocese etc.), current church leaders, ecclesiastical offices (ordained ministry, elders etc.), administrative structure and financial system.

**Worship:** In this concept I include liturgy, ritual (including manual), traditional music, the two sacraments and ecclesiastical rites like confirmation, ordination etc.

**Doctrine:** Doctrine will often be used for belief in a more subjective sense (*fides qua*), where pneumatological and soteriological aspects are important. Theoretical or systematic aspects of doctrine on the sacraments etc. will be highlighted when identified (*fides quae*).72 In order to save space I include means for promoting doctrinal awareness in this category, too, for example: Bible-schools, TEE etc.

**Ethos:** A characteristic lifestyle linked to a confession or conviction.

When I use the above types elsewhere in the text, outside my “Pictures”, I will use them according to my definitions above. I will furthermore make use of the following categories in my “Pictures”:

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69 L. Festinger, Professor of Psychology at Stanford. Festinger 1962; see Bernard, 1995, p.47.
71 In the English version Molland uses “constitution” and “church order” not polity. Molland 1959, p.6. Turner prefers the more comprehensive concept “polity”. Turner 1968. I follow Turner and include Molland’s concepts as part of my concept “polity”.
Relations to the EECMY: I use this category for the KEC-2 from 1962 and onwards. Before this year I include it in the next category.

Ecumenism: Relations to other churches, missions and Christian organisations.

Mission: Outreach to non-Christians.

Size: Statistics of membership in the KEC-2 and in other related activities.

As my “Pictures” will have the function of conclusions, I will discuss trends and developments both in the introduction to the “Pictures” and in the text.

A Missiological Model: In order to analyse the interaction of the Christian Gospel and Culture in Ethiopia I use the concepts “indigenising principle” and “pilgrim principle” as my interpretative instruments. These principles are suggested by the Scottish scholar Andrew F. Walls in his missiological model.

Walls’s perspective is to look upon church history as a process of translations. He maintains that church history always has been a battleground for two opposing tendencies in a translating process of the Gospel into specific contexts, which was initiated at Christ’s incarnation. The “indigenising principle” urges the Christian to identify with his culture and society and make a particular and relevant re-translation of the Gospel into his own context.

The “pilgrim principle”, however, warns him that he can not fully conform to one particular culture and society, and at the same time be faithful to Christ. The Gospel makes the Christian partaker of a common inheritance of a message of firm coherence, which urges him and his context to convert to Christ. The “pilgrim principle” is thus a universalising factor, extending culture and society. Christ wants to transform the Christian into what He wants him to be. A Christian is a Pilgrim.

The point made by Walls is that both of these opposing principles (tendencies) are part of the Gospel, as such, and should not be separated. If held together they help the Church to keep a balance between contextualization and obedience (to Jesus of Nazareth). If the balance between the principles is lost, the Gospel will become too narrow or lose its meaning.

I will, moreover, make use of various sociological concepts like centre-periphery, dominance-subordination, power, mentality etc. I will briefly present such concepts in the relevant context, if I find it necessary. For a general presentation of sociological concepts and models I refer to Burke 1992. For a presentation of the use of paradigm as a theological concept I refer to Bosch 1991.

I now turn to the material I build my findings on. It can be divided into three categories: unpublished sources in archives, unpublished oral sources, and published sources and relevant literature. I have intentionally limited myself to present literature with an obvious relevance to my subject matter.

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73 I use the concept “culture” in a wide sense, including political and rationalistic ideologies of different societies. These may be more or less conscious and can be compared to the concept “mentality”. See above, p.26, n.61.

C. My Material

Unpublished Sources in Archives
My thesis is mainly based on the unpublished sources listed in the Bibliography. Parts of them have not been used in scholarly research before. Others have been used by scholars, who have used them from different perspectives than mine.75

The main archives and primary sources for my study are as follows:

- Dr Gustav Arén’s Private Archives (GA-A) in Uppsala comprise important sources of this thesis. One example is the copies of the Qes Badima Yalew version of the CEEC minutes in 1944-54 in Amharic. The English translation of the CEEC minutes 1944-63 has been made by Dr Arén. The GA-A holds copies of the EECMY minutes from the different administrative levels of the EECMY 1958-78, including material on the KEC-2. The originals of such material can be hard to find in Ethiopia. Part of the GA-A I refer to is kept in the Church of Sweden Mission Archives (CSM-A) in Uppsala. See below.

- From the EECMY Archives (EECMY-A) in Addis Abeba I use minutes, reports, letters and documents of the Kambata Synod from 1970 and onwards. I also use relevant EECMY material from these archives. The material is written in English and/or Amharic.

- From the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation Archives (AAMY-A) in Addis Abeba I use some of the Amharic hand-written minutes and documents of the AAMY Church Officers.

- From the SIM Archives (SIM-A) in Charlotte, North Carolina, I use some material from 1929 to 1953. These comprise letters, notes and documents from the SIM missionaries, and extracts of the SIM Log-Book in Addis Abeba 1933-38. There is also material written in Amharic by Ethiopians like the KEC first written constitution from the reconciliation in 1952. The Amharic original document includes signatures (and some fingerprints). See Appendix I. Some of the Amharic material has been translated into English by the SIM.

- From the Church of Sweden Mission Archives (CSM-A) in Uppsala I use material from the GA-A kept there (see above), but also various other documents of the EECMY, the CSM, and LWF with its Swedish section “Lutherhjälpen”.

- From the Swedish Evangelical Mission Archives (SEM-A) in Uppsala I use letters and reports of the SEM.

- From the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Archives (FELM-A) in Helsinki I use correspondence, FELM (former FMS) minutes and reports of the Finnish Mission secretaries, especially in 1967-70. Parts of this material are in

75 For a full account and explanation of the sources, see below, the Bibliography pp.285ff. My thanks especially to the late Dr Gustav Arén (GA-A), the late Dr Carl-Johan Hellberg (LWF-A), Dr Ezra Gebremedhin (EG-A), Dr Arne Tolo (SIM-A), Dr Paul Balisky (PB-A), Mrs Pramilla Suganandam (EECMY-A) and Ato Mesfin Lisanu (AAMY-A) for providing material from the archives in brackets.
Finnish, which my mother Margit has translated for use in this dissertation. It also comprises material from the Kambata Synod and some FELM literature.

- From the Lutheran World Federation Archives (LWF-A) in Geneva I use the minutes of the Commission on World Mission (CWM) annual meetings in 1949-70 and “Home, Field and Church Reports” to the CWM annual meetings in 1953-71.

- From the Ezra Gebremedhin Private Archives (EG-A) I am grateful to be able to use the Ezra Gebremedhin diary, March-April 1965.

- From the Staffan Grenstedt Private Archives (SG-A) I will mention my correspondence mainly with SEM and SIM missionaries. I refer to 22 letters and e-mails. Rev. Melvin Donald’s Kambata Report (June 1995) spells out an SIM missionary’s version of what happened in the KEC in 1951-54. Rev. Donald was working there at this time. I have furthermore received a written evaluation of my licentiate dissertation from Rev. Donald.76

Of all the material mentioned above and other unpublished sources referred to in my thesis, copies are kept with the author.77

Unpublished Oral Sources
My oral sources consist of interviews made in Ethiopia 1996-98 and interviews made in Scandinavia 1993-2000.78 The 37 interviews I refer to can be divided into the following categories:

- Elders of Kale Hiywot Churches in the Kambata/Hadiya region (former KEC).
- Leaders in the national Kale Hiywot Church with connection to Durame.
- Elders of South Central Synod (former KEC-2) in the Kambata/Hadiya region.
- Current leaders in the SCS and the EECMY, remembering the KEC-2 from their youth.
- Former EECMY national leaders.
- Other persons from the Kambata/Hadiya region.
- SIM missionaries.
- FELM missionaries and mission secretaries with connections to the SCS (former Kambata Synod).

76 Grenstedt 1995, *Ambaricho. A Remarkable Venture in Ethiopian Christian Solidarity*. Donald’s evaluation is referred to as SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15

77 I relate critically to my material and comment on it when I find reasons to distrust my sources. This is the case of the *Report of the Special Commission to Kambata* (see below, Appendix II). It has a tendency to justify the EECMY’s actions in the region. In such a case I infer from the source as I would do from an artefact (“kvarleva”) and do not take its narrated message at face value. On rules for source criticism I refer to Torstendahl 1966, Jarrick/Söderberg 1993 and Dahlgren/Florén 1996. “Kvarleva” is the Swedish term for an artefact, used in a figurative sense.

78 For a full account of oral sources I refer to, see below, Bibliography, II. Interviews, p.290.
• SEM missionaries and LWF staff.

Just to mention a few, it has been rewarding to meet with local representatives like: Ato Sabiro Wesero, one of the KEC’s “Big Three”, Lambuda/Dubanco; Ato Daimo Ababo, Kale Hiywot Church (KHC) Shone; Ato Yacob Baffa, KHC Durame; Dr Tesfai Yacob, KHC General Secretary, formerly Durame; Ato Erjabo Handiso, the Kambata Synod’s first President, Dinika; Ato Ayele Asale, EECMY Durame; Qes Asfaw Qelbero, EECMY Addis Abeba, formerly Durame; Qes Fiqre Yesus Forsido, EECMY Hosanna; Dr Tarekegn Adebo, Lund, formerly EECMY Durame and Addis Abeba, Dr Teferi Sendabo, Uppsala, formerly Durame and Addis Abeba and Dr Yacob Arsano, Addis Abeba University, formerly Yayamo. Former EECMY national leaders of special interest are Ato Emmanuel Abraham; Dr Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Dr Ezra Gebremedhin. Rev. Ilpo Perttilä, should also be mentioned as one of the first FELM missionaries in 1969.

The interviews have been made either in Amharic, English or Swedish by myself without interpreters. They can be characterised as “qualitative research interviews”. Kvale characterises this type of interview as “partly structured” and open to following the interviewee in his narration if found convenient.\(^79\)

I will also make reference to and quote from two interviews with Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, which were made by Rev. (later Dr) Arén in 1972.

**Published Sources and Relevant Literature**

**On Ethiopian History**

There are rich collections of published sources and literature on Ethiopia. Early European references to Kambata are found in Beckingham Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia 1593-1646* (1954). It gives the Portuguese Jesuit Manoel de Almeida’s version of how Father Antonio Fernandez visited Kambata in 1614. J.L. Krapf, *Reisen in Ostafrika* (1858/1964) mentions Kambata as an area of interest to Krapf at his stay in Shoa 1839-42. Kambata and Hadiya are also mentioned in the interesting indigenous account of Ethiopian history from a perspective of the 1920’s by Aleqa Taye Gebre Mariam, *History of the People of Ethiopia* (1922/1987 short version).\(^80\)

In order to place my study in its wider Ethiopian context I will refer to some valuable scholarly studies, which mostly focus on the Ethiopian political centre. An outstanding example is Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527* (1972). It highlights Ethiopia’s medieval history and illustrates the links of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church with the Amhara Kingdom. These dynamics also had an influence on the Kambata/Hadiya region.

Several authors with connections to professors Richard Pankhurst and Sven Rubenson follow suit and take similar centre-dominated perspectives as Taddesse

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\(^79\) Kvale 1997; see Vansina 1985.

\(^80\) There are numerous early records on Kambata and Hadiya. Hadiya is already mentioned in the Kebra Negast from the 13th century, see below, p.45.
One of the more recent contributions to this “school” is Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1974* (1991). It is a general history from Tewodoros to the Ethiopian Revolution.

An alternative perspective to this way of writing history is opted for by Professor Pankhurst, himself, in *The Ethiopian Borderlands, Essays in Regional History from Ancient Times to the End of the 18th Century* (1997). He highlights developments in the Ethiopian peripheries. This includes the Kambata/Hadiya region and its surroundings from the early medieval period to the end of the 18th century. An alternative, and more challenging perspective is ventured by Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia* (1994). He contends that earlier studies to a great extent have been deprecative of the Oromo and too dependent on Amhara premises.

For the regional historical background of the Kambata and Hadiya peoples I depend primarily on U. Braukämper, *Geschichte der Hadiya Süd-Äthiopiens* (1980) and *Die Kambata* (1983). He is able to give historical and socio-political analyses of these ethnic groups from c. the 13th and 14th centuries to the 1974 Revolution. Braukämper to a great extent builds his books on oral sources.


A book, which provides an insider’s view of both political affairs and ecclesiastical dynamics in Ethiopia is H.E. Emmanuel Abraham, *Reminiscences of My Life* (1995). The distinguished Minister of Haile Selassie’s Government and long-term President of the EECMY has built his books on meticulously collected notes and documents. For an alternative Ethiopian voice concerning the role of the EOC in Ethiopia, this book can be read parallel to Getatchew Haile *et al*. See below.

**On Church History**

There is a very rich literature on churches and missions in Ethiopia. Official EOC presentations written by Ethiopians, which illustrate how the EOC understands its role in Ethiopia, are Sergew Hable Selassie (ed.), *The Church of Ethiopia* (1970), and Aymro Wondmagegnehu and Joachim Motovu, *The Ethiopian Orthodox Church* (1970). A later EOC publication is *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Faith, Order of Worship and Ecumenical Relations* (1996).

A Catholic perspective of interest is the presentation by an Ethiopian, born and raised in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Father Dr Antonio Alberto O.F.M.Cap., *The

Two shorter studies by local Ethiopians from the Kambata/Hadiya region are as follows. Tamru Abamu, *Bete Kristiyan na ye Lemat Enqesqase 1976 E.C.* (1984). This is in fact an indigenous Ethiopian attempt to write a history of the Kale Hiywot Church (KHC) in the Kambata/Hadiya region from a local KHC perspective. Beredo Bekalo, *A Short History of the EECMY South Central Synod, Origin and Establishment* (1990) is a corresponding indigenous Ethiopian effort describing the KEC-2 and the Kambata Synod from an EECMY perspective.


A more or less critical approach to foreign missions in Ethiopia is given in the thought-provoking volume based on a symposium held in Lund 1996, with the same title. Getatchew Haile et al., *The Missionary Factor in Ethiopia* (1998).

A very local approach concerning the Hadiya ethnic group in the Kambata/Hadiya Region is taken by B. Peter, *Kulturelle Identität und Religiöses Bekenntnis. Synkretismus bei den Hadiyya Südäthiopiens*. This book, written by a missionary with cultural interest and long experience from the grass-root level, depends to a great extent on oral sources. It gives valuable information on Hadiya culture.

An alternative perspective to the SIM authors concerning developments in Wolaita after the return of the SIM missionaries in 1945 is presented by the Danish Lutheran scholar F.R. Pedersen (now Aasebø Rønne), *Ato Birru Dubales Uafhængige Kirkebevægelse i Wolaita. Etiopien* (1989). This is a study with similarities to my own thesis. It highlights the role of the leader of the Wollamo Church’s revivals, Ato Biru Dubale. It describes the tensions between him and the returning SIM, and analyses the evolution of a new (or was it the old?) church. Ato Biru’s church, depending on one’s perspective, can be described as an independent church. Later on it became part of the Lutheran Church in Ethiopia (LCET), which is related to the Swedish Mission Bible-True Friends (SMBV).

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84 The title is “The Church and the Development Work” (my trans.).
85 Both Ato Tamru Abamu and Qes Beredo Bekalo are from the Durame area in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Their studies are printed manuscripts and in this sense not published. I count them as “relevant literature”.
86 The title is “Church out of Tribulation” (official trans.).
87 The title is “The Gospel Faith Movement in Ethiopia” (my trans.).
88 The title is “Ato Birru Dubale’s Independent Church Movement in Wolayta, Ethiopia” (my trans.).
F. Aasebø Rønne’s forthcoming dissertation, *Kontinuitet og Førændring, Etiopisk Ortodoks og Protestantsk Kristendom i Sydetiopisk Samfund og Kultur. Kambaataa-Hadiyaa ca. 1300-1974* is a piece of broad research into local ecclesiastical developments in the Kambata/Hadiya region. In relation to his forthcoming dissertation I concentrate on the dynamics of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity and how it was expressed in deliberate ecumenical initiatives, which brought the KEC-2 from its state as a local African Independent Church to a synod of the mainstream Protestant EECMY. Local relations between Orthodox and Protestant Christians in the Kambata/Hadiya region are, thus, not a major focus of my study.

T. Engelsviken’s forthcoming study is looked forward to, as well. It will bring a deeper understanding of Pentecostalism in Ethiopia: *Pentecostal Revival in Ethiopia. The Origins, Growth and Suffering of the Mulu Wongel Church 1960-1974.*

**Mainstream SIM Literature on Ethiopia**

The SIM literature, which I should like to mention is: T.A. Lambie, *A Doctor Without a Country* (1939) gives glimpses of Dr Lambie’s pioneer work in Ethiopia, including Kambata. N.C. Couer, *Seeds of Sacrifice in Ethiopia* (n.d.) tells a dramatic story of how SIM missionaries were refugees around Hosanna in 1936.


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89 I have already commented on this study, see above, p.21, n.36.
90 After the war Duff started “the Orthodox Presbyterian Mission” in Eritrea. In this mission infant baptism was normal. SG-A: Gunnar Svensson o.i.1993.11.21; see Duff 1980, p.374.
91 It was presented as a Doctoral Dissertation at Aberdeen in 1988.
Mainstream Lutheran Literature on the EECMY

The mainstream Lutheran literature on the EECMY written by Scandinavian scholars has an early forerunner in the more popular F. Hylander (ed.), *Bortom Bergen I, II and III* (1953, 1954 and 1960). It contains M. Lundgren’s important articles on the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”, the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (1954) and the evolving EECMY (1960).92

The Uppsala School of Mission under the leadership of the late B. Sundkler, C.F. Hallencretry, S. Axelson, A.-I. Berglund and A. Tergel has contributed several dissertations on Ethiopian Church History, all related to the EECMY.93 These dissertations have the advantage of having a solid presentation of the origins and background of the Evangelical Lutheran movement in Ethiopia in G. Arén, *Evangelical Pioneers in Ethiopia* (1978) and *Envoys of the Gospel in Ethiopia* (1999).

In dealing with different ecclesiastical fundamentals of the EECMY, a comprehensive approach is taken by O. Sæverås, *On Church-Mission Relations in Ethiopia 1944-1969* (1974). My study relates to Sæverås’s dissertation on the structural process, which led to the formation of the EECMY. In relation to Sæverås, however, I concentrate on the process of solidarity, where the CEEC and the EECMY were the Ethiopian participants vis-à-vis the local African Independent Church, the KEC-2. J. Bakke, *Christian Ministry* (1987) highlights the role of ecclesiastical offices in Ethiopia. Bakke’s analysis of how the function of elders and pastors differ in various synods of the EECMY is particularly pertinent to my study.

A local approach with a perspective from the periphery is taken by three other scholars: Ø. Eide, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia* (1996, revised 2000) analyses the relation of church and politics in Ethiopia 1974-85 with an emphasis on centre-periphery dynamics. I draw on Eide’s helpful religio-politic analyses and compare with the evolution in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

A. Tolo, *Sidama and Ethiopian* (1998) analyses the integration of local Sidama into the Evangelical Lutheran movement. As the former Sidamo Province is the neighbour of the Kambata/Hadiya region and the South Ethiopia Synod a neighbouring EECMY synod, Tolo’s study has become another point of comparison.

My own previous study, *Ambaricho, a Remarkable Venture in Ethiopian Christian Solidarity* (Licentiate Dissertation 1995), gives a foundation to my present thesis. The analysis has been elaborated and the time period for the main presentation extended by five years, to 1975, with a following epilogue.

For the FMS enterprise in the Kambata/Hadiya region I would like to mention *FMS Årsböcker* and M. Hirvilammi, *Finska Missionssällskapets Insats i Mekane-Yesus Kyrkans Verksamhet i Etiopien 1969-1984* (1989).94 The latter is written by the son of one of the first FMS missionaries in the Kambata/Hadiya region, Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi. Its focus is on the FMS enterprise in the region.

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92 The title is “Beyond the Mountains” (my trans.).
93 The well-informed presentation of Ethiopian Church History by Sundkler & Steed 2000 is part of this prolific “school”.
94 The titles are “The FMS Year-Books” and “The Finnish Missionary Society’s Contribution to the Work of the Mekane Yesus Church in Ethiopia 1969-1984” (my trans.).
D. Scope and Structure

As already implied, I have opted for a chronological structure and 1928 is the starting point. At that time the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) planned to commence work in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The terminal point for the main presentation is 1975. This is the year of the rural Land Reform, which affected the peasants of the Kambata/Hadiya region more than the revolutionary slogans of 1974. In my concluding epilogue I will highlight two important phenomena related to the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) in the Kambata/Hadiya region. This brings the presentation up to 1984.

The primary focus is from 1944 to 1975. From the end of 1944 outside foreign Evangelical Christians again started to influence the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC) more substantially. This influence, after some time, generated splits and the formation of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) in 1954. I then follow the development of the KEC-2 until it became a synod of the EECMY in 1969 under the name the Kambata Synod. I follow the first seven years of the Kambata Synod until the end of 1975.

My study consists of four parts of which part two and three are the core:

- In Part One, the historical background of the Kambata/Hadiya region and principle people at an early stage are introduced. Important aspects of the development of the KEC in 1928-43 are spelled out against the broader Ethiopian background. Early Evangelical contacts in Addis Ababa are analysed.

- In Part Two, which covers the period 1944-66, I first discuss the impact of the Emperor’s new policy of nation-building, which implied the co-operation of the foreign missions. I then discuss the local effects of the return of the SIM. I present the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) and analyse the formation of the KEC-2. I explore the dynamics of the independent KEC-2 and its interactions with the CEEC and the young EECMY as concerned Ethiopian partners in 1955-61. The latter brought the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to the scene and thus the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) was started. The EECMY’s efforts and strategy to transform the independent KEC-2 into an EECMY synod in 1962-66 are explored. Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity is clearly evidenced in the years covered in Part Two.

- In Part Three, I describe the new situation in 1967-69, when a supporting foreign mission was invited to the region and the Kambata Synod was established. I then follow the Kambata Synod’s first years of work and the dramatic changes in the Ethiopian society until the end of 1975.

- In Part Four, I discuss the ethnic dynamics, which came to a head in 1977 and the remarkable religious freedom in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1983-84. This freedom was also enjoyed by the members of the South Central Synod (SCS), as the Kambata Synod now was called. At last I present my general conclusions for the whole of the study.
The Western Synod was earlier called the Western Wollega Synod. The Central Ethiopia Synod was earlier called the Addis Abeba Synod, together with the Central Synod it formed the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod. The South Ethiopia Synod (at times called the South Synod) and the South West Synod earlier formed the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod. The North Ethiopia Area Work (including Adua) earlier formed the Wollo-Tigré Synod. The South Central Synod was earlier called the Kambata Synod, in 1977-83 the South Central Ethiopia Synod. The Bethel Synods (IBS, KIBS, WWBS) earlier belonged to the AUPM-related Bethel Church (Presbyterian). See below, Map 5, p.136.

Map 1 is from Jonsson 1998, p.96. Department of Business Studies, Uppsala University.
PART ONE
THE ETHIOPIAN BACKGROUND

If you climb Mt. Ambaricho or Mt. Shonkolla the views are overwhelming. A bird’s-eye view of the background of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2), is also quite overwhelming. It is such a survey that Part One of my study will provide.

The interaction between the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC) and the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) in the period 1928-43 necessarily belong to the KEC-2 background. The KEC contacts with other indigenous Ethiopian Evangelicals in the country before 1944 will also be discussed.

The dynamics of the KEC-2 background will be described from a local Kambata/Hadiya perspective, that is, from Mt. Ambaricho and Mt. Shonkolla.
Chapter One
The Kambata/Hadiya Environment

In order to understand the local dynamics of the evolution of the KEC-2, its preferences and priorities, I will first of all give a brief historical introduction to the Kambata/Hadiya region and its surroundings. Historical, ethnic, socio-economic, political and religious factors influenced the development of the Evangelical churches in the region.¹

The ethnic groups of Kambata and Hadiya origin will be introduced. The expansion of the Wollamo Kingdom is important to consider when trying to understand the ethnic relations along the southern border of the region. The Ethiopian slave trade and the ensete farming were factors of a socio-economic kind, worthwhile discussing.

The Amhara occupation of the region and some of its repercussions will be highlighted. This implies not least the expansion of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) and Amhara culture in southern Ethiopia.² Some aspects of the Amhara, and in the 1930’s the Italian, influences on the region will be spelled out. The folk religion of the region will be described. I will mainly draw on the findings of Ulrich Braukämper.³

A. An Ethno-Historical Background

The Kambata/Hadiya Region
The area between the River Omo in the west and the River Bilate in the east, which I call the Kambata/Hadiya region, has its own complicated history.⁴ Originally the Kambata peoples, in a “general sense”, were peasants and the Hadiya were semi-nomads. Their internal history has to be differentiated into the history of their sub-groups. The relations between Kambata in a “narrow sense” and the Hadiya sub-groups Shashogo and Badowacho, for instance, were quite friendly.⁵

¹ When using the term “region” in my study, if not indicated otherwise, I refer to the Kambata/Hadiya region.
² On “Amhara”, see above, pp.17f.
³ Mainly Braukämper 1980 and 1983.
⁴ See below, Map 3, p.44. In 1977-87 the region was called “the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja”. From 1987 it belonged to the so-called “Southern Shoa”. Negussie 1988, pp.109, 119. Today the area belongs to “the Hadiya zone” and “the Kembata, Alaba, Tembaro zone” in the wider “Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region” (SNNP), or just “Region 7”. Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) article 47, 1994.12.08.
⁵ Braukämper 1980, pp.202ff.; 1983, pp.51ff., 61ff., 81, 294ff. The terms Kambata in a “narrow sense” and the “Kambata proper”, are used for the Kambata living around the mountain of Ambaricho, in contrast to the three Kambata groups with origins from Sidama.
Relations between the two strongest Hadiya sub-groups, Lemu and Soro, however, have been strained from time to time, the main reason being their need of grazing land for their herds. Soro and Wollamo became enemies of the Kambata “proper”, whose kingdom started to expand c.1810. It is thus too simplistic to talk about tensions between the Kambata and the Hadiya just in a general sense. The situation has been more complex than that. In fact the Kambata peoples in many cases complemented the products of the semi-nomadic Hadiya through their skilled techniques of farming.\(^6\)

The good agricultural conditions in the Kambata/Hadiya region led to a density of population up to more than 300 per square km. Many conflicts in the region were due to scarcity of land. This was also the case in the conflicts along the southern borderland to Wollamo.\(^7\)

**The Kambata Farmers**

The contemporary name Kambata, which in Kambatissa language means “This is the place” (where we live), refers to four former states with different origins.\(^8\)

The first one, “the Kambata in a narrow sense”, has had its territory primarily around the mountain of Ambaricho in the heartland of Kambata. The other three, the former states of Dubamo, Donga and Tembaro, tracing their origin to the Sidama highlands, were formed in the region about 1550-70. These four groups are today collectively referred to as Kambata. They are primarily *ensete* farmers. They speak the same language and have more or less a similar culture. Together with Kabena, Alaba, Hadiya, Sidamo, Darassa and Burji the four Kambata groups belong to the “Highland East Cushitic” languages. The Kabena and Alaba are dialects of Kambatissa, though of Hadiya origin.\(^9\) From now on I shall use the word Kambata in a narrow sense in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated.

In the 13-14\(^{th}\) centuries the regions on both sides of the Omo River belonged to the state of Damot-Ennariya. The name Kambata is first referred to in a song of praise in honour of Emperor Yeshak (1414-29). He annexed Kambata, which as a province of the Christian Ethiopian Empire then designated an area between the Rivers Omo and Bilate. At the end of the 15\(^{th}\) century Kambata consisted of three distinct ethnic strata. At the bottom were the Fuga, a clan of potters, tanners and hunters, whose ancestors may have been the earliest in the region. In the middle were cultivators, probably Omotic-speaking. At the top were the Semitic-speaking military colonists from the north of Ethiopia, known as *chawa*.\(^10\)

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\(^6\) *Ibid.*

\(^7\) Braukämper 1983, pp.10, 61ff., 70, 294.

\(^8\) An Oromo version of the meaning of Kambata is: “How can we escape?” SG-A: Fiqre Yessus Forsido o.i.1997.06.27. Kambatissa and Hadiyissa are the languages of the Kambata and the Hadiya.


Map 2  Language Groups in South-Central Ethiopia

During the so-called “Holy War” of the Muslims against the Christian Empire in the 16th century, the Kambata Province was conquered by Muslim troops in 1532. This was a catastrophe, which was compared with “the Flood” in the Old Testament. The refuge, which was compared to Noah’s Ark, was offered by the mountain of Ambaricho. It was not occupied by the Muslims. Christian churches on Mt. Ambaricho were not destroyed and religious objects were hidden in caves. A federation was formed at the summit of Mt. Ambaricho by seven groups, who survived the war.12

By the end of the 16th century one can use Kambata not only as a political term for a province in the Christian Empire but as a term for a people, drawn together from heterogeneous groups, symbolised by the number seven and with a king at its head.13

From this time on the Kambata language dominated over the Omotic and Semitic alternatives. In the highlands Kambata ensete farmers cultivated the land. The kingdoms of Donga, Dubamo and Tembaro had reached their territories west of Mt. Ambaricho. In the middle and lower regions nomads of a Hadiya group called Weto-gira, who probably first arrived with the Muslim troops in 1532, grazed their herds.14

While the Ethiopian Empire still considered Kambata as one of its provinces in the 17th century, it had in reality lost its influence over it. This was experienced by the Portuguese Jesuit, Father Antonio Fernandez, when he visited Kambata in 1614. The King of Kambata, Hamalmal (c.1600-20), was at this time just nominally the Governor of the former Kambata Province. His authority was at this time probably limited to a smaller area around Mt. Ambaricho. This leads now to the much larger and more diverse entity called Hadiya, which increasingly seems to have dominated the former Christian Province in the 17th and 18th century.15

13 Characteristically the districts of the KEC, the KEC-2 and the Kambata Synod were originally called sebats, that is, “sevens”. See below, e.g., pp.82, 94ff., 104ff., 124ff., 141, 150ff., 164, 184f., 215f., 218f.
Map 3  Topography of the Kambata/Hadiya Region

The Hadiya Semi-Nomads

The name Hadiya is first mentioned in the *Kebra Negast*, the origin of which can be dated back to the 13th century. At that time the term referred to the most western of the Islamic states which belonged to the federation of Zayla. The name Hadiya seems mainly to have existed as a political term. There was no common leadership for the Hadiya and they were heterogeneous both linguistically and culturally. Some of the Hadiya were Muslims, others were not. In the north of the state an agricultural Semitic-speaking group dominated, in the South there was a more pastoral Cushitic-speaking people.

One of the famous female personalities in Ethiopian history was actually Hadiya, Princess Eleni, who married Emperor Zara Yacob (1434-68). Zara Yacob was one of the most powerful of the Ethiopian Emperors, known by local people in the Kambata/Hadiya region as “Zareko”.

From the 13th to the 16th centuries the Hadiya was a significant political entity. When its territory was shattered, mainly by the Oromo expansion, its people were absorbed by peoples of heterogeneous stock. Descendants of the old Hadiya can be traced by means of five different linguistic clusters: 1. The East Gurage, 2. The Oromo, 3. The Sidama, 4. The Kabena and Alaba and 5. The Hadiya proper.

The Hadiya “proper”, whom I am concentrating on, have had the nickname “Gudela”. Their sub-groups are: the Marako, Lemu/Badog, Soro, Shashogo and Badowacho. The Hadiya language belongs to the same “Highland East Cushitic” group as Kambata and Sidamo. Their languages are mutually understood by these different ethnic groups.

When the great Oromo expansion started in the 16th century, it caused Hadiya groups to move westwards, often practising a pastoral life. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Kambata proper were paying tribute to early nomads of Hadiya origin, the Weto-gira. About 1770 two other Hadiya sub-groups, the Shashogo and the Urusso, who later formed the Badowacho together with the Badeoso, crossed the Bilate River and were invited by the Kambata to form a pact against the Weto-gira. Together they defeated the Weto-gira and co-operated with each other more or less up to the time of the Amhara occupation at the end of the 19th century.

The Hadiya sub-groups of Lemu and Soro, which were individually the strongest groups in the Kambata/Hadiya region, settled in their present areas mainly around 1780-1815. They were fierce rivals in the struggle for land. The Shonkolla mountain is visible from Wachamo (Hosanna) in the Lemu area, but primarily be-

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17 *Kebra Negast* is an Ethiopian chronicle of its kings, embodying the legend of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Taddesse Tamrat 1972, p.250; Pankhurst 1997, p.78.
19 Taddesse Tamrat 1972, pp.287ff.; SG-A: Yacob Arsano o.i.1998.03.11.
came a point of reference to the Soro Hadiya. Tradition holds that land was divided among the Soro at a large assembly close to this mountain.\textsuperscript{23}

The Soro invaded the Kambata-speaking Dubamo and Donga. The Tembaro, though, maintained their independence. When the Badawacho emerged at the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, they were heading south into what is now Wolayta. There they found plenty of grazing land. Step by step they were, however, pushed northwards by the expanding Kingdom of Wollamo.\textsuperscript{24}

**The Kingdom of Wollamo**

The Kingdom of Wollamo expanded its territory between 1770 and 1894. It started its expansion from the territory of the mountain area of Kindo, a small area in the south-west in what is now Wolayta. The expansion continued to the present northern border, which also became the border of the Sidamo Province. The Kingdom of Wollamo, with its highly cultivated structure, almost assimilated the ethnic group of Badawacho. Besides being farmers, some of the Wollamo were weavers who brought important products to the market places.\textsuperscript{25}

The Wollamo represented Omotic culture, which is to be differentiated from the Cushitic of the Kambata and Hadiya. The Omotic language spoken by the Wollamo made communication easy to the south and to the west. To the north and to the east, however, a quite different language-family met. They were the Cushitic languages, to which the Oromo languages also belong.\textsuperscript{26} The number of slaves was comparatively high in the Wollamo Kingdom.\textsuperscript{27}

**A Border of Conflict**

As already implied, the Wollamo expansion gives a key to the understanding of the strained relations between the ethnic groups, who lived along the northern border of Wollamo. In fact, the northern and middle parts of what is today called Wolayta was for a long time the grazing land of the Hadiya groups of Badawacho and Alaba. Especially the pushing back of the Badawacho to their present territory sheds light on the enmity between the Wollamo and the Badawacho. The Badawacho, thus, became bitter enemies of the Wollamo, but also of the Alaba, whom they pushed eastwards. The Alaba ended up along the middle Bilate River.\textsuperscript{28}

The Kambata proper were in alliance with the Badawacho. Thus they became enemies of the Wollamo, too. It is said that the Kambata did not sell their re-


\textsuperscript{24} *Ibid.*

\textsuperscript{25} As already indicated, from 1976 Wollamo was called Wolayta. See above, p.18, n.24. Braukämper 1980, pp.230-40, 252.

\textsuperscript{26} Bender 1976, pp.14ff., 61f.; Cotterell 1973, pp.107ff.

\textsuperscript{27} The number of slaves in the Wollamo society is estimated to have been about 25\% of the population, while a corresponding figure in Kambata was 5\% in the year of c.1920. Braukämper 1983, pp.182f.

nowned horses to the Soro and the Wollamo in order not to strengthen their fighting capacity. As indicated above, from 1810 the Kambata proper expanded its realms through the policies of its kings. It even expanded its territory along the Wollamo border after the Amhara occupation, when peasants settled on the land belonging to Amhara landowners.  

The Slave Trade’s Effects on the Kambata/Hadiya Region

The Kambata/Hadiya region was not along the main trading routes, but was influenced by them. The revival of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula in the second half of the 18th century made an impact on Ethiopia. From about 1800 the trading caravans led by Ethiopian Muslim traders, the Jabarti, penetrated further than ever before into the interior of Ethiopia. The main targets were slaves, who were mainly brought from the south-west of Ethiopia. Generally they were called “Enarean”, “Guragean” or “Red” slaves.

One of the leading markets in Ethiopia since about 1800 was the market of Saqqa. It was the capital of Limmu-Ennarya, which was the earliest of the five Oromo Gibe states. From 1850 the town Hirmata in the Jimma state, under King Abba Jifar, became the leading market. One of the main routes went from Saqqa to Gojjam in the north and another from Saqqa through Gurage and Shoa in a north-eastern direction. There were minor routes leading from Saqqa to Janjero, Kullo, Wollamo, Gurage, Hadiya, Kambata and Tembaro. The great markets of Saqqa and later on of Hirmata, brought slaves and goods to them from all parts of south-western and southern Ethiopia.

In the 19th century the port of Massawa is estimated to have exported 2,000-3,000 slaves to Arabia and Egypt annually. From the northern coast of Somalia more than 2,000 slaves were exported annually to the Persian Gulf. The slave trade of Ethiopia has even been estimated as “... the backbone of the Showan trade and the main reason for its success”.

One of the big slave markets was thus to the west of the Omo River (Gibe), not far away from the Kambata/Hadiya region. In Kolito/Alaba immediately to the east of Durame, a big market was established. Salt from Ogaden was brought there and further via Soddu to the markets in the Gibe states. The Tembaro and Dubamo were known to have had an established slave trade with Jimma, even after the proclamation against slavery in Ethiopia in 1919 and 1923.

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29 Ibid.; see above, p.41.
30 These were just commercial designations without ethnic relevance. Christian Amhara and Tigrayan, or Muslim slaves were with few exceptions not purchased by the slavers. Abir 1985, pp.127ff.; see Hassen 1994, pp.136f.
31 The Gibe states were situated west of the River Omo (Gibe), mainly in what later on became the Province of Kaffa with the city of Jimma as its capital. Hassen 1994, pp.85ff., 135ff., 157ff.; see above, Map 1 and 3, pp.38 and 44.
32 Ibid.
33 Abir 1985, pp.131ff.
In the years of the rinderpest in 1889-91 and of smallpox and cholera in 1890-92, the slave trade escalated. Slaves were taken from Gurage and brought to Wollamo. Later on the traffic went in an opposite direction. Since 1920 slave raiding into Wollamo was carried out in organised bands, especially by the Badawacho. The slaves are said to have been sold openly, for instance in Kolito/Alaba, until the beginning of the Italian occupation.\textsuperscript{35}

The Socio-Economic Structure of the \textit{Ensete} Farming

When trying to understand the culture of the Kambata/Hadiya region, the \textit{ensete} plant, the so-called “false banana” is of special interest. It is mainly cultivated by different ethnic groups west of the Rift Valley, the exception being the Sidama, the Darassa and the Amarro areas east of the Rift Valley. As already hinted at, the density of population in the \textit{ensete} areas is often very high, from 300 per square km up to even 500 per square km. The Kambata, who are very skilled at \textit{ensete} cultivation differentiate between 40(!) different \textit{ensete} types.\textsuperscript{36}

Obviously owing to their agricultural skill, the Kambata territory was known to be a place where it was possible to survive in times of need. The Hadiya learnt the \textit{ensete} farming from the local people in the areas where they settled. Others, though, like the Arsi and the Amhara, felt contempt for \textit{ensete} farming, which they supposed generated weakness.\textsuperscript{37}

The \textit{ensete} plant provides a large amount of carbohydrates, which means that a whole family gets its daily requirement from a few plants. The \textit{ensete} can be stored for months, which actually gives room for a planned storage. This diet, though, has to be supplemented by other types of food like products from animal husbandry. In this way the Kambata \textit{ensete} cultivation and the Hadiya cattle breeding complemented each other. The markets became places for communication across ethnic borders, important for the communication of the Gospel as well.\textsuperscript{38}

The \textit{ensete} culture provided security and made travelling possible. This helped evangelists and preachers of the KEC when touring in the region and when crossing borders as missionaries to other ethnic groups. This is witnessed to, by one of the more prominent missionaries from the Durame area, Qes Shamebo Qelbero. He emphasises how believers gave KEC evangelists help in farming, when they went on a mission. This was easier in areas where \textit{ensete} was cultivated.\textsuperscript{39}

Some conclusions can be drawn from these observations: the \textit{ensete} cultivation made the high density of population possible in the Kambata/Hadiya region and in Wollamo. This seems to have attracted the SIM missionaries to start their work there.\textsuperscript{40} The large number of believers in these areas after the Italian occupation
can furthermore be explained by the fact that communication was comparatively easy. People lived close and easily influenced one another.\textsuperscript{41}

Travelling was comparatively easy, too. The infrastructure of the \textit{ensete} farming helped local evangelists and missionaries to survive their travelling ventures inside and outside the Kambata/Hadiya region. Instead of leaving the region due to scarcity of arable land, becoming a missionary may in fact have been an option.\textsuperscript{42}

\section*{The Amhara Expansion into the Kambata/Hadiya Region}

About 1870 the Christian Kingdom of Shoa started to expand its territory southwards. When King Menelik II became Emperor in 1889, the pressure on the southern states of Ethiopia escalated into occupation. Between 1889-93 the Hadiya groups of Lemu, Shashogo and Soro were defeated. The same thing happened to the Kambata peoples. The Badawacho astonishingly formed an alliance with the Wollamo in order to fight the Amhara but were crushed in 1894.\textsuperscript{43}

The \textit{gabbar} system was introduced in southern Ethiopia, which in principle made the conquered peoples serfs of the state. The occupied peoples were supposed to provide the Amhara \textit{neftanya} (riflemen) with food and other services. Of the local population only the \textit{balabbats} (mainly former chiefs) could keep their positions as independent landowners. They were, however, supposed to act as agents for the new political authority.\textsuperscript{44}

The early presence of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in southern Ethiopia, which had been terminated in the course of history, had left its characteristic imprints on religion in the Kambata/Hadiya region. This legacy was, however, now complicated as the EOC returned to the region as part of the Amhara occupiers. It was primarily the church of the Amhara and other privileged groups. Most of the present churches of the EOC in the region were built in 1890-1913. They received tax-free land of more than 10,000 hectares.\textsuperscript{45}

Around 1903 the Kambata/Hadiya region was known as the Province of Kambata, although the Kambata were in a minority. Their structure of nobles, chiefs and a king suited the \textit{balabbat} system better than the more egalitarian structure of the Hadiya. Hadiya \textit{balabbats} did not get the same support from people as did the Kambata. Such factors gave the Kambata a leading role in the Province.\textsuperscript{46}

Most of the area cultivated by the Kambata \textit{ensete} farmers at this time can be compared to a form of \textit{rist}, which is a northern term for land inherited by a private person or a collective group. This model suited the Kambata collective system.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{41} In 1989 the official size of the population in the Kambata/Hadiya region was 1,402,000 people. PDRE 1989, \textit{Statistical Bulletin} 72, pp.84ff.
\bibitem{42} Many people left the region and started to work as day-labourers. See below, p.51.
\bibitem{44} Braukämper 1980, pp.294ff., 434ff.; 1983, pp.82ff., 297; see Pausewang 1990, pp.38ff.
\bibitem{45} Braukämper 1980, p.314.
\bibitem{46} Braukämper 1980, pp.303ff., 313, 436; 1983, pp.89-95.
\end{thebibliography}
relatively well. As they were able to pay the land-tax asked for and were easy to control in their very regulated farming plots, they were better off.\textsuperscript{47}

The Hadiya with their legacy of a semi-nomadic lifestyle were less adaptable. They were forced to pay taxes for their cattle and their land was to a large extent designated as 	extit{gult}. That is, land owned by the state and administered by the Amhara aristocracy and soldiers, who had the right to collect tax and tributes. Comparatively fewer Amhara soldiers settled in the Kambata areas than in the Hadiya. The Hadiya were looked upon as less dependable by the Amhara.\textsuperscript{48}

The word for a city, 	extit{ketema}, originally meant a military camp. The early main 	extit{ketema} in the region was established in Angacha, just north of Mt. Ambaricho. From 1910 Hosanna (Wachamo) became the leading 	extit{ketema} and the new Province centre, succeeding Angacha. The 	extit{ketemas} soon developed into commercial and administrative centres. They were mainly the living centres for the dominant Amhara soldier population in the region. These were also the places where they received their tribute from the local population.\textsuperscript{49}

The Kambata/Hadiya Region under Pressure

Owing to the unrest in the country connected with the coup against the young regent Lej Iyasu in 1916, insurrections broke out in many parts of southern Ethiopia and lasted until about 1919. The period up to the Italian invasion in 1935 was characterised by a consolidation of the Amhara rule in the region. It was mainly challenged by the opposition from the Hadiya. This was also the time of the beginning of the SIM and Catholic enterprises in the region, at the end of the 1920’s.\textsuperscript{50}

After the Italian victories in the spring of 1936, the people of Hadiya and Kambata rose against the remaining Amhara soldiers in the region and threatened the 	extit{ketemas}. At the same time, though, intertribal wars broke out. The Amhara soldiers, who won the Gurage and Wollamo as allies against the revolting ethnic groups, were then able to regain control of the region.\textsuperscript{51}

During the time of the Italian occupation the 	extit{gabbar} system was abolished, not to be reintroduced again. The Kambata Province was made a 	extit{residenza}, belonging to the “Province Galla e Sidama”, with a governor residing in Jimma. When the struggle between the British and the Italians was going on in 1941, except for auxiliaries fighting on both sides, the Hadiya and the Kambata stayed neutral. After the Italian occupation a conflict between the Badowacho and the Wollamo broke out. Peace in southern Ethiopia was not finally restored before 1943.\textsuperscript{52}

After the so-called Amhara “restoration” of the land, which was completed in 1944, the former Kambata Province became an 	extit{awraja} (sub-province) in the

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.; see Pausewang 1990, pp.38ff.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.; SG-A:Yacob Arsano i.1998.03.11; see Dessalegn Rahmato 1984.


Arussi Province with its capital in Asella. Large areas in the Kambata/Hadiya region were now cultivated by land tenants, who were forced to pay heavy taxes. The gap between landless peasants and privileged landlords seems in fact to have widened after the Italian occupation. The number of so-called “absentee landlords” in the region was among the highest in the whole country.53

The EOC did not start any major missionary campaigns between 1917 and 1935. After 1935 it changed its strategy to a more open attitude to the local people. Later on EOC missionary campaigns seem to have given priority to the densely populated farming regions of Gurage, Kambata/Hadiya, Wollamo and Sidamo in the middle of southern Ethiopia. In Arsi and Bale its mission was less successful. A great number of people became Orthodox Christians in the Kambata/Hadiya region in the 1950’s. There was pressure from the authorities on people to become members of the EOC. Thus in 1948-49 the Governor in Hosanna “recommended” people in the region to become Orthodox Christians.54

As noted, the Kambata/Hadiya region was very densely populated. This led people to seek employment elsewhere, for example in the sugar cane plantations in Wonji and Metahara in the Awash valley.55 In the region cattle breeding decreased in favour of cultivation of land. When coffee was introduced as a cash crop in the higher altitudes in c.1960, the standard of living rose. In 1962 the Kambata Awraja became part of the Shoa Province with Addis Abeba as its centre.56

At this stage of my study I would like to emphasise that my description of the Kambata and Hadiya ethnic groups is presented in a form which is in line with Weber’s “ideal types”. During the time which I focus on, differences between Kambata and Hadiya were not longer strict (if they ever were). People mingled, intermarried and spoke one another’s languages. This was particularly true in the middle-grounds, where ethnic borders met, for example at Dodoba.57 How people mixed is highlighted by what can be characterised as the region’s folk religion.

### B. Features of Kambata/Hadiya Folk Religion

**The Evolution of Kambata/Hadiya Folk Religion**

As has been illustrated above, Kambata was a province of the Ethiopian Kingdom from the beginning of the 15th century until approximately the middle of the 17th century. During this period it was to some extent Christianised by the EOC. When the German missionary J.L. Krapf visited King Sahle Selassie in Shoa in 1839-42, he, on the basis of hearsay, could report on Kambata. His message was that 15 churches and monasteries were visited only occasionally by priests from Gurage.

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57 On Weber, see Burke 1992, pp.28ff. On Dodoba, see below, pp.150, n.108, 164.
and these were dangerous trips. In practice this seems to have meant that the religion of the former Christian Province had been cut off from mainstream EOC influences. It was now changing into a syncretism with Christian features.  

Islam had more or less dominated the Hadiya peoples from the 13th to the 16th century. When the Oromo invasion cut off the Hadiya groups from the Muslim mainstream in the east, Hadiya religion was mixed up and became a type of syncretism with Muslim traits, known as Fandano. When the Kambata and Hadiya people mixed by intermarriage, a folk religion with local variations evolved. Parts of it can be called Kambata folk religion, others Hadiya. The point made by calling it Kambata/Hadiya folk religion is to illustrate that Christian and Muslim legacies were merging.  

The Kambata/(Hadiya) folk religion developed into a cult connected with the tabot. In caves and grottos of the Ambaricho Mountain, crosses were hidden. These became holy places for sacrifices and prayer. The right way of ritual slaughtering was very important for both the Christian and the Fandano syncretism. The Kambata recited the name of the Trinity in corrupt Geez, during the slaughtering. An example of how Christian respective Muslim survivals linger on among Kambata and Hadiya is illustrated by a statement of a Kambata informant:

When my father, who is Kambata, slaughters, he says bsma-ab. My father-in-law, who is Hadiya says bsmillah, however.

Though much shorter than in the EOC, fasting periods were of great importance for the folk religion. Abstaining from certain food was very important. The latter seems to have been looked upon as one of the major proofs of a true religion by syncretistic movements in southern Ethiopia.

In the folk religion of Kambata/(Hadiya) God the Father became the sky-god, Maganno, functioning as a Deus otiosus. Kitosa, representing Christ, was a lower god or a spirit in the possession cults. Manfes Ked dus (Holy Spirit) was used in ritual prayers. The concepts of heaven, hell and the judgement day were familiar. Some clans embracing the Fandano religion claimed “Sharific” descent. They were believed to possess magical power for rainmaking ceremonies, etc. A concept of heaven with seven levels, where Kitosa was enthroned with angels and saints, was part of Kambata/Hadiya folk religion. Offerings made to ancestors, or the placing of food at certain places to appease evil spirits, were common but have disappeared. Votive gifts placed at holy trees were common until recently.

A priest in Kambata was known as maganancho. He was looked upon as a spiritual leader, sacrificer, healer and soothsayer. The leading priest in Dubamo the Hauzul-mancho, and in Kambata the Abba-seracho, held special places of importance. Their power grew when the kingships were secularised. More ecstatic forms

60 SG-A: Tseganesh Ayele 0.i.2000.03.03. bsm = in the name of, ab = the Father, illah = Allah.  
61 Braukämper 1992, pp.197ff.  
of possession cults and mediums (*qalicha*) spread mainly after the Amhara occupation at the end of the 19th century. Gorgisa (St. George), Marami (Mary) and Djafarro (Djafar) functioned as spirits in these cults. The *sayyannas* were evil spirits, as were the *djinna* and *iblisa*, showing Christian respective Muslim influences. From an Orthodox Muslim point of view many Muslims in Ethiopia can be called semi-pagans. The Tembaro, who were influenced by the Fandano religion, were for some time looked upon as Muslims, which they were not.63

**Influences of Muslim Strongholds**

At the end of the 18th century the grave of Sheik Husayn in Bale was re-established as a sanctuary. It was an important place for pilgrimage inside Ethiopia and for the spread of Islam. Tradition claims that Sheik Husayn was the first Muslim missionary in Ethiopia. The cult at his shrine in Annajina in Bale is described as a mixture of Muslim saint-cult, Mecca pilgrim ceremonies and Oromo pagan cult. Oral traditions point out “Nur Husayn” as Muslim missionary in Bale at the turn of the 13th century, connected to Somalia. He was a favourite saint of Muslim Oromo.64

From the early 19th century sheikhs would visit pagan areas in order to convert people. Examples can be shown from Arsi-Oromo, East-Gurage and Hadiya. “Survivals” from earlier periods were stimulating the process of re-Islamising. The Alaba ethnic group east of Durame turned Muslim in the second half of the 19th century under the influence of the Sheik Husayn apostle “Khana”. He proved that the Alaba once were Muslims. This prepared the way for (re-)conversion.65

The Gibe states, west of the region, were the only ones (apart from town states), where Islam became the established state religion. One example was the state of Jimma Abba Jifar. The Gibe states had great influence on the spread of Islam through their trading, especially in 1820-70. Influential Koranic schools were situated in Abred in Gurage to the north and in Alaba to the east of the region.

Socio-economic structures provided reasons for turning Muslim. Islam offered strong identity without identifying with the Amhara religion and state. Muslim fasting rules were more suitable for people dependent on livestock products than EOC rules. The latter demand abstention from non-vegetarian products. Thus Hadiya who depended on agriculture turned Orthodox to a greater extent than those who depended on livestock did. Another late example is the Arsi-Oromo who turned Muslim from 1930 onwards. Then the main part belonged to the Arsi folk religion. In 1970 hardly a non-Muslim existed among them, however.66 Another reason for turning Muslim in the course of the Italian occupation was the Italian promotion of Islam at the expense of the EOC. In the Kambata/Hadiya region, Islam has dominated among the Shashogo since c.1946.67

65 Braukämper 1987, pp.21-33.
Conclusions

I have in this chapter illustrated some preconditions of ethnic groups living in the region. The influence of the following environmental factors help us to understand how Evangelical churches evolved in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

The Kambata/Hadiya region was linked to the Ethiopian Christian Empire mainly from approximately the 15th to the middle of the 17th century. This fundamental historical factor influenced later developments in the region.

Christian “survivals”, especially connected to Mt. Ambaricho, formed an obvious continuity with the returning EOC of the late 19th century. If you will, the EOC’s return can be described as a kind of re-christianisation.

This “re-christianisation” primarily concerned the Kambata “proper”, and especially descendants of former Amhara colonists, chawa. The Hadiya sub-groups were, however, more oriented towards Islam. Furthermore, the Hadiya “proper” settled in the region quite late and were therefore less influenced by the early EOC presence.

Socio-economic factors connected to the ensete farming provided a basis for a high density of population in the mountainous region and its surroundings. Communication of messages was easy. A planned storage of the ensete plant generated a certain freedom and security for farmers.

The land factor was basic for survival. The struggle for land, especially in the borderlands, was part of living. Slave-raiding belonged to this context.

It is widely acknowledged that political factors have an impact on religion, which was the case when the Amhara occupation created turmoil for local people.68 This was to a greater extent true for the Hadiya people, who in general were more harshly treated by the Amhara neftanya (rifle-men). The Kambata were advanced ensete farmers and could more easily deliver tribute to the occupiers.

The technological superiority of the neftanya shook the religious microcosm of the Kambata/Hadiya folk religion and created confusion. Such experiences can be described as part of a larger multi-faceted process, generating conversion.69

As the EOC was part of the Amhara occupiers, and as such sanctioned the gabbar system, the fortified ketemas and the use of violence, it did not create any realistic religious option for independent-minded people in the region. Islam could have evolved into an alternative like it did for the neighbouring Alaba. Especially for the Hadiya under the influence of the Fandano syncretism, this was an option.

The evolving folk religion of the region was softening earlier religious barriers and made people more receptive to new influences. From the late 1920’s other forms of Christianity, too, were introduced into the Kambata/Hadiya region. To these developments I shall now turn my attention.

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69 Ikenga-Metuh 1987. For the debate on conversion, see Hallencreutz 1988 (Swedish).
Chapter Two
The SIM and the Evolution of the KEC 1928-43

It was in the late 1920’s that the interdenominational Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) commenced work in the densely populated Kambata/Hadiya region. Little did the SIM missionaries know of the future, neither did the French Catholic, Father Pascal Luchon of the Capuchin order, who arrived in the region in June 1928.¹

My main concern in this chapter is to explore the early SIM enterprise in the Kambata/Hadiya region and its repercussions, that is, the dramatic evolution of the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC). Necessary references will be made to local developments in the course of the Italian occupation.

I will draw on SIM-related historians and primary material from the SIM archives, which I supplement with my own oral sources. In the last section I also draw on the work of historians related to the Swedish Evangelical Mission (SEM), primary material from the SEM archives and the Gustav Arén archives.

A. Features of the Sudan Interior Mission

An Interdenominational Enterprise

The Sudan Interior Mission was founded in 1893 in Toronto, Canada by Walter Gowans, Rowland Bingham and Thomas Kent.² They were especially concerned with the spiritual needs of the so-called “Sudan” in Africa, that is, the area south of Sahara but north of the Equator. The three men set out as an independent group to create their mission base on Lake Chad via Nigeria in 1893. When trying to reach Lake Chad by travelling overland Gowans and Kent died. Bingham, who had become sick already in Lagos, returned home in May 1895.³

In 1898 Bingham formed the first SIM council in Toronto. In 1900 he led a second expedition to Lagos, but had to return after a month almost dying of illness.

² SIM was later registered in Ethiopia as the “Society of International Missionaries”, and from 1980 the “Society for International Ministry”. Wilson 1980, p.453; Fargher 1996, pp.264, 306. Ato Emmanuel Abraham relates that SIM changed the interpretation of the initials as it was an offence to speak of Sudan in Ethiopia. SG-A: Emmanuel Abraham o.i.1996.11.12.
The first mission station of the SIM in Nigeria was erected in 1902. Gradually the work in Nigeria developed and in 1954 the Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA) was formed. In 1976 the SIM bodies in Nigeria were integrated into the ECWA.4

Other early enterprises started by the SIM were made: in the Republic of Niger 1924, in Ethiopia 1927, in Upper Volta 1930 and in Sudan 1937. In 1980 the biggest “fields of service”, by far, were situated in Ethiopia with 2400 related churches (congregations) and in Nigeria with 1400.5

The leaders of the SIM, who were called General Directors, were 1893-94 Gowans, 1894-1942 Bingham, 1944-57 Guy W. Playfair, 1957-62 Albert D. Helser and from 1962 Raymond J. Davis. In 1967 there was a Home Director in each Home Country, with a Home Office in Toronto, New York, London, Auckland, Cape Town, Victoria (Australia) and in Lausanne.6

The Africa Mission Field was divided into two regions, known as the West Africa Field and the East Africa Field. Workers and principles were exchanged and compared between the fields, for example between Nigeria and Ethiopia. To use an understatement, the dominance of principles practised in Nigeria referred to as “the older ones” bothered SIM Missionaries in Ethiopia after the war.7

Each field was administered by a Field Director assisted by a Field Council, a Deputy Field Director, a Field Secretary and in major sub-divisions by a Field Superintendent. The financial needs were taken care of by groups, churches and individuals to which a “personal” missionary was allotted.8

The SIM has been characterised as a conservative, Evangelical and interdenominational missionary society. It is affiliated to IFMA, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association, which was founded in 1917 by leaders of several well-known faith missions.9

The interdenominational character of the SIM can be seen in the way in which it embarked on its work in Ethiopia in 1927. Mr Thomas Lambie had been working with the Presbyterian Mission for 20 years in Sudan and Ethiopia as a medical doctor. Now he returned to Ethiopia as the leader of the Abbysinian Frontier Mission, which was associated with the SIM. His aim was to reach beyond the frontiers of Ethiopia to peoples who had not heard the Gospel.10

Mr Clarence W. Duff, the leading SIM missionary in the Kambata/Hadiya region prior to the Italian occupation, was a Presbyterian, too. He is reported as hav-

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6 Lovering 1967, pp.616f. The SIM centre is today located in Charlotte, North Carolina.
7 SIM-A: Beacham to Fellow-workers 1947.06.11. Fargher is very critical of Playfair and Beacham and their “Nigerian” approach after 1943. Fargher 1996, pp.246ff.
8 Lovering 1967, pp.616f.
10 Cotterell 1973, pp.11, 14; Mr Duff sent letters titled “S.I.M. Camp” Hosanna in 1929 but also “Abbysinian Frontier Mission Camp” Hosanna. SIM-A: S.I.M. Camp, Duff to Lambie 1929.01.23; A.F. Mission Camp, Duff to Lambie 1929.01.23. On Lambie’s previous experiences in Ethiopia, see for example, Lambie 1939; Arén 1999, pp.348ff.
ing used the mode of aspersion when baptising in some instances.\textsuperscript{11} He is in fact said to have found his Presbyterian convictions on baptism in conflict with the reinforced Baptist emphasis of the SIM. Both Mr Bingham and Dr Lambie asked him to return to Ethiopia after the war as a missionary for the SIM. Duff maintained among other things, however, that he would seriously offend fellow workers “. . . if I would teach infant baptism . . . .”\textsuperscript{12} As already mentioned, he instead commenced mission work in Eritrea with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.\textsuperscript{13}

Rev. Carl Rasmussen, who worked at the first headquarters of the SIM in Addis Abeba with his wife, was an ordained Lutheran minister in the Church of Denmark. The couple had experiences of work with the Danish Mission in Aden.\textsuperscript{14}

The SIM in Ethiopia is said to have become more explicitly Baptist in churchmanship after the Italian occupation than before. This assessment has been challenged by others. As far as developments in the Kambata/Hadiya region are concerned, however, it seems to be valid.\textsuperscript{15}

### Characteristics of SIM Evangelicalism

According to the SIM missionary Fargher, the early SIM missionaries in Ethiopia were carriers of a characteristic Evangelical tradition, which they to some extent were unaware of.\textsuperscript{16} If Molland’s typology is applied to the early SIM in Ethiopia, its dominant emphasis seems to have been on doctrine with a strong correlation to ethos, whereas modes of polity and worship were more open fields for local initiatives.\textsuperscript{17} The SIM doctrine can be described as a fundamentalist, Christo-centric understanding of the Bible, with an emphasis on conversion. Fargher defines the conversion as profession (of Christ as Lord) and a change of conduct. The conversion was tested by identifying certain behavioural changes. These can be summarised by the words “separation” from “worldly practices”.

Three problem areas which SIM missionaries taught the baptismal candidates to separate from were: multiple marriages, intoxicating drinks and ancestral spirits. Missionaries adopted what Fargher calls “. . . an aggressive attitude towards culture.”\textsuperscript{18} He further contends that:

> The expatriate evangelists claimed they did not legislate right or wrong. But they left no doubt in the minds of the converts what they considered to be sinful. They felt obliged to teach the necessity for radical separation from any association with such things as intoxicating drinks and dancing.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{12} SIM-A: Duff to Lambie 1941.03.25; Cotterell 1969-70, p.104, n.51.
\textsuperscript{13} See above, p.35, n.90. The “Orthodox Presbyterian Church” was founded by J.G. Machen et al. in 1936. Marsden 1980, p.192.
\textsuperscript{14} Duff 1980, p.9.
\textsuperscript{15} Sæverås 1974, pp.44f. See below, pp.62ff., 82, 127ff., Appendix II, III.
\textsuperscript{16} The following section is mainly based on Fargher 1996, pp.26ff.
\textsuperscript{17} Molland 1961, p.19; see above, pp.28f.
\textsuperscript{18} Fargher 1996, pp.113, 30.
\textsuperscript{19} Fargher 1996, p.29.
With Marsden it is not hard to identify the ethos described by Fargher as ingredients of a North American Evangelical and/or fundamentalist legacy.\(^{20}\)

This was also the ecclesiastical framework of the two early outstanding SIM missionaries in the Kambata/Hadiya region, Mr Duff and Mr Norman Couser. Duff was educated at Princeton Theological Seminary and one of his teachers was J.G. Machen. He first heard about the plans of a new mission field in Ethiopia at a summer conference at Northfield, a place strongly connected to the name of D.L. Moody. Mr Couser spent two terms at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago after two years at Potomac Bible College in Washington, D.C.\(^ {21}\)

**Principles for Indigenous Church Growth**

The mission strategy of the SIM was influenced by John Nevius, Henry Venn, Rufus Anderson and Roland Allen. The missionaries were obviously trying to encourage an indigenous development in the churches (congregations) in Nigeria and in Ethiopia: “From the beginning the writings of J. Nevius and R. Allen were studied and applied to the Nigerian scene . . . .”\(^ {22}\) “We have found here as indigenous a church as Roland Allen ever dreamed about . . . .”\(^ {23}\) The missionaries saw themselves as visitors in a “mission church”.\(^ {24}\)

In practice these principles for indigenous church growth meant that the responsibility for the church work, like the employment of evangelists and sending of missionaries from the KEC, rested with the local Christians. Indigenous ways of singing, indigenous style of church-buildings and an indigenous liturgy were encouraged by the missionaries. With Molland one can say that the SIM indigenous principles were applied mainly to polity and worship. The SIM furthermore opted for a “parallel structure”, which meant that the church carried the costs for its local work, whereas the SIM supported larger projects such as hospitals.\(^ {25}\)

Thus the SIM had consciously promoted indigenous initiatives. On the other hand it has been criticised for not following these principles when influencing the leadership in churches or when confronted with indigenous culture, which it disliked. When interacting with the leader of the Wollamo Church after the Italian occupation, Ato Biru Dubale, it seems that a democratic leadership became more important for the missionaries than Ato Biru’s own Ethiopian style of leadership (polity). It was deemed too authoritarian.\(^ {26}\) When confronted with how local Chris-

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\(^{20}\) Marsden 1980, pp.35f., 220.

\(^{21}\) Machen is characterised as the chief intellectual spokesman for conservative Presbyterians. Moody as a “progenitor of fundamentalism”, who “…believed in premillennialism”. Marsden 1980, pp.33, 37, 137. Duff 1980; SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 2000.06.28

\(^{22}\) Hay 1972, p.197; see below, pp. 83, 87, 145f., 169f., 180, 223ff.

\(^{23}\) Mr Davison describes the Wollamo Church in May 1945 in Cotterell 1973, p.103.

\(^{24}\) Bakke 1987, p.143.


\(^{26}\) Cotterell 1969-70, p.102; Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989 (Danish). The paradox is that Playfair, Beacham et al. strongly emphasised an authoritative Biblical leadership, by one man, who was superior to the SIM collective, SIM-A: Beacham to Fellow-workers 1947.06.11. On Biru Dubale, see Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989 (Danish); Arén 1978, p.419.
tians used alcohol or tobacco, the SIM has been criticised for being rigorous and puritan (ethos). It even forbade traditional dancing and songs, it is said.²⁷

David B. Barrett maintains that the mission discipline of the SIM led to schisms and the formation of two independent bodies, the KEC-2 and Ato Biru’s new church in Wollamo.²⁸ Barrett’s verdict on the SIM mission discipline is criticised by Cotterell, who points to the indigenous principles of the SIM. He maintains that: “... the mission was never in a position to administer discipline ...”.²⁹

Cotterell certainly is right from a formal point of view. It was the SIM policy to let the KEC elders and the Wollamo Church leaders decide and vote according to indigenous and democratic principles. But from the point of view of substance it is naive to maintain that the missionaries did not have an extraordinarily strong influence through their preaching, advice and as examples, sometimes even assessed as elders in the indigenous churches. In fact, in many cases the missionaries were aware of how they were “copied” by the Ethiopian Christians.³⁰

Fargher furthermore maintains that the missionaries and new converts together examined a “list of proscribed activities” before baptism. This led to a change in thought patterns among the Ethiopian converts.³¹ It is a question of definition if one wants to call such new “thought patterns” indigenous or not. The simplest way to explain the similarities between the SIM doctrine and ethos and later KEC church discipline is to connect it with the characteristic Evangelical traditions brought by the SIM missionaries. I will come back to this question,³² and turn now to local developments in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

B. The Start of the SIM in the Kambata/Hadiya Region

Tensions in Addis Abeba and in Hosanna

1928 was a crucial year in Ras Tafari Makonnen’s career on his way to the Ethiopian throne. To mention two important events, the young regent managed to neutralise a competitor like Dejazmach Balcha Safo in February. Having undone other threatening opposition, he made Empress Zewditu crown him king in October.³³

In this situation it was important to secure the support of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. It was therefore logical for Ras Tafari to let representatives from the Holy Episcopal Synod interview the newly arrived SIM missionaries on their plans for a mission in the South. Thus, in early 1928 the SIM was questioned on spiritual

²⁸ Barrett does not identify the other independent church, but he seems to mean Ato Biru’s new church. Barrett 1968, p.31; Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989, p.11 (Danish).
³¹ Fargher 1996, p.31.
³² See below, pp.83ff., 93ff.
matters like baptism and fasting by the Ethiopian Primus of the EOC, the *Echege*. According to Fargher there was, however, no real communication between the two spiritual movements. They were too different.\(^{34}\)

The differences between the EOC and the SIM can be described by way of different paradigms. The EOC’s emphasis was on *worship* according to the EOC traditional Holy Communion liturgy of *anaphoras* and the characteristic Ethiopian veneration of the *tabot* (ark). Its *doctrinal* formulation of the united nature of Christ in the word *tewahedo*, which today is part of the EOC name, illustrates how its frame of reference was/is oriented backward to the era of the Church Fathers.\(^{35}\) It connected to what Hans Küng defines as “the Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period”.\(^{36}\) The SIM mentality, however, connected to “the modern Enlightenment paradigm”, emphasising a *doctrine* of individual conversion followed by a characteristic cultural *ethos*. Though conservative in theology, the SIM was opting for modernising rationalistic (“scientific”) developments. Its frame of reference was oriented forward and was part of an era believing in “progress”. It was not by chance that it was led by a medical doctor in Ethiopia.\(^{37}\)

The first official contacts with the EOC leadership can be characterised as a painful experience for the SIM. Instead of continuing negotiations with the EOC, the eager SIM missionaries ventured to leave for the South having only been given oral permission from Ras Tafari as official credentials.\(^{38}\)

Dr Lambie and his team first set out from Addis Abeba to Jimma on March 7, 1928 but seem to have lost the trail and instead arrived in Hosanna, the capital city of Kambata. They were welcomed by Dejazmach Moshesh Wolde, who was the Amhara leader and Governor of the Kambata Province. He was an old friend and former patient of Dr Lambie in Wollega. After having spent about a week in Hosanna, the party set out to reach Jimma via Soddu on March 26.\(^{39}\)

As has been related by the SIM authors, the party changed its plans on reaching Jimma. Instead they decided to settle in the three areas where they thought they would be welcome to stay: *Hosanna* in the Kambata/Hadiya region, *Soddu* in Wollamo and *Garbitcho* in Sidamo.\(^{40}\) Mr Duff was appointed to start the mission work in Hosanna together with a newly arrived missionary from New Zealand, Mr Reginald Annan. On January 10, 1929 the SIM missionaries met in Hosanna to look for a site for the work.\(^{41}\)

Owing to their lack of an official permission to start work in the region, the bureaucratic procedures in Addis Abeba were delayed. Therefore, the two missionar-

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\(^{36}\) Küng’s paradigms are presented and elaborated by Bosch 1991, pp.181ff., 190ff., 262ff. For a discussion on African concepts of time, see Mbiti 1969, pp.15ff.


\(^{38}\) Fargher 1996, pp.44ff.


\(^{40}\) Davis 1966; Cotterell 1973; Duff 1980.

\(^{41}\) Cotterell 1973, p.29; Duff 1980, p.108.
ies had to leave the appointed site and move to a small house in Hosanna town, owned by an Indian shopkeeper until valid work permits were arranged. Not until July 30, 1929, however, were papers for the renting of a site at Lambuda north of Hosanna arranged.42

**Concentration on the Hadiya**

In light of what I have mentioned above concerning the role of the *ketemas* as centres of Amhara control and culture, the move from the mainly Amharic speaking population in Hosanna town to the countryside of Lambuda was crucial. By this move the two missionaries showed that they were not part of the dominating Amhara culture. Instead, to use Mr Duff’s words, they were “saturated” in the “Gudela” language.43 This was, however, not just a blessing in disguise but part of the early SIM principles. Missionaries were expected to learn the local language of their area of work and not use an interpreter when preaching. In fact, Dr Lambie had the missionaries to ask him for permission if they wanted to learn Amharic!44

As it seemed natural for the SIM missionaries to start their work in and around Hosanna, they first gave their attention to the Hadiya ethnic group. Mr Duff, who was appointed “District Superintendent” of the SIM in Gurage and Kambata, used his workers, who were young boys, to teach him the Hadiya language. One of them, Ertiro later known as Shigute, lived in a village called Dubancho north of Hosanna. Mr Duff says that “Dubancho was eventually to become the mother congregation of the whole Gudeilla Church.”45 This comment shows the dominance of the Hadiya people in the early KEC.

Mr Duff soon began to preach in “the Gudela tongue” and was helped by, for example Ato Sabiro, whom he called “the first Gudela brother”.46 When Mr Duff was investigating the Kambata-speaking vicinity of Durame, he characteristically used the Hadiya language as a means of communication. From a letter dated May 7, 1931 we hear that Mr Duff had been asked to find a suitable place for a station among the Kambata, as the SIM missionaries were “. . . as yet working only in the Gudela tribe”. He continued by saying: “It seems as if someone ought to be learning the Kambata language . . . .”47 Again we notice the emphasis of the early SIM missionaries to identify with local culture.

42 Duff 1980, p.137.
43 Duff 1980, p.115. Duff uses *Gudela* for Hadiya; see Braukämper 1980, p.1; see above, p.45. On *ketema*, see above, p.50.
**Beginnings among the Kambata**

On February 1933 a new SIM missionary, John Phillips, arrived in Lambuda. He had been appointed to work in Durame among the Kambata. On March 8 he and Mr Duff pitched their tents on a rented piece of land close to Durame. In May 1933, houses for a new mission station were started to be built. In April 1934 the Phillips’s family was well established at the station and Miss Zillah Walsh joined them. On March 8, 1936 the three missionaries had evacuated from Durame to stay in Lambuda, as the Italian invasion had caused unrest in the area. On May 8, 1936, as the news of the Emperor’s flight reached Kambata a civil war started between the local population and the remaining Amhara. The station in Durame was soon to be sacked by a mob.48

From what has been said above, it is reasonable to conclude that the impact of the missionaries in Kambata area before the Italian occupation was quite small. The time was used for building, learning the language and some preaching. Places around Durame where the Gospel is said to have been preached by missionaries at this time were: Dato, Megere, Arsho, Mesafe, Kacha, Oshoro and Amburse.49

Mr Duff had a fairly good grasp of the different ethnic groups living in the area. The Badowacho, close to Durame, were for example correctly identified as a section of the Hadiya. In 1931 he was also familiar with the Alaba ethnic group. Later on he visited the Tembaro countryside and realised the linguistic similarities between Kambata, Alaba and Tembaro.50

**Tensions on Baptism Praxis**

Before I move on to local developments during the Italian occupation I have to be specific about an issue, which would have long lasting repercussions.

As we have seen above, issues on baptism were discussed between the EOC and SIM right from the start of the SIM enterprise in 1928. According to Fargher the SIM policy on baptism became clearer after a missionary gathering in 1932. Owing to the SIM’s emphasis on conversion, with profession and a change of conduct as characteristic criteria, it seems as if the SIM in general opted for believers’ baptism.51 Although the SIM was interdenominational, in due time this emphasis implied (re-)baptism of EOC members and a general denial of the value of infant baptism. Moreover, immersion was adopted as the right mode for baptism.

There were denominational tensions within the interdenominational group of missionaries before the Italian occupation. At the local level in the Kambata/Hadiya region these tensions can be identified in discussions between Mr Duff, who was a Presbyterian and Mr Couser, who was of “Baptistic” background.52

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48 Duff 1980, pp.243, 327; Cotterell 1973, pp.89f.; see above, p.50; SIM-A: Phillips to Duff 1936.03.06.
49 KHC-A: Tamru 1984, p.22 (Amharic); see above, Map 3, p.44.
50 Duff 1980, pp.234, 242; see above, pp.41ff.
51 See above, p.60; Fargher 1996, pp.44ff.
52 Couser’s congregational background was “independent” and “interdenominational”, which usually means “Baptistic” in doctrine. SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 2000.06.28.
Prior to 1936 only two persons from the Kambata/Hadiya region had been baptised by the SIM missionaries. The first one was Ato Ayago Bamburei (Aseffa). He was a student at the Swedish Evangelical Mission’s (SEM) school in Addis Abeba under the auspices of the renowned SEM missionary, Mr Per Stjärne.53 Aseffa was baptised in Lambuda on April 22, 1934 by Mr Duff. He was sent home for baptism at the recommendation of Mr Stjärne. He was probably not baptised earlier in the EOC, or Mr Stjärne would not have endorsed baptism. The second person was Ato Lirei, a young neighbour to the missionaries at Lambuda. He was baptised by Mr Couser on May 14, 1935.54

I have found no evidence of Mr Duff baptising infants while serving the SIM. He adjusted to the SIM pattern of a thorough examination of the adult baptism candidates before baptism. It was, however, known to the SIM-Christians in Hosanna, “Muluneh, Babo, Shugute”, that Mr Duff considered his own infant baptism as valid. In writing to Mr Duff, Mr Couser concludes that: “They all seem to think that their previous baptism is sufficient counting it as you do yours . . . .” 55 They in other words were aware that Mr Duff had been baptised as an infant by aspersion and counted their mode of baptism in the EOC as equal to his.

Mr Duff had obviously been discussing the question of baptism with the young converts. It seems that he did not require “re-baptism” of those who had been baptised in the EOC. Mr Couser asked Mr Duff for advice as to whether to count those baptised in the EOC “ . . . in with the other all-ready baptised ones’”, or to recommend them to be “baptised again”. Mr Duff’s words would clearly have a strong impact on the young Christians according to Mr Couser. Mr Couser himself seems to have recommended re-baptism, however. The issue of infant baptism was discussed between Mr Duff and Mr Annan at Lambuda, too. We have already noted Duff’s possible use of aspersion as a valid mode of baptism.56 The issue of infant baptism would, in fact, influence Mr Duff’s later engagement with the SIM.57

Ato Sabiro and three others from the region were baptised in Addis Abeba in July 1936. Later on in the same year Ato Shigute and Ato Retabo Amele were baptised in Soddu, after having escorted the SIM missionaries there from Hosanna. Accordingly, c.10 people from the Kambata/Hadiya region had been baptised by

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53 First sent out as a teacher in 1921, the SEM missionary Mr Per Stjärne was later ordained in the Church of Sweden in Storkyrkan in Stockholm 1936.06.10. Hylander 1971, p.543 (Swedish); see Sandström 1988, pp.18ff. (Swedish).
54 Stjärne’s gesture was highly appreciated by Duff. Duff 1980, pp.273ff., 287f.; see Cotterell 1973, pp.97f.
56 SIM-A: Couser to Duff 1936.04.11; Duff to Lambie 1941.07.14. On Duff’s use of aspersion, see above, p.57.
57 Though having a “constitutional right” to believe in infant baptism, the “practical liberty” of practising infant baptism in the SIM was doubted by Mr Duff when asked to return into SIM service in Ethiopia in 1941-42. SIM-A: Duff to Lambie 1941.07.14; Duff to Bingham 1942.03.20. See above, pp.56f. On continued developments, see below, pp.82, 99f., 127f.
the SIM missionaries at the beginning of 1937. This number seems to have been the same, when the last SIM missionaries left Ethiopia in August 1938.\(^{58}\)

My material on EOC baptism of local Hadiya shows how people could react differently to EOC and Muslim syncretistic influences. Ato Shigute was from a Muslim background through his relatives. From what has been said above, one realises that he anyhow was baptised in the EOC, but according to my sources probably not as a child.\(^{59}\) Ato Sabiro, however, witnessed to his ethno-historical understanding of the EOC baptism in the region as foreign by saying:

> We were not baptised as children by the EOC, because we were Hadiya.\(^{60}\)

### C. Indigenous Developments during the Italian Occupation

#### The “African Factor”

Expatriate missionaries including Catholics, who did not come from Italy, were forced to leave the region in 1936.\(^{61}\) Before Duff and Couser had to withdraw they had completed the translation of the Hadiya version of the Gospel according to Matthew, which arrived in Lambuda in April 1936. It was immediately used in the Sunday meetings and as a means to learn to read.\(^{62}\)

The lasting factors of the SIM enterprise in the region prior to the Italian occupation, however, were the Ethiopian men and women who lived close to the first missionaries as their workers and friends. They were the local people with whom the first missionaries identified. Owing to the circumstances surrounding where the first missionaries settled, the majority, if not all, were Hadiya.\(^{63}\)

Two of them are of special interest, Ato Shigute Dada and Ato Sabiro Wesero, who were called “Mr Duff’s Boys”.\(^{64}\) They became the local leaders of the KEC, when the missionaries had to leave the region in the mid-1930’s. I suggest that the “African factor” was crucial for the evolving KEC. As we will see, future developments support the theory that Africans were the real missionaries of Africa.\(^{65}\)

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\(^{60}\) SG-A: Sabiro Wesero o.i.1998.01.30.

\(^{61}\) Alberto 1997, pp.143ff.; Balisky 1997, pp.61, 145. The French Catholic, Father Pascal Luchon stayed in Addis Abeba, however. He was expelled from Ethiopia in 1946 accused of speaking about slavery in Ethiopia. SG: A. Alberto o.i. 1998.03.20.


\(^{63}\) Duff 1980, pp.219, 247, 365f.

\(^{64}\) Duff 1980, p.372.

Indigenous Dynamics

Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro followed Mr Duff to Addis Abeba and were doing housework at the SIM headquarters in August 1937, when they heard of an incipient revival in the Kambata/Hadiya region. When they asked for permission to visit their homes, the two were “ordained” and sent by Mr Duff, and his colleagues, as “elders” of “the Gudela Church”. This was on August 29, 1937.66

After a seven-week stay in the region they returned to Addis Abeba, having baptised c.20 people. One of them was Abba Gole Nunamo, the brother-in-law of Ato Shigute, another was Ato Abebe Bushero from Bellesa. Abba Gole and Ato Haile Mariam, were appointed elders of the evolving church at Dubancho.67

The polity of elders was a characteristic mark of the KEC from the very beginning. It was as elders Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro became pillars in the KEC. As newly “ordained” elders they themselves immediately “copied” the missionaries and appointed new local elders, like Abba Gole. This system of elders in the church was very natural to them, as the concept of elders is part of local Ethiopian culture. The KEC was later known as a “church fellowship without pastors”, but led by elders.68 Another characteristic feature of the evolving KEC was that several of the first converts were relatives of Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro. The enforced retreat of the missionaries in 1936 became a test of the first local Evangelical Christians. When they did not return to their “old ways”, people were astonished.69

As the EOC was regarded as primarily the church of the Amhara occupants and the Catholic Church as the church of the Italian occupiers, Evangelical Christianity represented by the KEC and its indigenous leadership provided something new. As we have seen, Hadiya were traditionally not regarded as a Christian ethnic group. When therefore Hadiya people like Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro witnessed to their new faith, people were surprised as the witness about Christ came from their own relatives. The Evangelicals got the characteristic nickname “Iyesus-Menna.”70

When furthermore a well-known, strong, traditional Hadiya folk leader like Abba Gole was converted, this added to the testimonies of the “Iyesus-Menna.” In their enthusiasm the new converts neither gave in to threats from the Italians, nor did the fear of evil forces connected with the local folk religion and qalicha impress them. The new faith was thus becoming an attractive alternative.71

68 Cotterell 1973, p.162.
69 Cotterell 1969-70, p.92; 1973, p.120.
A letter from Ato Shigute to the missionaries before they left Addis Abeba on August 21, 1938, provides interesting information. Dubancho, the home of Ato Shigute was the centre of the “Gudela Church”. A church building had been raised there. Two women, named Tabalei and Bashuto, led the singing in church. Christians in Lambuda, Durame and Soro visited each other. They turned to the Dubancho elders for advice. In Badowacho people were interested in “the Word”.72

This description of the early KEC is confirmed by the testimony of Ato Daimo Ababo from the Badowacho Hadiya at Shone, close to Durame. According to his own testimony he first listened to Mr Duff’s, Ato Sabiro’s and Ato Shigute’s preaching in Hadiyissa at the market in Shone town c.1931. He, however, misinterpreted the teaching on the resurrection from the dead. He imagined that the missionaries referred to a return of the ancestors. Later on he had a vision of Christ in a dream and started to believe. When preachers arrived from Lemu in Dubancho/ Hosanna c.1936-37, he became as he says “a serious believer”. On this occasion Abba Gole, one of whose wives and whose ancestors were from the Badowacho Hadiya, came with the preachers to Shone and witnessed to his new faith.73

During the Italian occupation an indigenous pattern of worship with antiphonal singing, services led by elders, baptisms coinciding with early communion services and monthly meetings extending through the night, evolved. The similarities of this pattern between the KEC and the Wollamo Church imply close relations.74

73 SG-A: Daimo Ababo o.i.1998.01.31.
74 Cotterell 1973, pp.103ff. The elements of the Wollamo Church were found in the KEC, too.
KEC Church Growth Supported by the Wollamo Church

During the Italian occupation the two evolving churches seem to have mainly concentrated their evangelistic efforts in their respective region. Especially the Wollamo Church was under severe pressure from the Italians. At such times Christians from the KEC tried to support the persecuted by providing food, *sink*.75

According to the SIM missionary Mr Laurie Davison, there were just ten churches in the KEC in 1941, though widely scattered.76 From 1941-42 the KEC grew a lot. When the SIM General Director Guy Playfair already in 1943 visited Wollamo and passed the fringe of the Kambata/Hadiya region on his way to Soddu, he reported that there were 100 churches in the Kambata/Hadiya region.77

A more realistic estimate may be that it was not until 1945 that there were about hundred churches in the region. Using the figure of 100 members per church, which was used as the rule of thumb by Mr Davison for the Wollamo Church, would mean that there were about 10,000 baptised members in the KEC in 1945. This should be compared to the c.10 converts who, all in all, had been baptised by the SIM missionaries before the last left Addis Ababa in 1938.78 One can thus surely speak of the “African factor” at work. The revival started when the missionaries returned home and local Ethiopian Evangelical Christians were in charge.

When trying to explain this remarkable church growth, some factors can be identified. The political turbulence during the Italian occupation obviously made an impact also on religion. It reinforced tensions already existing since the Amhara occupation. In this context the bold indigenous Evangelical preaching by former slave-dealers like Abba Gole became powerful instruments for conversion. He, Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro are said to have been doing a lot of itinerant evangelism in the region to strengthen the young Christians. These three men would later on be referred to as “the Big Three”.79

There were, however, also other less well-known people, who did a great deal of the evangelistic groundwork. Ato Daimo Ababo, Ato Ababo Misebo and Abbay Edamo constituted a bilingual Hadiya/Kambata team, who spread their teaching from Amburse (Shone) as far as to Doyogena (c.20 km south of Hosanna). The strategy was to teach the Amharic *fidels* (alphabet) in specially erected grass huts and then give witness to the new faith.80

This strategy was also used by Wollamo evangelists (missionaries), who witnessed to the Kambata/Hadiya people. Their personal testimonies became an important factor for KEC growth. Positive contacts between leaders and ordinary

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75 SG-A: Daimo Ababo o.i.1998.01.31.
77 The two persons following Mr Playfair were Mr Alfred G. Roke and the SIM pioneer in the Kambata/Hadiya region Mr Couser. KHC-A: Tamru 1984, p.57 (Amharic); Davis 1966, p.115; Cotterell 1973, pp.102ff., 118. See below, p.73.
78 Cotterell 1973, pp.170f. As noted above, another c.20 people had been baptised by the Ethiopian Evangelicals in 1937, see above, p.65.
80 Ato Daimo counted up to 50 places he had visited. SG-A: Daimo Ababo o.i.1998.01.31.
members of the two churches were cultivated at market places, especially in the borderland where people are bilingual. Ato Daimo Ababo, for example, had been baptised by the Wollamo Church leader Ato Biru Dubale, who visited in Shone.  

Ato Lollamo Boke, who was together with Ato Biru at this baptism, was from Kambata. He was a former slave dealer but became an itinerant evangelist after his conversion. He travelled from Wollamo to the Kambata/Hadiya region on “missionary journeys” and visited Amburse, Ambaricho, Shashogo and Tembaro.  

Others, who became Christians through the testimonies of Wollamo Christians were, just to mention a few, Abba Gole, Ato Ayele Asale and the whole Qelbero Arache family. The latter had three wives and 18 children. His home in Sheshira was on one occasion used as a school for one month by Wollamo evangelists, who taught the fidelis and witnessed. They later on often spent the night there on their evangelistic journeys. Ato Qelbero’s son, Ato Shamebo, became a well-known evangelist (missionary) of the KEC and, Ato Asfaw, a regional evangelist.  

The new faith brought peace and reconciliation along the border of Wollamo. This increased church growth in the two churches. Mr Davison reports of how “ten old men” at the border of Wollamo have been converted “... where the Combattas and Walamos used to be always fighting. Now they meet to worship together.”  

Mr Playfair mentions four Wollamo widows, who brought the Gospel to the Kambata people and of a meeting of 1,350 people from “the three tribes” (“Gudela”, Kambata and Wollamo), who together celebrated Holy Communion. Ato Daimo Ababo emphasises how the Gospel brought peace between the Badowacho and Wollamo Christians. The fellowship was strengthened during the war, he says. Even so, in order to understand continued developments in the KEC one also has to recognise that some of the conflicts that had marked the relationship between the Kambata/Hadiya ethnic groups and the Wollamo continued.

Conflicts between the KEC and the Wollamo Church  
As we have seen earlier there were cultural and historical factors causing tensions between Wollamo and the Kambata/Hadiya region. The history of their interaction is marked by conflicts in competition for land and slaves. Both the KEC leader Abba Gole and the later leader of the Wollamo Church, Dana Maja, were former slave dealers. This legacy of conflicts affected the two churches.  

Ato Tamru Abamu relates how in 1941-42 three evangelists from Wollamo Ato Mandefero, Ato Darmuro and Ato Degeso were invited by Abba Gole to assist in

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81 Ibid.  
85 SIM-A: Playfair, Ethiopia, n.d. (1950?).  
86 SG-A: Daimo Ababo o.i.1998.01.31.  
87 See above, pp.46f.  
the evangelistic work. Soon a conflict characterised as “disunity on doctrine” occurred in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The reason was that Wollamo evangelists, who had come there in 1942 taught differently from the KEC evangelists.\textsuperscript{89}

The SIM authors Davis and Cotterell tend to spiritualise such conflicts in favour of the Wollamo Church.\textsuperscript{90} What was at stake is reflected by Davis:

Questions about drinking beer, eating raw meat, the use of tobacco had brought division between the Wallamo Church and the church among the neighbouring Hadiyas to the north. A few Hadiya Christians had accompanied the missionary party into Wallamo from Kambatta. They presented their point of view. The Wallamo church had decided against these practises without hesitation, but there was less clear definition about them among the Hadiyas. As a result of this council meeting, fellowship between the two churches was restored, although the Hadiya church did not take the absolute stand against beer and tobacco of the Wallamo church.\textsuperscript{91}

These “doctrinal” differences may very well have been symptoms of deeper cultural and historical conflicts. The perspective widens when one considers the atmosphere of the old conflicts between the Wollamo and the Badowacho peoples. The problems had deeper roots than spiritual “maturity”. Even so, there was a strong and remarkable fellowship between the two churches. But the conflicts would appear anew, for example in 1946 and in 1955.\textsuperscript{92}

\section*{D. Outside Influences}

\textbf{The Legacy of the Evangelical Pioneers}

The Kambata/Hadiya region and Wollamo were not the only regions where Evangelical revivals started during the Italian occupation. Apart from the “Kambata-Wollamo Group”, Rev. Manfred Lundgren identifies the early “Bethel Church” in southern Wollega, and in Addis Abeba, with connections to the American United Presbyterian Mission (AUPM) as such revival groups. Groups with connections to the Swedish Evangelical Mission were found in Adua, Dessie, Addis Abeba and in western Wollega. The group in Challia-Aira in western Wollega, with relations to the German Hermannsburg Mission (GHM), was also part of the revival.\textsuperscript{93}

As has been shown by Dr Gustav Arén, the missionaries of the SEM, who arrived at Massawa in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century did not reach their primary goal, the Oromo.\textsuperscript{94}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{89} KHC-A: Tamru 1984, pp.30, 33ff. (Amharic).
  \item \textsuperscript{90} Davis 1966, p.114; Cotterell 1973, p.142. Omotic language unites Kullo and Wolayta. Cotterell seems to disregard this factor in the KEC/Wollamo tensions in a mission to Kullo.
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Davis 1966, p.114.
  \item \textsuperscript{92} In 1946 there was lack of fellowship between the KEC and the Wollamo Church according to Mr Beacham. He refers to it as a problem due to differences regarding drinking and circumcision. SIM-A: Beacham to Playfair 1946.12.19. Cotterell describes the poor cooperation of the Wollamo Church and the KEC in Kullo in 1955. Cotterell 1973, p.142.
  \item \textsuperscript{93} Lundgren 1954, pp.279f. (Swedish).
  \item \textsuperscript{94} The Swedish Evangelical Mission commenced work in Eritrea in 1866 with the aim to reach the Oromo in Ethiopia. The SEM, in Swedish “Evangeliska Fosterlands Stiftelsen” (EFS), is a revival movement in the Church of Sweden founded in 1856. Arén 1978; 1999.
\end{itemize}
Just like Mr Duff in 1937, they instead sent Ethiopians as missionaries and envoys of the Gospel. What I have called the “African factor” was thus a crucial factor in early developments in western Wollega, too. The Ethiopian Evangelicals’ network would later on also involve southern Wollega, where Dr Lambie arrived in 1919 as a Presbyterian missionary before he joined the SIM mission.95

It is important to note how barriers of ethnicity, status and denominationalism were overcome by the Ethiopian Evangelical Pioneers from the very beginning in the Bethel Congregation at Massawa in 1872.96 The first missionary in Boji in western Wollega in 1898, known as the “Cradle of the Mekane Yesus Church”, was an Eritrean. He was a priest in the EOC and, as such, he was sent by the SEM and Evangelical Christians of Eritrea. His name was Qeshi Gebre-Ewostateos Zemikael. In order to communicate the Gospel he learnt Oromiffa and was a friend of Onesimos Nesib. As employed in the Boji Mariam Church of the EOC, he introduced Oromo vernaculars for the readings of the texts in church on Sundays.97

Another EOC priest and colleague of Qeshi Gebre-Ewostateos in Boji Mariam, whom we already have met, was Qes Badima Yalew from Gojjam. As a young priest he was open to new influences and became part of the Evangelical counter-culture that evolved in Boji.98 Later on he would make a team with the son of Ato Gebre-Selassie Tesfa Gaber. Ato Gebre-Selassie (later Qes) was also an Eritrean missionary and a deacon in the EOC. He served with the Oromo, Onesimos Nesib, in Nejo (close to Boji) and Nakamte. As has already been mentioned, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was born in Nakamte in 1910 owing to his parents’ mission.99 We will meet him at strategic points later on in this study.

As a priest in Boji Mariam, Qes Badima also met Ato Abraham Tato. This young Oromo Evangelical from Boji went by foot to Eritrea in order to get in contact with the sending mission church. While he was there, he was confirmed in Tzeazega on September 3, 1911. His son, born in Boji in 1913, would be the third part in a future team with Qes Badima. His name is Ato Emmanuel Abraham.100

From what has been said above, one realises that the Evangelical Pioneers transcended barriers of ethnicity and promoted communication between different ethnic groups. This meant an appreciation of other peoples’ cultures and efforts to learn new languages. As in the KEC, the vernaculars were used to a certain extent in Boji, too, both in church services and in Bible readings. Onesimos Nesib’s translation of the Bible into Oromiffa in 1899 is of course the highlight of this process. Barriers of status were also transcended. People met in church and had meals with discussions afterwards. Qeshi Gebre-Ewostateos is an example of how a well-educated person chose to identify with ordinary Oromo peasants. Onesi-

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95 Arén 1999, pp.343ff.; see above, p.65.
98 Qes Badima (1885-1973) was not yet 20 years old, when Qeshi Gebre-Ewostateos died in 1905. Arén 1978, pp.423ff., 442; 1999, pp.64ff., 88f.; Stjärne 1973.05.17.
100 Emmanuel Abraham, 1995; Arén 1999, pp.85, 103; see above, p.26.
mos’s life story, from slavery to well-educated Bible translator, who chose to return to his people is another example. Moreover, **barriers of denominationalism** were transcended. The young Evangelicals tried to identify with the EOC and renew it from inside. A pertinent example is the efforts made in the Boji Mariam Church.\(^{101}\) The legacy of the pioneers would make itself known in Addis Abeba, too.

### The Network of the Evangelical Congregation in Addis Abeba

The Rev. Karl Cederqvist led the SEM work in Addis Abeba in 1904-19. He was fully connected to the traditional strategy of working to reform the EOC. In the spirit of Peter Heyling he supported the idea of “Evangelical Associations” inside the EOC. Cederqvist purchased a compound close to Siddist Kilo in Addis Abeba. There he maintained his medical and educational work in the so-called “English school”. He did not establish an autonomous Evangelical congregation, however. As we recall, the early leader of the Wollamo Church, Ato Biru Dubale, was one of Cederqvist’s pupils. Other pupils later on supported the Bethel Church, which was related to the American United Presbyterian Mission.\(^{102}\)

The SEM-related Evangelical Congregation was instead established in Cederqvist’s compound in 1921 by the Rev. Olle Eriksson. Qes Gebre-Selassie Tesfa Gaber served as the first indigenous pastor from 1922 to 1932. SEM missionaries played an important part in this congregation until they had to leave in 1936.\(^{103}\)

We have already noted that Ato Sabiro Wesero was baptised in Addis Abeba in July 1936. Mr Duff was then in charge of the SIM in Addis Abeba.\(^{104}\) We also know that Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie led “... a most fruitful evangelistic campaign” at “Akaki” in Addis Abeba in January 4-17, 1937, where also SIM Christians attended.\(^{105}\) In 1937 the SIM was using the SEM’s “lower station” (at the Evangelical Congregation) temporarily. Mr Duff, Ato Emmanuel and Qes Badima were approached by Captain Bertinatti, an Italian pastor from the Waldensian Church. He wanted to make use of the church and other buildings. The SIM was furthermore informed about Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie’s imprisonment on June 17, 1937. On July 2, 1937 SIM missionaries visited him in prison.\(^{106}\)

Accordingly, the man in charge of the SIM in Addis Abeba at this time, Mr Duff, was in close contact with Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Qes Badima in 1937. As Addis Abeba was not a big city in the 1930’s, I suggest that both Ato Sabiro and Ato Shigute were acquainted with Ato Emmanuel already in 1936-37.

\(^{101}\) Arén 1978; 1999.
\(^{103}\) Arén 1999, pp.197, 244; Sæverås 1974, pp.35, n.2 (the text of n.2 is on p.187 in *idem*).
\(^{104}\) Cotterell 1973, p.98; Duff 1980, pp.333, 362; see above, p.63.
\(^{106}\) SIM-A: Extracts from Log-Book of SIM Head Quarters Addis Abeba, Jan.1933-Aug.1938; Duff to Dahlberg 1937.05.22. Ato Emmanuel was forced to spend three years, 1937-40, in an Italian prison camp close to Mogadisho in Somalia. GA-A: Arén 1972, pp.3f.
This means that Ato Biru, Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro were part of the network of the Evangelical Congregation at Siddist Kilo already during the Italian occupation.

**Early Ethiopian Evangelical Ecumenism**

The shared afflictions experienced in prison camps and under other hard conditions revived nationalism and solidarity among Ethiopians. This was also true of the Evangelicals. Denominational differences were not in focus. In fact, they were barely heard of. In the 1940’s a more vital concern was to help each other to endure hardships. Some early examples anticipate what was going to happen later.

The blind Ato Gidada Solon, who is said to have heard the Gospel from Dr Lambie, was ordained as a Presbyterian pastor by the AUPM on February 24, 1939 in Addis Ababa. On his return home he celebrated Holy Communion together with Ethiopian Christians at the SEM centres in Nakamte and Boji. This was repeated in Nakamte on September 1, 1941 when Qes Gidada and Qes Mamo Chorka had been released from prison in Jimma and returned home via Addis Ababa.107

In June 1941 the Evangelical Congregation, now also called the Addis Ababa Congregation, reorganised itself separately of the SEM. Qes Badima Yalew became its first minister. Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was a prominent elder.108 Together they brought the legacy of the Evangelical Pioneers with them.

A sign of this continuity is the support provided for Evangelicals in the peripheries of the country by the Evangelical Congregation concerning legal matters.109 That such a help was needed already in 1941 is stated by the SIM missionary Mr Davison, who met Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro in November 1941 in Addis Ababa. The reason for their visit in the capital was to obtain permission from Ethiopian authorities to hold religious meetings in the region.110 Though this is not documented, I suggest that at this time the KEC elders met with other Ethiopian Evangelical Christians. They were helped in contacts and “errands” with Ethiopian authorities. Ato Sabiro confirms this function of the Evangelical Congregation. He mentions a certain lawyer, Ato Gilo, who helped the KEC in legal matters.111

When Mr Davison himself arrived in Addis Ababa in September 1941 he met Captain D.E. Stokes of the Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society (BCMS), who became his military superior.112 Mr Stokes lived at the Swedish “upper station” at Entotto. One of Mr Davison’s first visits to a church in Addis Ababa in 1941 was to attend the Evangelical Congregation and listen to Mr Stokes, who “preached in Amharic”. After the service they had lunch with Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie.113

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109 In 1947 the Evangelical Congregation approached the Emperor on behalf of the KEC in matters of religious liberty. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1947, pp.4f.
111 SG-A: Sabiro Wesero o.i.1998.01.30.
112 BCMS’s ambition was to renew the EOC from within; see below, pp.182, 185.
113 SIM-A: Davison to wife, Sept.1941.
Ato Emmanuel mentions that ecumenical meetings of the CEEC type took place in Addis Abeba “long before” the CEEC had been formally established in 1944. Ato Biru Dubale attended these meetings as “one of the leaders of SIM”. Other “early leaders” mentioned are “. . . Abba Gole, Shegute, Sabore . . . .”114 We know that Ato Emmanuel had registered the revival in Kambata and Wollamo from 1942. In a letter to the renowned SEM missionary Stjärne he reports:

The Lord has done wonderful things in Kambata, Wollamo and in its surroundings. During the five last years thousands of souls have been saved and great changes have taken place among a great number of people.115

Ato Emmanuel’s words about early meetings of Evangelical leaders in Addis Abeba are confirmed by a letter by Mrs Lily Davison in 1942. She mentions how Ato Biru together with three others from Wollamo, Ato Shigute from Hadiya, pastor Mamo from the Bethel Church, two elders from the Gulale Church and Ato Emmanuel met together. The BCMS had also been invited. The main topic of their discussions was a certain Friday fasting in the Wollamo Church.116

To sum up: Owing to the contacts of men like Qes Badima Yalew, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Ato Emmanuel Abraham the Evangelical Congregation was influential not only at a spiritual level. It provided support for Evangelicals in legal matters related to religious freedom. Ecumenical relations were reinforced during the Italian occupation. Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity involved the members of the Kambata Evangelical Church, too.

The SIM Returns to Addis Abeba

As implied, the first SIM missionary to return to Addis Abeba after the Italian occupation was Mr Davison. He arrived in August 1941 as an employee in the British army where he worked until January 1943. During this time he and his wife met Christians from the KEC and the Wollamo Church in Addis Abeba. According to Fargher they were not in a position to accomplish any particular support to the young churches at this time, except for distributing bibles. In 1943 other SIM missionaries returned, among them Mr Couser. I have already identified him as a key-person in SIM’s contact with the KEC. With one exception, no SIM missionary was permitted to leave the capital to visit the churches in the South in 1941-43. The exception was a two-week trip made by the SIM General Director Playfair, Mr Couser and Mr Alfred Roke to Soddu in Wollamo in July 1943.117 On this basis it is reasonable to infer that, except for the visit to the Wollamo Church in July 1943, SIM influence on the KEC in 1941-43 was small.

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115 SEM-A: Emmanuel G.S. to Stjärne 1942.07.12, in SEM/MT 1943.02.14, p.109, (Swedish).
116 Lily Davison’s letter 1942.07.05, in Fargher 1996, pp.238f.
117 Fargher 1996, pp.221f., 244f., 249, 254ff.
Conclusions

The early leading SIM missionaries in the Kambata/Hadiya region, Mr Duff and Mr Couser, were carriers of a characteristic North-American Evangelical legacy with connections to premillennialism and fundamentalism.

Although being an interdenominational movement, it was crucial to the SIM missionaries to stress a certain pattern of *doctrine* and *ethos*. Thus, the need of personal conversion to Christ and a consequent behavioural change were necessary before baptism was permitted. This meant a separation from “false” religion and “sinful” cultural traditions in line with the SIM understanding. The SIM showed greater flexibility as to variations in *polity* and *worship*, where indigenous principles were applied. In these fields there was more room for local initiatives.

It was of great importance for future events in the region that the early SIM missionaries identified with local Hadiya (“Gudela”) in the countryside and not with Amhara *neftanya* in the Hosanna *ketema*. By learning the local language and integrating with Hadiya culture they were able to communicate the Gospel. They were trusted by the early converts. Mr Duff’s workers, Ato Sabiro and Ato Shigute, were appointed elders of the “Gudela Church” in Addis Abeba in 1937. Together with the traditional Hadiya leader, Abba Gole, they became the core of the evolving Kambata Evangelical Church. Its centre was in one of their villages, Dubancho. Referred to as “the Big Three”, they copied Mr Duff in appointing local elders. The early missionaries’ impact on the Kambata was small, however.

Though Presbyterian in confession, Mr Duff did not baptise infants while serving in the SIM. In fact approximately just 10 people, probably all Hadiya, were baptised by the SIM missionaries before they had to leave Ethiopia in 1938. When they returned to Ethiopia around 1943 there were almost 10,000 believers. The revival in the region was reinforced at the end of the Italian occupation. It was led by local Christians in line with indigenous patterns and thus became a strong alternative. Evangelists of the even larger Wollamo Church supported the KEC. The testimonies from these former enemies, while they taught the *fidels*, made an impact. The movement was soon firmly established also among the Kambata. These developments give ample evidence to the theory that Africans, themselves, were the real missionaries of Africa. We can speak of “the African factor”. A characteristic name of the Ethiopian Evangelicals in the region, which hints at the character of their testimonies, was “Iyesus-Menā”, that is, “Jesus-men”.

From c.1941 there was an established contact between KEC elders, Wollamo Church elders and other Evangelicals from different parts of Ethiopia. “Ecumenical” meetings were held regularly in Addis Abeba between Ethiopian Christians related to Lutheran, Presbyterian and SIM missions. At such gatherings common ecclesiastical concerns and issues of religious freedom were discussed. A strong motivating factor for this fellowship can be described as Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity. This was a mentality with connections to the “Evangelical Pioneers”, which was reinforced during the Italian occupation.

The SIM impact on the KEC after the Italian occupation was comparatively small before 1944.
PART TWO
ETHIOPIAN INITIATIVES 1944-66

From the perspective of Mt. Ambaricho and Mt. Shonkolla I will in Part Two follow the interaction of the expanding Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC), the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) and the wider Ethiopian Evangelical fellowship from 1944 and onwards. As has been mentioned, this fellowship had been reinforced during the Italian occupation.

As the focus narrows, I will identify factors that influenced the split in the KEC in 1951, and in 1954 led to the formation of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2).

I will then follow the evolution of the KEC-2 from 1955 to 1966. The KEC-2’s interaction, first with the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC), and then with the young Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), and their respective representatives will be highlighted.

Colourful Ethiopian characters influenced the development of the KEC-2, which at this time was altogether an Ethiopian enterprise. The EECMY connections with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and its member churches reinforced the EECMY support of the KEC-2. In the end it would open the door for a supporting mission to co-operate in the region.

The remarkable support among Ethiopian Evangelicals and their own initiatives in local developments in the Kambata/Hadiya region are evidence of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.
Chapter Three

The Emperor is Back in Ethiopia

On May 5, 1941, exactly five years after the Italian entry in Addis Abeba, Haile Selassie returned to the capital. From his own frame of reference, he started the awesome work to maintain Ethiopia’s independence and to modernise the country.

The foreign missions became part of his nation building. They were directed by a government decree issued on August 27, 1944. It would guide their work for the next 30 years.¹

The Imperial Decree on Missions divided the country into “open areas”, that is, non-Christian areas where mission work was allowed in full, and “Ethiopian Church Areas” (“closed areas”), that is, areas where the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) was predominant and should be preserved. The language to be used for more thorough education was understood to be Amharic in all areas of the country, however.²

The expanding KEC was confronted with the SIM legacy of “separation” from “worldly practices”. In this context tensions on how to interpret the SIM indigenous principles appeared among the SIM missionaries.

I will draw on primary sources from the SIM archives and the literature of the SIM historians. I supplement them with findings of the local writer of the Kale Hiywot Church (KHC), Ato Tamru Abamu, and my own oral sources.³

A. The Imperial Decree on Missions

Nation Building and the Renewed Ethiopian Orthodox Church

During the Italian aggression people from different parts of Ethiopia had taken part in the defence of their country. There was for example a Kambata contingent of 30,000 men in the Ethiopian Army at the Northern Frontier from October 1935 to April 1936.⁴

After Haile Selassie’s return to Ethiopia in 1941 and the regaining of independence in 1942, it was essential for the Emperor to develop the nation’s autonomy. The intensified contact with smaller countries like Sweden, at the expense of Eng-

¹ DECREE No.3 OF 1944, in Trimingham 1950, pp.68ff.
² Ibid.
³ Especially the five-page letter from the Ethiopia Field Director Gordon Beacham to the SIM General Director, Guy Playfair 1946.12.19 and the 22 pages report on the split in the KEC are illuminating. The latter is called: Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9. It reports in detail on Mr Playfair’s effort to reconcile the KEC.
⁴ Braukämper 1980, pp.346f.
land, can be interpreted with this in mind. The Emperor’s return also meant that the so-called Amhara restoration of the South started. In 1944 it was completed, which for example meant that almost all posts in the administrative system in the Kambata/Hadiya region were occupied by “Amhara”.

As in several other countries with dominant Orthodox churches, Ethiopian nationalism has been strongly linked to the church. The EOC, has been called “... the unifying influence in a state where almost everything tends to division and disruption ...” Martyrs like Abuna Petros and the monks of Debre Libanos became new powerful symbols of Ethiopian nationalism during the Italian occupation. As already evidenced, however, the EOC was highly integrated in the Ethiopian central state and primarily the religion of the Amhara civilisation. Just like other ethnic groups in Ethiopia, the Hadiya and Kambata people received new names in Amharic and a new national status if they were baptised in the EOC.

The link between the Ethiopian central state and the EOC was more evident in the South, as there the church was one of the big landowners. The Mariam Church in Hosanna, for instance, was the owner of 5,000 hectares of land.

As has been indicated above, the EOC frame of reference can be illustrated by applying Küng’s type called “the Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period”. The modernising Emperor, however, was more in favour of “the modern Enlightenment paradigm” of the West. There was an obvious tension between the pragmatic attitude of the Emperor and the conservatism of the EOC.

From 1951, when for the first time an Ethiopian was appointed Metropolitan of Ethiopia, a new confidence filled the EOC. In 1959 Ethiopia became a patriarchate of its own. It interpreted its national role as parallel to the church in ancient Byzantium, “... the Established Church of the Empire. ...” According to the EOC frame of reference there was no need for other churches or missions in Ethiopia. The EOC regarded all Ethiopia as one nation with one national church, which also included the Kambata/Hadiya region. Consequently it saw the Decree on Missions as unnecessary. I suggest that it did not accept it.

In contrast, Haile Selassie’s concern was to gain technical, medical and educational support from abroad and to benefit from the missions in his modernising efforts. At the same time he had to placate the EOC and conservative groups in the council of ministries, which he depended on. When comparing the Decree on

7 Trimingham 1950, p.17. If the Roman Catholic Church was almost always compromised to the state this was even more so of the Byzantine Church. Bosch 1991, pp.206f., 212.
8 Bahru Zewde 1991, p.170; Marcus 1994, pp.149f.; Bakke 1987, p.122; SG-A: Tseganesh Ayele o.i.2000.03.03; see above, pp.17f.
Missions of 1944 with earlier discussions concerning missions in 1942, which were less liberal, it seems right to infer that the 1944 document was an ingenious compromise between conservatives and liberals in power including the Emperor.\textsuperscript{14} It acknowledged the EOC’s priority over other churches but at the same time gave room for other churches in Ethiopia, too. Thinking of Ethiopia’s history the latter could not be taken for granted.\textsuperscript{15}

As the Decree was not very precise, it could be interpreted in the interest of the Emperor. With this document Haile Selassie could control the missions but at the same time provide a legal basis for them to work in the country. The fact that the EOC was not officially represented in the discussions preparing “the Decree on Missions” in 1943 supports the hypothesis that the Emperor wanted to make room for the missions in Ethiopia. The deliberations were instead held between the Ministry of Education and mission representatives.\textsuperscript{16} As will be recalled, this was a difference to 1928 when the SIM arrived in Ethiopia and the EOC led the deliberations. As Emperor in the 1940’s, Haile Selassie had his own standpoint also in religious matters. He was anxious to modernise the EOC. The dependence of the missions upon the Emperor would, as we will see, have certain repercussions.\textsuperscript{17}

The Foreign Missions

According to Ato Emmanuel Abraham, the so-called “closed areas” were areas where the Amhara were in majority. In practice it referred to areas north of Shoa. Wollega and the Kambata/Hadiya region were consequently “open areas”. This was at least the impression given to the SEM missionaries by Ato Emmanuel, who in fact was in charge of the Ministry of Education in 1944.\textsuperscript{18}

As argued above, however, it was the Emperor who gave the “right” interpretation of the Decree. Perhaps it was in line with his intention that a map defining “open” and “closed” areas was never produced (?).\textsuperscript{19}

The rules on language forced missionaries to learn Amharic and use it in their teaching. They were too dependent on the Emperor’s good-will to dare to protest. In the Kambata/Hadiya region the result was that no SIM missionary would master the local languages like Mr Duff and Mr Couser, who as we have seen arrived before the Italian occupation. This is illustrated by Rev. Melvin Donald, who worked as a missionary for the SIM in the KEC at Bobicho (Hosanna) from 1951 to 1954:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14} Fargher 1996, pp.245ff., 265ff., 276ff.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} The Jesuits were ousted out of Ethiopia in 1632. In the 19\textsuperscript{th} century both Protestants and Catholics were forced to leave the country in turns. The main reason for this state of affairs was the close link between the state and the EOC, and the missions’ lack of understanding of this strong relation. See Crummey 1972.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} SIM-A: Copy of letter from Rev. A.F. Matthew 1943.08.04. It contains reports from conferences between missionaries and the ministry of education 1943.07.24 and 07.27; \textit{Notes on a Conference Called by the Minister of Education}, 1943.07.24, u.s. (Playfair?); see Fargher 1996, pp.265ff.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} See above, p.60; Fargher 1996, p.266; Tolo 1998, pp.128ff.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} SG-A: Manfred Lundgren to Grenstedt 1999.04.29; see Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.59ff.
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Fargher 1996, p.266.
\end{itemize}

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When I left K. in 1954, the bulk of the KEC membership did not understand Amharic. In the post-war Ethiopia we were not allowed to learn the vernaculars, so all my teaching in the Bible School, preaching at elders’ meetings, was done in Amharic, and always, always then interpreted into Hadiya or Kambata, sometimes into both!\textsuperscript{20}

I understand Lamin Sanneh’s emphasis on the importance of “translating the message” into local languages as an elaboration of Walls’s missiological concepts of the “indigenising principle” and the “pilgrim principle”. Sanneh emphasises that “translating the message” has been a vital praxis of the Christian Church from its origins and through the ages. In contrast to Islam, translations into local languages were part of the Christian self-understanding.\textsuperscript{21}

I take contradictions to this praxis like the dominance of Latin in the Roman Catholic Church or Geez in the EOC, as imbalances in this self-understanding owing to a dominating culture. With Walls it can be said that in such cases, the “indigenising principle” dominated at the expense of the “pilgrim principle” and disturbed the balance. Sanneh argues that the translation of the Gospel on one hand led to a “relativisation” of cultural and linguistic roots. That is, all cultures became equal before God (“pilgrim principle”). On the other hand it led to a “destigmatisation” of all cultures in line with the message of the incarnation. That is, all cultures and languages are able to be the carriers of God’s Word (“indigenising principle”).\textsuperscript{22}

The translation of the Bible into the Oromiffa language by Onesimos Nesib in 1899 is an important example of this “vital praxis” of the Christian Church. For the first time the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia could hear the words of the Bible in its own “mother tongue”.\textsuperscript{23}

Contrary to a “relativisation” and “destigmatisation” of cultures, the Decree on Missions instead prepared the way for the dominating Amhara culture. The words of Johny Bakke that: “The Evangelical movement offered the Kushitic peoples of Ethiopia the gift of Christianity within their own tribal context”, have to be qualified after the promulgation of the Decree.\textsuperscript{24}

His statement is true in a sense, but not as far as the use of language by missionaries was concerned. The missionaries’ teachings were usually translated from Amharic into one or two local languages. Translations of the Scripture into local languages were no longer permitted. It would take 30 years before a change would occur. In this light it would seem as if Onesimos’s translation of the Bible has not

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{20} SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Sanneh 1989, pp.1ff.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Sanneh 1989, pp.1ff.; see Walls 1996, pp.xvii ff.; Bediako 1995, pp.61, 109ff.; Gray 1998, p.11; see above, p.29.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Arén 1978, p.385. Gray is interested in what happened to Ethiopian Christians when Geez became a dead language and people could not hear the Bible in their mother tongue. Gray 1998, pp.11f. Ethiopian non-Semitic ethnic groups did not even have an option to hear the Bible in their mother tongue before Onesimos’s translation.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Bakke 1987, p.122. See Halldin Norberg 1977, p.77; SG-A: Tseganesh Ayele 2000.03.03.
\end{itemize}
got the scholarly publicity it deserves. Among Oromo Christians “Abba Gama-
chis’s” translation was highly appreciated, however.25

Another issue concerning the Decree, which has been overlooked by previous
research, is that recognised foreign missions got a stronger platform in relation to
the authorities than Ethiopian Evangelicals did. They could now discuss comity
principles and “spheres of interest” directly with the Emperor, without bothering
too much about the Ethiopian Evangelicals. Owing to the good-will that their
modernising efforts generated, they could act more authoritatively in matters of
culture, too. They did not have to win their converts “from below” in the same way
as a Cederqvist in Addis Abeba in 1904 or a Duff in Lambuda in 1929. Their posi-
tions were different. We can speak of the “Missionary factor” in Ethiopia in a new
sense after the Decree on Missions in 1944.26

The Ethiopian Evangelicals
To the Ethiopian Evangelicals the Decree on Missions did not alter much as far as
their religious freedom was concerned. In fact one realises tensions between the
policy of the Ethiopian political centre and the practice in the periphery in the way
local Evangelicals were treated. The persecution of Evangelicals can be interpreted
as a protest by the EOC against the liberal religious policy of the Emperor, as illus-
trated in the Decree on Missions.

Both Cotterell and Bakke emphasise that the official policy of the state was reli-
gious freedom. There was official support for the mission work in the open areas
but still the Ethiopian Evangelicals were persecuted in such areas. This was the
case, for example in Wollega and in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The roots of this
paradoxical persecution can be traced to local authorities backed up by the EOC.
Different sources point to a widespread persecution of Evangelicals in different
parts of the country at certain periods in the 1940’s and the 1950’s.27

As will be recalled the SIM/KEC did not recognise the EOC baptism, nor did it
have a long history in Ethiopia compared to the venerable EOC. There were no
pastors in the KEC. In short, it was a strange church to the EOC. The expansion of
the EOC was thought to be hampered by the growth of the Evangelical move-
ments. They were seen as threats and proselyters.28 The complicated network of
land-ownership, the official dominance of Amhara culture, and the expected alle-

tion of the Bible is neither mentioned by Hastings (1994) nor by Isichei (1995). Sanneh
Onesimos is colloquially called Abba Gamachis. In 1996 my Oromo colleague in EECMY,
Qes Berhanu Wedajo, witnessed of his appreciation of Abba Gamachis’s translation.
26 See Oliver 1965; Getatchew Haile et al. (eds.) 1998.
minutes 1952, p.16, no.3. On religious freedom as part of Human Rights, see Tergel, 1998.
28 The EECMY in contrast to the SIM recognises the EOC baptism. This has apparently not
made any difference to EOC-EECMY relations in terms of ecumenism or ecclesiastical co-
operation. M. Lundgren maintains that the reason for persecution was that EOC members
migrated into Evangelical churches. SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1999.04.29.
giance to the EOC created a breeding-ground of charges against Evangelicals in the Kambata/Hadiya region and elsewhere.29

Visiting the Evangelical prisoners in Hosanna and in Asella became part of the experience of Christians in the KEC. In 1947 thirty “Kambattan believers” were imprisoned, and still in 1959 there was a pressure on the Evangelical Christians. In 1950 it was stated that the Evangelical church had freedom to preach in the region. Church members should not be required to pay annual tax to local EOC churches or be forced to assist in building them. Soon problems occurred again, however.30

To sum up: The special and ambiguous situation in Ethiopia, where on the one hand there was the official policy of “open areas” for mission work and on the other hand the local nationalism which reinforced an implied allegiance to the EOC, was unique in Africa. It forced the Ethiopian Evangelical Christians to unite. The CEEC representatives, who could negotiate with the authorities, became invaluable for Christians living in the Ethiopian periphery.31 The chances for an independent church to survive on its own, without support from a strong organisation, seemed quite small in Ethiopia. This will be a recurring theme as I proceed, but first I have to assess the repercussions of the return of the SIM missionaries.

B. The Return of the Sudan Interior Mission to the South

The Role of Mr Couser

I have already indicated that Mr Norman Couser was a key-person in the SIM’s contact with the KEC. As will be recalled he joined Mr Duff at Lambuda in 1932 and learnt Hadiyissa fluently, which impressed local people. Before being evacuated to Soddu in October 1936, he and his colleagues had been refugees for several months around Hosanna under dramatic circumstances. In 1943 he was back in Addis Abeba and visited the Wollamo Church together with the SIM General Director the same year.32 It was him that the KEC members turned to when visiting the SIM in Addis Abeba from 1943. In the words of a later colleague: “... as far as the KEC leadership was concerned, Norman Couser was Mr. SIM.”33

After the Decree on Missions was published at the end of October 1944, and Mr Gordon Beacham had arrived in Addis Abeba as the new SIM Field Director for Ethiopia, the Cousins visited the Kambata/Hadiya region for three months.34 They

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31 See above, p.72. This function was particularly true of the AAMY representatives.
33 SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15.
stayed at Dubancho where a temporary Bible-school was being run. According to my sources there existed a certain practice of infant baptism at this time in the KEC. I suggest that Mr Couser advised against it and that this led to its ceasing.\textsuperscript{35}

In 1945 (1937 E.C.) the KEC was divided into seven districts so-called “sevens”. “Seven” is an indigenous concept connecting up with the region’s history as well as to the Bible. I suggest that Mr Couser had an impact on this arrangement, as the Wollamo Church had earlier been divided in a similar way.\textsuperscript{36}

**The SIM’s Resettlement**

It was in 1946 that the SIM missionaries resettled in Dubancho north of Hosanna, the home of Ato Shigute and Abba Gole. It was still the KEC’s centre at this time.

On July 13, 1946 Dr and Mrs.Wilson and Miss Warhanik reached Dubancho. On their first Sunday three hundred and fifty gathered for the service.\textsuperscript{37}

The SIM missionaries met a vital church with approximately 10,000 members led by elders. Abba Gole and the early elders of the KEC were still in charge. As we have seen, the church was under pressure from local authorities and the EOC. This must have hampered the missionaries’ work, too. The newly erected “sevens” were Lemu, Dinika, Densao, Kacha, Ashira, Ilgira and Amburse. This shows that the KEC was well established in both the Hadiya and Kambata area. Money was brought from the “sevens” to Dubancho in support of evangelistic outreach.\textsuperscript{38}

The SIM missionaries soon settled closer to Hosanna, in Bobicho, where the centre of the KEC was gradually transferred. In 1949 the missionaries were running a clinic, a Bible-school and an elementary school. A number of village schools, teaching literacy were started. When Mr Duff made a visit to the region at the end of 1949, the Durame station had still not been reopened. He visited Bobicho, where he was greeted by his colleagues from the time prior to the Italian occupation: Mr and Mrs Couser and Ms Fiona Mac Luckie. The main event of the Sunday spent in the region was a service in the Dubancho Church. The first regional Bible conference was held in Hosanna in the beginning of December 1949 with Mr Playfair as main speaker. “Just” 800 persons attended. The elders were afraid of inviting more people because of difficulties of accommodation. 38 volunteers were willing to go out for a month to witness, while receiving support from fellow Christians.\textsuperscript{39}


\textsuperscript{36} As Mr Couser was in USA 1946-47 he probably visited the KEC in 1945. SIM-A: Beacham to Playfair 1946.04.24; Beacham to Fellow-workers 1947.06.11; KHC-A: Tamru 1984, p.31 (Amharic); Cotterell 1973, pp.103ff. On “seven” in the Kambata federation, see above, p.43.

\textsuperscript{37} Cotterell 1973, p.121.


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The SIM Leaders’ Impact on the KEC

There were different opinions between the SIM central leadership and SIM missionaries in Ethiopia on how self-government in the indigenous churches should be interpreted.\(^{40}\) One of the early missionaries in Sidamo, Mr Alfred Roke, and some other SIM missionaries in Ethiopia stood for a liberal interpretation, while Mr Beacham and Mr Playfair strongly stressed “separation” from so-called “worldly practices” like drinking, smoking and dancing.\(^{41}\) By “drinking” they did not differentiate between traditional “beer-drinking” and local common drinks like the weak borde. The decisive point seems to have been whether it was fermented or not.\(^{42}\)

This is illustrated by what Mr Beacham wrote to Mr Playfair after a visit in Dubanche in 1946. Mr Couser and the KEC became special targets for Beacham:

While at Dubanche, we talked with Shiguti about it. He said that a while ago, he and the two other leading elders (suburo and Abagoli) felt that drinking was not quite right and had stopped the practice of having beer at their monthly meetings, and that the three of them decided to set a personal example by not drinking themselves. . . . yet we in the S.I.M. took the stand, on the principle of 1 Cor.8.13, that we needed to draw the line against all drink, even that which was weak. He thanked us for what we had said, saying we were the teachers and they the pupils, and they would give further thought to the matter. . . . We just want to be sure that when the Cousers return, they will take the same attitude as the rest of us.\(^{43}\)

According to Beacham the SIM sharpened its attitude against the KEC at a Field Committee meeting in May 31 - June 4, 1947 and promulgated the following rules, aiming at changing the KEC’s cultural traditions:

1. Henceforth no Christian servants are to be employed except those who have taken a stand against drinking; tobacco; dancing; adult circumcision and such things of the old life.
2. Missionaries must not attend a Communion Service of a church which has not taken a stand against these same things.
3. When the Kambatta Bible and Teacher Training School is being conducted, one of the rules for admission will be definite separation from the worldly practices.\(^{44}\)

Without going into details it seems as if the critique of the SIM central leadership made an impact on Mr Couser when he returned from furlough in the USA. This is at least the essence of the words of the SIM General Director Playfair:

In 1947 when I returned I was still very much disappointed that the Kambatta-Gudeilla churches had not done away with beer. I wrote to Mr. Couser about it. Then after we were here in 1949, after the Lord so wonderfully worked, and thousand of new people were brought in, then Mr Couser wrote to me and said the church had decided to follow this teaching against drink. That delighted me because it is a rule of the SIM in every land.\(^{45}\)

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\(^{40}\) On SIM impact on Ato Biru in the Wollamo Ch. Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989 (Danish).
\(^{41}\) SIM-A: Beacham to Fellow-workers 1947.06.11. Fargher stresses the difference between the SIM work in West Africa and Ethiopia. Both Playfair and Beacham had been missionaries in Nigeria. Fargher 1996, pp.273, 295. On A. Roke, see Duff 1980, pp.190, 204 etc.
\(^{42}\) On borde, see below, p.98, Appendix II, p.2.
\(^{43}\) SIM-A: Beacham to Playfair 1946.12.19.
\(^{44}\) SIM-A: Beacham to Fellow-workers 1947.06.11.
\(^{45}\) SIM-A: Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, p.19, u.s.
That the KEC elders really took a stand against drinking approximately at the end of 1949, issued rules and exercised discipline in this matter, is witnessed to by the same source, for example by Ato Sabiro’s words:

Subero It is true that the Kambatta mahiber did drink for a long time. While we did our thought was we could get along this way. Then through all the mahiber we decided that we would not drink. Everyone heard it. Some continued to drink and we advised them. Finally those who refused to stop, we stopped from Communion.46

As the quotes in this section are from sources in the SIM archives and are recorded by SIM missionaries and SIM central leaders they are of great historical value. The tendency among SIM missionaries has often been to deny SIM’s influence on the KEC on drinking. From the quotes above this is however difficult to deny. Furthermore, rules on drinking in the KEC have been said not to appear before 1952. But as the sources quoted are from 1946 to 1951 rules were issued latest in 1951.47

**Dissonance in the KEC**

As argued by Festinger’s *Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, dissonance is an inevitable consequence at decision making. Furthermore, social groups can generate dissonance as pressure groups for behavioural change. After a change they can reduce dissonance and become groups to identify with. The dissonance experienced at behavioural changes is less if support is given by a social group.48

From what I have discussed above I infer that the SIM influenced the KEC elders to issue rules in the KEC against drinking alcohol. The KEC traditional behaviour on drinking was in such a strong dissonance to the SIM ethos, that a decision in line with the SIM expectations was enforced from c. the end of 1949. The main participants in this process were primarily not the local missionaries in the KEC, like Mr Couser, but the central leadership of the SIM, that is, Mr Beacham and Mr Playfair and possibly some other SIM missionaries. They put pressure on local missionaries and the KEC elders. My sources furthermore witness that the Wollamo Church was presented as an ideal example of a non-drinking and “pure church” to the KEC. I have earlier implied this tendency among SIM authors.49

Thus, in analogue with Festinger’s theory the Wollamo Church had a double influence on the KEC. Before KEC’s decision to prohibit drinking it functioned as a social pressure group on the KEC. After its decision to stop drinking it was a group to identify with and get support from. The rules on drinking were issued by elders of the KEC. The influence of the Sudan Interior Mission on the Kambata Evangelical Church in this matter is obvious, however.

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46 SIM-A: *Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station* 1951.11.28-9, p.20, u.s.
48 Festinger, 1962; see above, pp.27f.
49 SIM-A: Beacham to Playfair 1946.12.19; *Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station* 1951.11.28-9, p.19, u.s.; SG-A: Sabiro Wesero o.i.1998.01.30; see above, p.69.
Conclusions

The policy of the Emperor after his return to Ethiopia was to balance between maintaining Ethiopia’s independence and efforts to modernise the country. In his ambition he appreciated the modernising influence of recognised foreign missions. The EOC, however, regarded mission work as unnecessary in a country, which according to their frame of reference was already Christian.

In this context of multiple tensions the Imperial Decree on Missions became a handy instrument for the Emperor. It recognised EOC predominance but at the same time provided a legal basis for the missions, too. As the text of the Decree was vague, it made the missions even more dependent on the Emperor’s good-will.

The Decree hindered foreigners from communicating the Gospel in local languages and prevented translations of the Bible into the vernaculars. The consequence was that local missionaries in general were less contextualised than missionaries arriving before the Italian occupation were. They did not learn to communicate in local languages like their colleagues before the Imperial Decree but used languages which needed translation. Furthermore, their new legal platform and the appreciation showed by the Emperor to foreign missionaries, who obeyed the Decree, tempted them to neglect to build their dependence on local Christians.

The continuing oppression of Ethiopian Evangelicals in “open areas” after 1944 can be interpreted as a protest of the Amhara - EOC establishment in the peripheries. They reacted against the modernising efforts and liberal religious policy of the political centre, personified in the Emperor. The oppression forced the Evangelicals to unite and independent churches to seek support from outside.

The return of the SIM to the Kambata/Hadiya region reinforced traditional missionary teaching in schools and in the Bible-school at the KEC new centre in Bobicho, outside Hosanna. Regional conferences with foreigners as speakers were held in the KEC from 1949.

The “indigenised” missionary, Mr Couser, probably advised against a certain practice of infant baptism within the KEC after the war. He was probably also instrumental in the reorganisation of the KEC into “sevens” (districts), but more hesitant of a rapid enforcement of the SIM official ethos of a strict prohibition of the use of alcohol in the KEC.

Owing to pressure from the SIM central leaders, Beacham and Playfair, the KEC leading elders experienced increasing dissonance regarding their traditional drinking habits. The Wollamo Church was instrumental as a model and pressure group for change in this process. The dissonance among leading elders in the KEC influenced them to issue rules on drinking from c. the end of 1949.
Chapter Four

Alternative Ecumenical Strategies

The matrix and evolution of the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) necessarily belong to the background of church developments in the Kambata/Hadiya region. As a concerned Ethiopian partner the CEEC played an important part in the encouragement of indigenous Ethiopian Evangelical initiatives. It also took an active part in local mediation and subsequently in the support of the independent Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2). The CEEC is the clearest institutional expression of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.

In this chapter I will focus on the ecumenical atmosphere, which prevailed among Ethiopian Evangelicals after the Italian occupation. I will highlight some of its repercussions in the Kambata/Hadiya region. To be able to understand the missions’ frame of reference concerning comity and how this mentality influenced the independent-minded Ethiopians, I will start by analysing the Ethiopian Inter-Mission Council.

I will draw on primary material from the Swedish Evangelical Mission’s (SEM) and the Sudan Interior Mission’s (SIM) archives, and the CEEC minutes. In the last section I will pay particular attention to material which concerns the relationship of the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC) to the CEEC.1

A. Traditional Missionary Ecumenism

Missionaries from different Evangelical missionary societies have played a vital part in Ethiopian church history. What were their relations to each other like? One forum for the missionaries to meet in was the weekly prayer-meetings held in Addis Abeba. It was a time for mutual edification, but not for discussions of mission policy. These meetings started already in 1921.2

In September 1943, the Ethiopia Inter-Mission Council (EIMC) was established. It was a forum for the Evangelical missionary societies in Ethiopia to discuss principles of comity among themselves and to promote harmonious cooperation. Just like in colonies in Africa and in other continents “spheres of inter-

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1 From my Kambata/Hadiya perspective I will highlight material from the CEEC minutes, which hitherto has not been given special attention. This includes the CEEC minutes in Amharic (to 1954), which convey important nuances. (Sæverås seems to have used the CEEC minutes in Amharic sparsely). The GA-A: Arén 1972 interview with Dr Emmanuel Gebre Selassie also conveys interesting new aspects, when read from a Kambata/Hadiya perspective parallel to SIM primary sources.

2 Sandström 1988, p.36 (Swedish); SG-A: G. Arén o.i.1993.08.18.
est” or “comity areas”, i.e., areas which the missionaries considered belonged to a special mission and where other missions were supposed not to work, were discussed and clarified among the EIMC members in Ethiopia.³

As Ethiopia was not a colony, however, the Ethiopian Government did not officially recognise the EIMC, but gave permission for mission work with individual missionary societies on an ad hoc basis. This made the status of the EIMC unclear. Its decisions were based on mutual agreement among its members. From the beginning the Society for Propagating the Gospel (SPG), the AUPM, the BCMS, the SIM and the SEM were members of the EIMC. Later on the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM), the General Baptist Conference and the Mennonite Mission joined, whereas the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) and the Swedish Mission Bible-True Friends (SMBV) stayed outside.⁴

“Areas of comity” was a sensitive question for the Evangelical missionary societies in Ethiopia. The members of the EIMC tried to respect these areas. Violations against them were discussed. The SIM and the NLM, of which the latter was a newcomer in Ethiopia, had quite a discussion in 1949 on how to divide their areas of work in Sidamo and Gamu Gofa. The chairman of the EIMC once “... appealed to the two Missions to get together and come to an agreement to prevent further overlapping”.⁵

Mr Cotterell seems to hold the view that the relationship between the SIM and the NLM was “consistently good”.⁶ This is an ambiguous statement, which understates the actual tensions. It is more correct to describe the initial SIM - NLM relations after the Italian occupation as a kind of competition for areas and evangelists, which Mr Aasebø Rønne has described as “The Scramble for Southern Ethiopia”.⁷

The differences in SIM and NLM principles on education and in paying salaries to evangelists generated great problems between the two. The SIM leadership was arguing with NLM leaders on the value of the indigenous principles they opted for. The NLM, however, did not seem to have any scruples in employing evangelists from the “SIM-related revivals”. That the NLM model of paying salaries from mission funds became a motivating factor for evangelists to join the NLM work seems undeniable. The critique from the SIM against the Norwegians on this point mirrors the poor contact between the two missions at an initial stage.⁸

The SIM found the tensions in the KEC as embarrassing, having the Norwegians so close. The situation was considered a threat to the KEC by SIM leaders. Tensions between the SIM and the NLM were strong from at least 1949 to 1953.

³ GA-A: EIMC minutes 1943.09.30; 1943.10.29; CEEC minutes 1956, p.28. For a history of mission comity, see Beaver 1962.
⁴ GA-A: EIMC minutes 1943.09.30; 1943.10.29; CEEC minutes 1956, p.28.
⁵ GA-A: EIMC minutes 1949.04.18.
⁷ Aasebø Rønne 1998 (Norwegian); see above, p.17.
referred to as the “Norwegian Business” by the SIM. In 1951 Mr Playfair said that the NLM presence was: “... a thorne in our sides where they are ...” The Norwegians regarded the SIM as too self-confident. Agreements regulating the two missions’ “areas of work” were signed in November 1952 and in June 1953.

The relations between the missionaries of the SIM and of the SEM varied. There certainly was an irritation in the SEM, because of the alleged SIM policy to hinder the KEC and the Wollamo Church from attending the CEEC. Prominent leaders in the CEEC were probably considered by the SIM too closely connected with the SEM. The SEM missionaries were also discontented with some of the SIM missionaries’ “... propaganda on baptism”. SEM missionaries were prepared to join hands with the Presbyterians “... in the front against the rebaptisers”.

The relation between the SIM and the SMBV, which was not a member of the EIMC, became quite tense when the SMBV started to support Ato Biru Dubale in Wollamo financially. The SIM considered Wollamo as their “area”. The SIM seems to have approached the SMBV in 1951 and in 1953. The SIM questioned what the SMBV was doing in Wollamo. As Aasebø Rønne suggests, Ato Biru was also approached personally in this matter by the SIM.

There were thus, forums to meet in and develop organised fellowship among the Evangelical missionaries in Ethiopia after the Italian occupation. But there were also severe tensions among them. That these tensions were experienced as problematic by the Ethiopian Evangelicals is illustrated by a quotation from the CEEC minutes in 1952, where the Ethiopian participants complain on how:

The difference between the missions in Sidamo spoils the unity of the Evangelical church.

There were also tensions between different Lutheran missions inside and outside the Mekane Yesus groups. Their joint forum was the “Lutheran Missions Committee of Ethiopia” (LMC), which held its first meeting on December 31, 1951. Dr Gustav Arén summarises the situation after the return of the missions well:

In September 1943 they formed the Inter-Mission Council to promote comity relations among themselves by delimiting their various spheres of activity and safeguarding their particular confessional interests. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church had contrary aims, indigenous co-operation and unity of faith.

9 SIM-A: Extracts from Letters from G.W. Playfair 1951.12.29, c.c. Beacham, Helser, Kirk; Joyce Playfair to Beacham 1952.03.18 (quoting two letters from Playfair 1952.03.01, 06); Playfair to Thompson 1952.06.28; Abba Gole to SIM in Addis Abeba, Meskerem 1945 E.C. (Sept.1952, Amharic and English).
12 Arén and Dr Fride Hylander mention that SIM had this policy. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1948, p.5; Hylander 1954, pp.271f. (Swedish).
13 SEM-A: Arén to Månsson 1951.10.03 (Swedish). Arén’s latter quote refers to Lundgren.
14 Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989, p.113 (Danish).
15 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, p.15, no.8 (Amharic). Missions referred to are SIM and NLM.
The CEEC a Remarkable Ecumenical Movement

A clear sign of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity among Ethiopian Evangelical Christians were the conferences arranged annually by the Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) from 1944 to 1963. Here Ethiopians from different parts of the country met irrespective of the denominational backgrounds of the related foreign missions. The CEEC met in different places, either in Addis Abeba or in western Ethiopia. The two first CEECs were held in Nakamte, December 1944 and January 1946. The CEECs in 1947-49, 1952, 1955-63 were held in Addis Abeba.18

The initiative to form these conferences was purely Ethiopian. The invitation to join the conference was made to all Evangelical groups in Ethiopia. Missionaries did not attend in the beginning. The first CEEC in Nakamte 1944 was mentioned by the SEM missionary Dr Erik Söderström: “...the different Evangelical groups from the whole of Ethiopia have been invited to send their chosen representatives there. We missionaries are not invited and I think this is good.” He was enthusiastic at the thought of a united “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”.19

The Mekane Yesus groups and the Presbyterian groups were represented at every CEEC from 1944 to 1963. The KEC was represented in 1947, 1948, 1952, 1955 and in 1956, that is, all the conferences held in Addis Abeba from 1947 to 1956 except for the one in 1949.20

The Wollamo Church was represented just once, in 1955, by an “observer”. The SIM-related Gemu/Chencha Evangelical Church was represented in 1952 and 1955. The KEC-2 attended all the CEEC meetings in one way or another from 1955 to 1963, except for the one in 1962.21

What attracted the KEC to attend the CEEC in Addis Abeba five out of six possible times 1947-56? After all the CEEC leadership was dominated by Evangelicals related to the Lutheran and Presbyterian missions.22

As will be recalled there were contacts on a personal level between the KEC elders and the network of the Evangelical Congregation even before the Italian occupation. Dr Emmanuel Gebre Selassie claims that after the Italian occupation there were first informal meetings in Addis Abeba every third month, where also SIM Christians attended. Then these developed into meetings every sixth month.

18 Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Qes Badima were not present at the two first CEEC in Nakamte. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1944-63.
19 SEM-A: Söderström to Eriksson 1944.11.25 (Swedish). Sæverås quotes a similar letter by Söderström to Dahlberg 1944.11.24. Sæverås 1974, pp.41f.
20 These simple statistics show the importance of the CEEC for the KEC at this time. The CEEC meetings in Wollega were not easy to attend for the KEC, due to travelling problems.
21 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1944-63. Sæverås gives the impression that the Wollamo Church was represented in 1947 (and onwards). This was not the case according to the minutes of the CEEC. Cf. Sæverås 1974, p.44.
22 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1944-63.
and eventually to once a year. As we have seen this is confirmed by SIM missionaries, who witness that SIM-related Evangelicals met other Ethiopian Evangelicals in the capital to solve common issues in 1942 and probably in 1941, too.\textsuperscript{23}

From what I have said above, I infer that the KEC Evangelicals had an established position in the fellowship of the Ethiopian Evangelicals. They had similar concerns and were sharing their experiences with others. They felt at home in the CEEC and were accepted as full members.

A pragmatic reason for joining the CEEC was to gain support from its representatives in contacts with the Government. The Evangelical Congregation in Addis Abeba (later on called AAMY) had a kind of executive function in relation to the CEEC. On behalf of its sister churches in the peripheries, it followed up issues in Addis Abeba decided upon at the CEEC. Several ministers in Haile Selassie’s Government were related to the Evangelical Congregation. The most famous is Ato Emmanuel Abraham.\textsuperscript{24}

In 1944 Ato Emmanuel Abraham was elected President of the Evangelical Congregation. He was able to pursue his connections with the Ethiopian Government for another 30 years(!), working as an ambassador or a government minister.\textsuperscript{25} SIM leaders were well aware of Ato Emmanuel Abraham and were glad to have him at government level. He was characterised as “... an active member of the Swedish Church here, ... and a friend of Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie”.\textsuperscript{26}

It is relevant to repeat the point that the Evangelical Congregation (AAMY) in Addis Abeba created a unique indigenous network, which the Evangelical Christians attending the CEEC could make use of. This point is well illustrated by the CEEC minutes in 1947, where the KEC is recorded as having applied to the conference for help in gaining religious liberty in their province. It was:

"... resolved to request the Addis Abeba Evangelical Church to appoint a man to bring their difficulties before the Emperor."\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{23} GA-A: Arén 1972, pp.6, 9; 1999, pp.534f.; see above, pp.72ff. Mr Laurie Davison and Mrs Lily Davison.
\textsuperscript{24} Others were, for example, Ato Abebe Retta, Blatta Dawit Okbazgie and Haddis Alemayu. SG-A: G. Arén o.i.1994.01.18.; see Spencer 1984, pp.219, 314. As already mentioned, from 1950 the Evangelical Congregation’s name was Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus (AAMY). See above, p.72, n.108.
\textsuperscript{25} Emmanuel Abraham 1995; Arén 1999, p.535, n.65; SG-A: Arén to Grenstedt 1995.10.11.
\textsuperscript{26} SIM-A: Beacham to Playfair 1945.06.29.
\textsuperscript{27} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1947, pp.4.f.; see above, pp.71ff., 80f.
The “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”

As has been mentioned earlier, it is a question of definition as to whether the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” (“EEC”) was established as a church or not. The first CEEC in Nakamte in 1944 was characterised by Dr Söderström as “. . . a consultation on founding a common Evangelical church”.28 As the Amharic minutes of the next CEEC in 1946 are designated “concerning the Ethiopian Evangelical Church’s matter at the conference arranged in Nakamte” (sele Etiyopia Woneglawit Betekristiyan guday leqemt lay yetederege gubae), Ethiopian Evangelicals obviously regarded their fellowship as a church at this time.29

Missionaries, too, in those days were expressing themselves as if they regarded “the EEC” as a church in its own right. It was for example important to the SEM that the first ordained pastors in Wollega in 1952 should be recognised by “the Ethiopian Evangelical Church” in formal writing.30 The SIM missionaries referred to it as the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - the “E.E.C.”.31 “The EEC” was a church, which administered the Word and Sacraments and thus qualifies for recognition from a Lutheran point of view. In fact it seems odd to maintain that the church, “the EEC”, which Rev. Lundgren describes as a living and challenging entity in 1953 would later not be qualified as a church in a real sense.32

As Dr Olav Sæverås has emphasised, however, gradually the denominational differences became more and more accentuated at the expense of Ethiopian Evangelical unity. The ambitions of the “EEC” and the Evangelical missions had been developing on more or less parallel lines from 1944 to 1953. From the middle of the 1950’s a new awareness of denominational differences became prevalent among Ethiopian Evangelicals.33

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28 SEM-A: Söderström to Eriksson 1944.11.25 (Swedish); Sæverås 1974, pp.46ff.; GA-A: Arén 1984, pp.6ff.; Bakke 1987 pp.140ff. For a discussion on terminology, see above p.23.
29 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1946 (Amharic); see Arén 1999, p.535.
30 SEM-A: Arén to Lundgren 1952.06.17 (Swedish).
31 SIM-A: Notes of Meeting held at Addis Abeba 1952.03.05, u.s.
32 Lundgren 1954 (Swedish); see Lundgren 1960 (Swedish); see Arén 1999, p.535.
33 Sæverås 1974, pp.43ff., 72ff.; see below, pp.110ff.
Conclusions
After the Italian occupation there were forums in Addis Abeba for the returning missionaries to meet in and enjoy fellowship. There were, however, initially also real tensions and a competition for “areas of work”, “spheres of interest” and promising evangelists. This confused Ethiopian Evangelicals, who occasionally were motivated to change their mission affiliation from one mission to another owing to differences in financial and educational support.

The missionaries brought their colonial framework of comity agreements with them to independent Ethiopia. They had to negotiate with the Ethiopian Government for permission to do mission work in certain areas on an individual basis, however.

The KEC elders had an established position in the fellowship among Ethiopian Evangelicals since the more informal ecumenical meetings from c.1941. When these meetings developed into yearly conferences of what was regarded to be an evolving “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”, the KEC elders chose to participate. In fact they took part in the CEEC in Addis Abeba five out of six times between 1947-56. This shows the relevance these conferences and the wider Ethiopian Evangelical fellowship had to them.

Besides spiritual fellowship and a sharing of ecclesiastical concerns, they gained support in issues concerning religious freedom in their region. As the CEEC was a purely Ethiopian initiative, and there were no financial motives behind these gatherings, (no missionaries were invited to attend), the CEEC can be described as the clearest institutional expression of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.
Chapter Five

The Formation of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2

In Chapter Three I have illustrated how the return of the missionaries of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) after the Italian occupation made an impact on the evolving Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC).¹

Not everybody in that local Christian community felt satisfied with the new regulations issued by the KEC elders. Tensions arose and it is to this development, which resulted in a split and the formation of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2), that I now turn my attention.

These developments have not passed unnoticed in local church history. I will particularly focus on the factors which inspired some KEC leaders to break away and form a church of their own.

I make my own assessment of the information offered by the local Kale Hiywot Church’s (KHC) historian, Ato Tamru Abamu, primary material of the SIM archives, the minutes of the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) and the Church Officers’ minutes of the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation (AAMY).²

A. The Kambata Evangelical Church in 1951

The SIM and the KEC Positions

In 1951 the SIM had been well established in the area around Hosanna for six years. But as we already have seen its influence on the KEC after the Italian occupation went even further back.³

The leading missionary in Hosanna was the experienced Mr Couser, who had developed his contacts well with the leading elders of the KEC. In fact he was himself regarded as one of the four leading elders of the KEC by Mr Playfair. Several sources witness that:

. . . the Sudan Interior Mission representative Mr. Couser, is one of the four leading elders and in filling a double capacity, it is rightfully claimed that in case of a church quarrel such as the present one, he is unable to judge between brethren when he himself belongs to one of the parties of the dispute.⁴

¹ See above, pp.82ff.
² The AAMY minutes in Amharic have probably not been used in scholarly work before.
³ See above, pp.73, 81f.
⁴ SIM-A: Playfair to the Members of the Kambatta Church and Those who Broke Away from the Main Body, n.d. (Dec.1951?); see Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, pp.1, 3, u.s.; Cotterell 1973, p.135.
Together with “the Big Three” he made, what was sometimes even called “the Big Four”. Up to 1951 the dominating Ethiopian leaders in the KEC, still were “the Big Three”: Abba Gole, Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro - all Hadiya. Abba Gole seems to have been the outstanding leader in the KEC at this time and his relative Ato Shigute and Ato Sabiro were still the KEC representatives at the CEEC in Addis Abeba.

One effort of the missionaries had been to support the KEC’s quest for increased religious freedom. As has been noted the situation improved a bit on this point in 1950, but just temporarily.

In 1951 the centre of the KEC was situated in Bobicho, close to Hosanna. The system of elders and so-called “sevens” (districts) made communication possible between the KEC centre and its periphery also in times of pressure. The church was now organised in six “sevens” (districts) - Lemu, Soro, Ilgira, Kacha, Dinika and Amburse.

The number of congregations was approximately 145. If we count 100 members a church, there were approximately 14,500 members. The church had since its origin been mainly based among the Hadiya but soon spread also to the Kambata. In 1951 the number of Kambata congregations was increasing remarkably. On one occasion in late 1951, it was enthusiastically stated that people in the area around Durame turned to Christ at a rate of a 100 per day.

The changes in the KEC from the return of the SIM missionaries in the early 1940’s up to 1951 can be expressed by words of the EECMY team investigating the KEC-2 in 1961:

... the S.I.M. missionaries through the help of the nearby congregation in Lemu started working to organize the Kambata congregations into one body.

These changes and a new teaching, which expected a moral behaviour in line with the SIM ethos were, as we recall, reinforced by the central leadership of the SIM from approximately 1947 and promulgated by the KEC leading elders from c. the end of 1949. The new teaching also contained the seeds of friction and future split.

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5 SIM-A: Playfair to Beacham 1952.01.16.
6 SIM-A: Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, u.s.; see Cotterell 1973, pp.134f.; see above, pp.67, 73f.
7 See above, p.81; SIM-A: Thompson, Notes on the Visit of H.E. Dejazmach Asserat Kassa 1950.12.27.
8 SIM-A: Excerpts from Mr Playfair’s Kambatta Letter 1951.11.10.
9 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, no.9 (Amharic and English); SIM-A: Playfair to Cain 1951.11.19; see Cotterell 1973, p.134. Playfair and Cotterell speak of 145 congregations in 1951 and 17 of these followed Ato Abebe. The CEEC minutes mention 133 congregations in the KEC and 17 of these were following Ato Abebe. I prefer the SIM sources in this case.
11 GA-A: Amare 1961, p.1; see below, pp.140ff., Appendix II, p.1
12 See above, pp.82ff., below, pp.95ff., 108.
B. The Split of the Kambata Evangelical Church in 1951

Reinforced Dissonance in the KEC

According to Festinger’s Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, resistance to a behavioural change can be stronger than the dissonance generated by a pressure for change. The strength of such a resistance depends on how important the behaviour is for a certain group. In order to avoid dissonance, such a group will gather like-minded and thus strengthen its own position.14

Resistance from such a group to adapt to the new rules of the KEC can be identified at the CEEC in Addis Abeba in January 1952. The KEC elders Ato Shigute, Ato Sabiro and a newcomer Ato Qelbero Wayero accused “one of the former lead-

13 The sketch-maps (no.4, 6-11) are made by myself and are therefore approximate. Bold colour marks a “seven”, e.g. Lemu. SIM-A: Excerpts from Mr Playfair’s Kambatta Letter 1951.11.10.
14 Festinger 1962. See above pp.27, 84.
ers” of dividing the congregations and of causing disputes and problems in the KEC. 17 of the 133 churches in the KEC were said to be following him. The leader accused was in fact Ato Abebe Bushero. 15 Who was this man and what had happened in the KEC?

Ato Abebe was one of the Hadiya pioneers of the KEC. As we have seen, he was baptised in 1937 together with Abba Gole. He is mentioned as one of the leading elders in the KEC with considerable authority. He and Ato Bekele were, for example, as elders authorised to baptise. 16 In fact splitting tendencies seem to have started already c.1946, when the leading elders did not permit the bright Ato Abebe, Ato Bekele and Ato Retabo to go on with their education. Even if this was more of a private matter at this early hour, it affected their continued relationship. 17

Ato Abebe apparently was a strong and eloquent person, who mastered Amharic well. As late as 1949 he was sent by the KEC to approach the Emperor in the matter of gaining religious freedom for the KEC in the region together with Abba Gole, who after some time was replaced by Ato Shigute. Before this enterprise Ato Abebe had been temporarily reconciled to them. 18

Ato Abebe had, as a “deacon” of the KEC, the courage to voice his own opinion together with his colleagues Ato Bekele Nunamo and Ato Retabo Amele. He was critical of the strong centralisation of the church administration to the four senior elders in Hosanna and their supervision of money. 19

In quite a short time, from approximately the end of 1949 to the end of 1951, his ideas had gained the support of 17 congregations of the KEC. They formed a group, which now opposed the leading elders. In the Soro “Seven” there were eleven congregations, in the Amburse “Seven” three congregations, in the Lemu “Seven” two congregations and in the Dinika “Seven” one congregation, which followed Ato Abebe. The 128 churches of the large KEC body had the support of the local SIM missionaries. Almost 12% of the KEC churches supported the separate line of Ato Abebe in 1951. 20

From the fact that the issue was brought to the CEEC in 1952, I infer that the split was clearly annoying to the KEC elders. I will now continue by analysing the reasons of the conflict in depth.

15 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, pp.15, 17, no.9 (Amharic). Ato Qelbero Wayero from Kidgisa later on became the second President of the Kambata Synod after Ato Erjabo Handiso. See below, pp.218, 221, 229f., 239.
17 SIM-A: Notes on two Days of Meetings held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, pp.2, 8, u.s. Cotterell traces the roots of the split to conflicts on education. Cotterell 1973, p.135. There were, however, stronger factors like finance and drinking traditions, see below, pp.97f., 100.
Reasons for the Conflict

Several factors have been mentioned as reasons for the conflict in the KEC. With Ato Tamru I will explore the issue at three levels.

The first level of the conflict was the effort to “. . . organise the Kambata congregations into one body”, which was not an easy procedure.\textsuperscript{21} And as the KEC was growing, new leaders were being elected to the new “sevens”. This process of repeated elections created a breeding-ground for misunderstandings and suspicion among the different parts of the KEC with its complicated ethnic structure.\textsuperscript{22}

A second and more important level of the conflict was the centralisation of the KEC leadership to the three leading elders around the Dubancho Congregation and later to Hosanna/Bobicho. This centralisation was complicated by the return of the SIM missionaries in 1946 and the continued growth of the KEC in the midst of local persecution.

It was one thing to lead the indigenous KEC from Dubancho in the beginning of the 1940’s, it was another matter when the missionaries returned and brought new resources with them in 1946. One of the critical points of the splinter group was to accuse: “. . . the four senior elders of taking too much authority upon themselves.”\textsuperscript{23}

In this connection the handling of collected money from the KEC congregations for evangelism should be mentioned. This money was brought to Bobicho and administered by the leading elders. This procedure was explicitly questioned by Ato Abebe and his fellow “deacons”. Instead they recommended that each “seven” should collect, supervise and distribute money on its own. Financial irregularities were implied and letters were written to the “sevens” so that collected money would not be distributed to the leading elders.\textsuperscript{24}

When Ato Abebe’s idea was presented to the leading elders, it created a lot of discussion. It was a question which touched all the “sevens”, all the congregations and ordinary people in the KEC. It challenged the old leadership structure of a few leading elders. The leader of this opposition against the centralisation of power and finances to a few elders in Bobicho was Ato Abebe Bushero.\textsuperscript{25}

A third level of the conflict was the process of communicating new ideas and new teaching from Hosanna to the different “sevens”. This problem was obviously not properly assessed by the KEC/SIM. When the new teaching affected ordinary people and was not understood or accepted by them, problems occurred. This ap-

\textsuperscript{21} GA-A: Amare May 1961, p.1; see below, Appendix II, p.1.
\textsuperscript{22} KHC-A: Tamru 1984, p.33 (Amharic).
\textsuperscript{24} KHC-A: Tamru 1984, pp.36f. (Amharic); SIM-A: Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, u.s.
\textsuperscript{25} KHC-A: Tamru 1984, pp.36f. (Amharic). According to Ato Tamru Abamu the three who came up with this idea were Ato Abebe Bushero, Ato Bekele Nunamo and Ato Retabo Amele, who were “deacons”. See Cotterell 1973, pp.134ff.
parently was the case when new moral rules were promulgated by the KEC elders from approximately the end of 1949 and onwards.\textsuperscript{26}

In November 1951 Abba Gole had the following to say about Ato Abebe’s relation to the rules on drinking:

\ldots Abebe and Bekele \ldots started a new mahiber; made up of some who were drinking \ldots . He made this mahiber of these who had gone against the rule of the mahiber.\textsuperscript{27}

As hinted at above the rules against drinking included the customary drink of \textit{borde}.\textsuperscript{28} This drink was a common local drink, used even for children as gruel. Though slightly fermented, it seemed fairly harmless and aggravated the reaction of ordinary people. The drinking of \textit{borde} became a symbolic top of an indigenous cultural iceberg, which also included polygamy.\textsuperscript{29} That the conflict had strong cultural connotations is furthermore emphasised by the words of the KEC elders at the CEEC in January 1952. Ato Abebe was accused of having:

\ldots become leader of members who can not leave habits and evil things which they had in the old time, when there was no faith \ldots .\textsuperscript{30}

In fact, a main reason for the split was this clash between the observance of traditional customs and habits of the Kambata/Hadiya region and the stern rules promulgated against some of them by the KEC elders. These rules occur in almost every source or are alluded to as a main reason for the split.\textsuperscript{31}

As the new rules were effectively distributed by the elders and the violation of them led to disciplinary punishment, they inevitably created a reaction among ordinary people, especially the one on not drinking \textit{borde}. A person who violated the new rules was prohibited from taking Holy Communion and he and his children were even said to be disallowed from attending the SIM schools.\textsuperscript{32}

\begin{itemize}
\item See above, p.83f.
\item SIM-A: \textit{Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station} 1951.11.28-9, p.19, u.s.
\item Peter argues that \textit{borde} was used by poor people instead of milk etc. It would add sociological dimensions to the conflict. Though possible, it is hard to verify. Cf. Peter 1999, pp.344ff.
\item SIM-A: \textit{Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station} 1951.11.28-9, p.19, u.s.; SG-A: Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1995.08.30; MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, pp.5f.; see below, Appendix II, p.2.
\item GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, p.17, no.9 (Amharic). A translation into English of the 1952 CEEC minutes signed: “Copyright. The Secretary of the Congregation. Signature HAGOS” is another CEEC source. In this translation of the CEEC minutes the accusation is formulated: “9. In the members of Kambata Evangelical Church’s there was some disput. The man who made this was excommunicated because he is not following the Commandments of Jesus such as, drunkenness, comitting idolatry and so on. His name is Abebe Bushero.” (sic!) GA-A: Hagos CEEC 1952.01.14. The secretary of the CEEC in 1952 was Ato Hagos Twelde Medhin. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, p.15.
\item SIM-A: \textit{Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station} 1951.11.28-9, u.s.; Excerpts from Mr Playfair’s Kambatta Letter 1951.11.14; GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, p.17 (the rules alluded to); CEEC minutes 1955, p.24, no.10; CEEC minutes 1956, p.26, no.3 etc.
\item SIM-A: \textit{Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station} 1951.11.28-9, u.s.
\end{itemize}
Two Alternative Reasons?

Another possible reason for the split is the alleged inconsistency in the teaching on infant baptism in the KEC.³³ As the KEC-2 after 1954 still practised baptism by immersion in a river, when “the person to be baptized was big enough to go himself to the river”, and as the teaching on baptism is said to have been “diffuse” as late as in 1970 in the new Kambata Synod, infant baptism is ambiguous as a reason for the conflict in 1951.³⁴ Different baptism practices seem later on to have been in use side by side in the KEC-2, when the contact with the EECMY was reinforced, at least in the way baptisms were carried out.³⁵

What seems to be a convincing argument in favour of even an early KEC practice of infant baptisms are Abba Gole’s words at a later reconciliation venture:

But as to point one, he said that there was a time that they used to baptize their infants, but now that had it in their by-laws that it is only those who believed on Jesus and then of their own volition asked for baptism, would we baptize them . . . . ³⁶

The distinguished early leader of the KEC, Abba Gole, is the one who made this statement in 1960. It is witnessed to by a SIM missionary. It seems to me to be strong evidence of an early KEC practice of what could be characterised as a kind of infant baptism.

My oral sources also give witness to an early practice of infant baptism in the young KEC. Qes Asfaw Qelbero mentions the hot springs at “Bishan Guracha”, between Adilo and Alaba as a place where early on also infants were baptised in the indigenous KEC. Beer-drinking was then part of the local culture, too.³⁷

A certain practice of infant baptism probably had its roots in the EOC legacy rather than in Mr Duff’s teaching. As argued above, Duff obviously did not practise infant baptism in the KEC. His views on baptism may have reinforced the first KEC elders’ belief in EOC infant baptism as a valid form of baptism for some time. I have suggested that Mr Couser advised against infant baptism.³⁸

It is, however, revealing that the KEC-2 leaders in 1955-56 were more eager to stress the differences in drinking habits between the KEC-2 and the KEC than the differences concerning infant baptism. From a tactical point of view the latter would have been wiser to emphasise, when trying to get support from “Lutherans” and “Presbyterians”. When the KEC-2 representatives understood this, infant baptism became an attractive argument for the KEC-2 in the discussions with the CEEC members.³⁹

³⁵ Cotterell 1969-70, p.104, n.51; see the references to n.34 above.
³⁶ KM-A: Hodges to Donald 1960.07.18.
³⁸ See above, pp.62f., 81f.
My conclusion, therefore, is that the question of infant baptism was not the main cause of the initial conflict between the KEC and the splinter groups in 1951. As argued above, Baptist teaching was reinforced early on in the KEC, probably with the return of Mr Couser from c.1945.40

A second alternative reason to the conflict, which I also exclude, is ethnic differences. In the early 1950’s the KEC had become too firmly rooted in the different ethnic groups in the region. The split in fact cut right through the different ethnic groups, even if the KEC from its origin was stronger among the Hadiya. As will be recalled the leader of the splinter group, Ato Abebe, was himself Hadiya as were the three leading elders in the “main group”.41

A Summary Assessment of the Conflict

In Chapter Three, I have argued that the SIM ethos demanded a change of drinking habits in the KEC. The pressure from the SIM led to a change of view among the KEC leading elders. This was visible in the promulgated rules from approximately the end of 1949.42

These rules, however, generated new dissonance among larger groups of KEC members, who were affected by the church discipline. The rules simply clashed too much with the Kambata/Hadiya traditional way of living. With Festinger we can say that these groups, instead of changing their behaviour, were united by their common dissonance.43 When the strong Ato Abebe Bushero and his fellow deacons challenged the KEC elders on the unpopular collecting of money to Bobicho, they could connect this matter to the frustration already felt with the moral rules.

My conclusion is accordingly that the three levels of the conflict shown above coincided and prepared the ground for Ato Abebe’s splinter group. The most important was the third level: the lack of communication in the case of the promulgation of new ethical rules.44 These rules were not understood by ordinary people. Ato Abebe’s challenging of the Bobicho leadership and their centralisation of power and money coincided with the opposition to the new rules. The result was that his own group became a strong and popular alternative.

Here was a chance to avoid giving up customary traditions and to exercise local control over collected money. As the leaders of this splinter group were the well-known Ato Abebe Bushero together with the strong Ato Bekele Nunamo and Ato Retabo Amele, the challenge was real. The NLM presence in nearby Sidamo made the SIM situation complicated. Its policy of paying salaries to indigenous workers and evangelists made NLM an attractive alternative among KEC members.

“drinking”. Baptism is not mentioned as a splitting factor by the Kambata churches. In 1961 the order is baptism as the prima causa, then drinking. See below, pp.114ff., 143.

40 Mr Couser was not in favour of infant baptism. SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 2000.06.28; see above, pp.63, 81f.
41 See above, pp.61, 65, 96.
42 See above, pp.82ff.
43 See above, pp.27, 84, 95.
44 Bosch on “poor communication”, see above, p.25.
Ato Abebe’s movement was a challenge to the KEC leading elders but in fact also to the SIM leaders, who were behind them. The group of 17 churches under Ato Abebe’s leadership was the embryo of the KEC-2. Indeed, it was a real threat to the unity of the KEC.

C. Attempts at Mediation

The SIM Tries to Solve the Conflict
The SIM tried to solve the conflicts in the KEC but was not very successful. After all, the centralisation of the KEC to Bobicho/Hosanna and the new moral rules were parts of the policy and teaching of the SIM. The local SIM missionaries’ support of “the Big Three”, and with Mr Couser regarded as one of the leading elders, made the SIM part of the conflict. This added to the problem so that the local missionaries were not able to bring about a solution.45

An earnest effort at reconciliation was made on November 28-29, 1951 by the SIM General Director Playfair. He used all his energy to find a solution to the conflict. But obviously he did not succeed completely. The CEEC minutes of January 1952 tell that: “. . . the Sudan Interior Mission has tried to reconcile the conflict until they were exhausted.”46

Ato Abebe’s group was undoubtedly not satisfied with the SIM’s efforts at reconciliation. On the contrary, they saw the SIM as part of the conflict. One of the points they reacted to was the lack of respect for their own culture and the right to decide for themselves. To settle the matter something more indigenous was needed than a SIM General Director and his final “written judgement”, which he sent to the KEC after he had left the region. Moreover, Ato Abebe’s group probably found his solution too much in favour of the so-called “main group”.47

The KEC Elders Ask the CEEC for Reconciliation
The KEC was attending the CEEC for a third time in Addis Abeba in January 1952.48 The KEC elders raised an item on the agenda, asking for advice as to how to put an end to the conflict, which Ato Abebe Bushero was said to have started. The elders pleaded with the CEEC: “. . . Reconcile us or help us with a spiritual judgement!”49

As has been learnt the KEC elders were accustomed to turn to the CEEC and the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation’s elders for advice and assistance in

45 See above, p.93. The splinter group was said to be “fed up” with Mr Couser. SIM-A: Ex- tracts from Letters from G.W. Playfair 1951.12.29, c.c. Beacham, Helser, Kirk.
46 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, no.9 (Amharic); Cotterell 1973, pp.134ff.; SIM-A: Notes on two Days of Meetings held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, u.s.
47 SIM-A: Playfair to the Members of the Kambatta Church and Those who Broke Away from the Main Body, n.d. (Dec.1951?). Playfair seems to have believed that he reached a perma- nent solution of the conflict in the KEC. SIM-A: Playfair to Beacham 1952.01.30; cf. Cotte- rell 1973, pp.134ff.
48 Earlier attendance was in 1947 and in 1948 (by coincidence!). GA-A: CEEC minutes 1947; CEEC minutes 1948; see above, pp.89f.
49 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, no.9 (Amharic).
times of trouble. They saw the CEEC as a natural indigenous platform. Therefore, it is pertinent to suggest that the elders in the KEC understood that the Ethiopian CEEC representatives were more skilled in the indigenous art of reconciliation than foreign missionaries were. They thus turned to the CEEC with their proposition. Most probably Ato Abebe’s separate group demanded an indigenous intervention by the CEEC. As previously suggested, Ato Abebe was acquainted with some of the leaders in the CEEC as he had visited Addis Abeba at times.\textsuperscript{50}

The CEEC members were at first eager to call Ato Abebe directly to the conference and to hear his version. As they realised that there was a shortage of time, they asked the AAMY President Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie together with elders of the AAMY church council to do the job of reconciliation. That meant: to listen to both sides, to have contacts with the SIM workers in Kambata, to reconcile the parties and to bring a report to the next CEEC in 1953. As indicated above, the AAMY representatives gained an executive function on behalf of the CEEC.\textsuperscript{51}

To sum up: the result of the KEC plea for help was that Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was authorised by the CEEC to take the initiative together with the AAMY church council. It emphasises the strategic role that the AAMY still had among Ethiopian Evangelicals in 1952. The contact between the CEEC and the SIM, which was characterised as the agency which: “. . . lit the gospel light in the Kambata Awraja”, still seemed positive. There was nothing mentioned of “areas” or “comity” among the Ethiopians at the CEEC in 1952. It was a very natural thing for the CEEC to give its support in order to alleviate the conflict in the KEC.\textsuperscript{52}

\textbf{The Attempt of the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation}

The 1952 CEEC ended on January 18. A week later the AAMY held a reconciliation session for the two KEC groups in Addis Abeba. The KEC’s “main group” was represented by Ato Shigute, Ato Sabiro and Ato Qelbero Wayero. The splinter group was represented by Ato Abebe and Ato Retabo. An additional resource person was Ato Mersha Tesema from Dodoba, who served as “. . . a reminder and a helper of the peace . . . .”\textsuperscript{53}

The AAMY was represented by Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, Ato Gebre Mikael Fisihayé, Ato Reda Tsadik, Ato Zacharias Tekle, Ato Hagos Twelde Medhin and the SEM missionary Rev. Per Stjärne(!).\textsuperscript{54}

The reason for the split was defined in terms of the management of the KEC and the lack of a constitution. For the remedy of these problems the AAMY gave the two groups 30 copies of the constitutio-

\textsuperscript{50} Ato Abebe met with Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Ato Hagos (Twelde Medhin) in 1950, asking for help in matters of approaching the Emperor. SIM-A: Notes on Two Days of Meetings Held on Hosana Station 1951.11.28-9, u.s.; see above, pp.90, 96.

\textsuperscript{51} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, no.9. (Amharic and English); see above, p.90.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} SIM-A: Donald to Cain and Couser 1952.02.27; AAMY-A: AAMY Church Officers’ minutes, pp.177-79, Tir 12, 1944 E.C. (Jan.1952, Amharic).

\textsuperscript{54} As this was a regular meeting of the AAMY Church Officers, and Stjärne was one of them, he took part in the session. AAMY-A: AAMY Church Officers’ minutes, pp.177-79, Tir 12, 1944 E.C. (Jan.1952, Amharic).
tion of the AAMY. The idea was that this would explain the function of a church constitution to the KEC and help it to prepare a constitution of its own.\(^{55}\)

The agreement reached by the AAMY was based on two ideas. The first was a rearrangement of the KEC into a democratic pattern with elders to be elected each second year. The second idea was that the KEC should receive two representatives from the AAMY, who would go to Hosanna and complete the peace at the time of the KEC’s elections. One of the persons who explicitly was asked to engage himself in this matter was Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie.\(^{56}\)

It seems as if the SIM in fact had been uninformed of the KEC’s actions until the end of February. The news of these “. . . quite radical changes” in the KEC naturally led to an intense activity among the SIM leaders in Ethiopia.\(^{57}\) After all, the KEC’s polity was on its way to being transformed, without the SIM knowing about it(!).

The SIM missionary Rev. Donald recommended a cautious approach to the new situation.\(^{58}\) Mr Playfair, however, accused the “E.E.C.” and the SEM of using the situation to their advantage. He affirmed that he and others would try to “. . . bring them to their senses”.\(^{59}\) He obviously regarded the AAMY reconciliation as an abuse of missionary comity principles, which he regarded as valid for Ethiopians, too. In his frustration that his own efforts for reconciliation had been disregarded in favour of indigenous initiatives, he threatened to take the following measures:

If matters gone to the worst, we shall have to tell Charney if he does not withdraw and urge all his people to withdraw, we shall no longer regard his territory but go in where and when we like. It was one of his men who pointed the Norwegians to our territory.\(^{60}\)

### The “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” Meets the SIM

Representatives of the SIM and “E.E.C. church officials” met on March 5, 1952 to discuss the “Relationships in the Kambatta Churches”.\(^{61}\) Ato Emmanuel Abraham and Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie represented the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” and Mr Playfair, Mr Cain, Mr Borlase and Mr Couser represented the SIM. The reason given for the KEC split was characterised as a “. . . lack of proper administration in the Kambatta churches . . . .” The SIM seems to have questioned if the KEC elders and the splinter group were acting on behalf of the whole Church, when they approached the 1952 CEEC on constitutional matters.\(^{62}\)

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55 Ibid.
57 SIM-A: Donald to Cain and Couser 1952.02.27; Notes of Meeting Held at Addis Abeba 1952.03.05, u.s.; Joyce Playfair to Beacham 1952.03.18 (quoting two letters from Playfair 1952.03.01, 06).
58 SIM-A: Donald to Cain and Couser 1952.02.27.
59 SIM-A: Joyce Playfair to Beacham 1952.03.18 (quoting two letters from Playfair 1952.03.01, 06).
60 Ibid.
61 SIM-A: Notes of Meeting Held at Addis Abeba 1952.03.05, u.s.
62 Ibid.
The outcome of the meeting, except for an exchange of information, led to a letter being written to the KEC asking for its opinion on a suggested “new” constitution presented by Mr Playfair. It was said that the “EEC” representatives would wait for the KEC’s answer to the letter until further actions were taken.63

Reconciliation in Hosanna

In April 1952 Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie went on a reconciliation mission to Hosanna. He went by the weekly plane and realised that Mr Glen Cain, the SIM Field Director in Ethiopia, was on the same plane. When the two arrived in Hosanna, it created astonishment among the KEC elders. They asked for the reason for Mr Cain’s arrival. He replied that he was just on his way to Wollamo.64

Ato Emmanuel stayed for a week in Hosanna. There were meetings every day. The two parties were reconciled and a constitution for the KEC worked out. Ato Emmanuel describes it as very simple, called: “The Church Rule”.65

The main idea was to introduce democratic principles into the KEC. Elections were thus from now to be held every second year. The six “sevens” elected four elders from each “seven”, that is, a total leadership of 24 persons. It was the task of these representative elders to negotiate on “rules” for the church. They agreed on eight items.66

One item was the election of four new top leaders in the KEC. “The Big Three” and Ato Abebe Bushero were elected. Abba Gole was appointed President and Ato Abebe Secretary. Other items concerned regular elections in the KEC and financial matters. From now on half of the sums collected locally should remain in the local congregation.67

The rest of the rules were of a more administrative nature except for the ones on marriage and on drinking. The rule on drinking prohibited “drinking” (metet) - to be understood as alcoholic beverages. The text refers to a bad example of two members in the KEC, who whilst drunk hurt each other and thus gave a bad example. The text also refers to earlier rules on drinking in the KEC.68

The eight rules were signed by the 24 elders and by Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie. Others, like Ato Erjabo Handiso, also signed this so-called “Church Rule”. In fact, by these rules the “three levels” which caused conflicts were dealt with. Rules for elections were properly defined, the centralisation of the KEC to

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63 Ibid.
64 GA-A: Arén 1972. As has been seen above, the SIM knew about the arrangements of the CEEC/AAMY. SIM-A: Donald to Cain and Couser 1952.02.27.
65 GA-A: Arén 1972, pp.7f.; Arén 1983, pp.18f.; see below, Appendix I.
68 See below, Appendix I; GA-A: Arén 1972, pp.7f.
the Lemur “Seven” was in principle broken, the financial system was rearranged into a more open system that could be checked on and abuses of drinking were discussed.69

The claims for a better balance with regard to leadership and finances in the KEC had thus been attended to. Ato Abebe had become a top leader of the KEC. Accordingly, from 1952 the KEC had a new democratic structure based on the six “sevens” and was led by four elders. All the six “sevens” were properly represented by the 24 district elders. The rule on drinking, however, was probably Ato Abebe’s compromise to gain his goal. The effect the rule would have on local people does not seem to have been analysed in depth at the reconciliation session in April.

The role of Ato Emmanuel as an Ethiopian and neutral counterpart in the reconciliation process was very important. The splinter group led by Ato Abebe had been alarmed when Mr Cain arrived in Hosanna together with Ato Emmanuel. It accepted an indigenous act of reconciliation led by the Ethiopian CEEC representative Ato Emmanuel, however.

This was a remarkable contribution of Ethiopian indigenous and ecumenical solidarity to restoring unity in the KEC. It was accomplished by the CEEC and its executive representative from the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation. Barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism were transcended in this reconciliation process. While foreign missionary initiatives were more of a hindrance, the Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity of the CEEC delegates proved successful. After his return to the capital Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie delivered an oral report to the AAMY Church Officers on Miazia 3, 1944 (E.C). The minutes laconically testify that it was decided to reimburse the 57 Birr Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie had spent on his trip to the KEC.70

The changes in the KEC primarily focused on changing the polity of the church. The ethos, concerning the question of drinking (metet) was not properly dealt with, however. By drinking the KEC elders seems to have meant all alcoholic beverages “. . . even that which was weak”, to use the words of Mr Beacham.71 They were all strongly forbidden, anew. The failure to deal with this issue in a contextualised manner and to consider the effects the prohibition of drinking would have on local people was a weak point of the 1952 reconciliation.

69 See above, pp.97ff., below, Appendix I.
71 See above, p.83. The SIM translates “metet” with “strong drink”. See below, Appendix I.
D. The Kambata Evangelical Church in a Time of Trial

The KEC in 1952-54

The problem of the persecution of KEC members continued in 1952. Ato Mersha Tesema and Ato Abura Bachore presented a letter to the Emperor, which contained a list of 65 prisoners. 36 of these were imprisoned in Durame.72

After the reconciliation in April 1952, the KEC - SIM relationship was strained from time to time. Especially the differences in foreign missions’ policy on financial and material support caused disturbances among the KEC elders. Some SIM leaders even articulated their fears that both the KEC, and the Wollamo Church, would abandon the SIM and turn to the NLM and the SEM.73

In September 1952 the President of the KEC, Abba Gole, wrote a letter to the SIM in Addis Abeba asking if there was a real union between the KEC and the SIM. Until an answer was received from the SIM, the KEC leaders stopped the students at the schools in Hosanna from attending(1). Only after a meeting held in Hosanna, where Mr Cain was present, were students allowed to return. The KEC elders bargained with the SIM for: a forceful help to prisoners, salaries for evangelists, an orphanage, a hospital, a new Bible-school and higher education etc.74

In 1953 the KEC started a decentralisation from Hosanna. The opening of the SIM station in Durame with a new elementary school was important in this respect. Conferences were held at two places this year, both in Hosanna and in Durame. This step was probably due to a general growth of the KEC in the area, and met with the petitions of local KEC elders. Another plausible factor was the Catholic return to the Durame area. It emphasised the need of a SIM presence.75

Especially the elders from the Soro “Seven” presented problems with the KEC leadership of elders. The KEC elders, however, tended to blame problems in the KEC on the new constitution. SIM missionaries questioned the handling of collected money in the KEC and even discussed the possibility to earmark money for outreach. They were annoyed by the alleged poor spiritual climate in the KEC.76

The KEC/SIM and the NLM intensified their contacts with each other in order to solve the problem of evangelists, who left the KEC (SIM) for the NLM. Deliberations on this issue were held in Hosanna. The NLM accepted certain principles formulated by the KEC on how to receive KEC evangelists. The KEC/SIM were not in favour of sending KEC evangelists to the NLM and risk losing them. As

72 SIM-A: Letter to His Imperial Majesty 1952.03.18, u.s. (Mersha Tesema, Abura Bachore).
73 SIM-A: Playfair to Thompson 1952.06.28; 1952.07.17; see above, pp.87f.
74 SIM-A: Abba Gole to SIM in Addis Abeba, Meskerem 1945 E.C. (Sept.1952, Amharic and English); Notes of Shungo at Hosanna 1952.11.29-30, u.s.
75 SIM-A: Joyce Playfair to Beacham 1952.03.18 (quoting two letters from. Playfair 1952.03. 01, 06); Donald to Cain 1953.06.04.
76 SIM-A: Soro District Elders to Cain 1953.02.04. (Amharic and English); Donald to Cain 1953.06.04.
already indicated, from 1953 and onwards the SIM and the NLM came on speaking terms in a new way.\textsuperscript{77} This would prove important for future events.

The KEC leaders had met some of the appeals of the dissidents in 1952. One thing the KEC/SIM did not want to compromise on, however, was the rules on drinking. On the contrary, they were more clearly defined in 1953:

1. A person who drinks alcoholic beverages cannot be an evangelist or a church leader.
2. Before a person is baptized it must be known by an affirmed decision that he is prepared not to drink intoxicating drinks.\textsuperscript{78}

These exclusive rules, however, would soon rekindle tensions within the KEC and there was thus a reinforced attention to drinking in the KEC from 1953 onwards.

In 1954 there were slightly fewer than 170 congregations belonging to the KEC. The church was spread all over the Kambata/Hadiya region. Hosanna with the SIM mission station in Bobicho was the centre of the KEC. The KEC was indigenous in its outlook as far as employment of evangelists, leadership, church-buildings, liturgy and outreach were concerned. The elders were positive to the contact with the CEEC representatives, who had given them support in the successful reconciliation in Hosanna. The KEC had contacts with the Wollamo Church and, like it, was sending missionaries to different areas. The KEC was still being put under pressure by the EOC and its members were imprisoned by the local administration.\textsuperscript{79}

In 1954 the KEC was a church with strong points but it was also experiencing internal tensions. The risk of “internal migration” into other denominations, for example Catholic and evolving SDA groups, or into other Evangelical missions, was obvious among discontented KEC members in 1954.\textsuperscript{80}

The KEC-2 Evolves as a New Local Independent Church

As will be recalled Ato Biru Dubale was the strong leader in the early Wollamo Church. When his “new” indigenous church in Wollamo received financial support from the SMBV in 1951, it seems to have started to grow. In 1954-55 it comprised approximately 30-40 congregations.\textsuperscript{81} We have furthermore noticed how the NLM policy of paying salaries attracted KEC members and generated discussions between the KEC and the SIM. Even if an agreement was reached between the NLM

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\textsuperscript{77} SIM-A: Notes of Conference of between Norwegian Mission and Elders of Kambatta Evangelical Church 1953.04.24 u.s.; SEM-A: Tausjø to Lundgren/Arén 1953.09.27 (Norwegian); Cotterell 1973, pp.136ff.; see above, p.88.

\textsuperscript{78} KHC-A: Tamru 1984, pp.46f. (Amharic); see above, p.83, Beacham’s letter 1947.06.11.


\textsuperscript{80} Prof. Hallencreutz defines “internal migration” in contrast to conversion as “... an activation of a latent church-belonging, which leads to a shift from one church into another.” Hallencreutz 1983, p.184 (Swedish).

The establishment of a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Training School in Kuyera at Shashamene in 1947 generated contacts in Wollamo and Kambata from c.1955. In 1961 government permission was granted for a mission station at Abonsa, just east of Durame. A clinic and a school were built there. Neufeld (ed.) 1966, p.384; see Braukämper 1980, p.381.

See above, pp.27, 59, 71ff., 88; Pedersen (Aasebø Rønne) 1989, pp.103ff., 108f.(Danish).
and the SIM in 1953, the situation was still tense. The presence of the SDA in nearby Shashamene and its intensified contacts in the region, and the EOC’s attitude towards Evangelicals, did not improve ecclesiastical relations. To use an understatement: religious dynamics inside the region were complex in 1953.82

A discontented group in the KEC now reacted more clearly against the KEC sharpened discipline on drinking since 1953. It looked at the church of Ato Biru Dubale and in 1953 several deputations from “Kambata” visited the NLM centre in Sidamo and asked for an alliance. They were, however, let down by the Norwegians, who were more concerned about comity principles than the SMBV.83

It seems as if the new dissenting group in the KEC was very concerned with gaining an outside supporter. It was pressed from two sides: from the KEC (SIM) and from the EOC. It understood that it could hardly survive on its own and was discussing “...how to obtain the missionaries who could support their work”.84

It is this discontented group, which I identify as the evolving Kambata Evangelical Church 2. It had its strongholds around Dodoba, close to Mt. Shonkolla, and in Mishgida (Durame), close to Mt. Ambaricho. Two of its early leaders were men of some wealth. Ato Mersha Tesema from the Dodoba area and a coffee trader from Mishgida, Ato Ashebo Wolecho. We have already met Ato Mersha at the AAMY reconciliation attempt in 1952 and when presenting a letter to the Emperor on religious freedom. He had obviously mastered Amharic well and became the new spokesman of the KEC-2.85

The SIM-related churches had probably received special invitations to the 1955 CEEC to discuss and decide on a federation among Evangelicals in Ethiopia. This was also in the interest of the evolving KEC-2. The determined preparations of this dissenting group in 1954 to attend the 1955 CEEC in Addis Ababa under the leadership of Ato Mersha, as a church in its own right separated from the KEC, marks the final split within the KEC and the birth of the KEC-2.

The KEC-2 was reacting primarily against the KEC (SIM) foreign cultural pressure on drinking, that is on ethos, otherwise it was very similar to the KEC. Moreover, it was founded in Africa, by Africans and primarily for Africans. I find that the KEC-2 had the characteristics of a local African Independent Church fighting for its cultural freedom.86

[82] See above, pp.88ff.; 106f.
[83] SEM-A: Tausjø to Lundgren/Arén 1953.09.27 (Norwegian). Not all the NLM missionaries shared the view of Dr M. Tausjø, that is, to discard the Kambata petitions for help. SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1995.06.25.
Conclusions

The split in the KEC in 1951 was caused by a failure of communication concerning new moral rules on drinking alcohol, including the common traditional everyday drink - *borde*. As these rules, issued from the end of 1949, affected ordinary peoples’ lifestyle they generated considerable dissonance in the KEC “sevens”. The new dissonance reinforced the disaffection felt at the centralisation of power and money to the three leading KEC elders.

In short, the split was generated by the shortcoming in communication of a new KEC ethos, influenced by the SIM, and lack of democracy and financial decentralisation. This paved the way for Ato Abebe Bushero and his fellow “deacons”, who for a long time had a more private matter to settle with the leading elders concerning further education. Issues of infant baptism and ethnicity were not points of conflict in 1951, however.

In quite a short time, less than two years, 17 of the 145 congregations followed Ato Abebe’s group. It became an attractive alternative as it offered local control of the collected money and allowed traditional lifestyle. As these things were strong motivating factors and Ato Abebe a strong leader, the split was threatening the unity of the KEC. It became a great concern to the KEC leadership and the SIM. The latter was, furthermore, worried by influences of the nearby NLM.

According to Ato Abebe’s group, however, the SIM was part of the problem, as supporter and even, through Mr Couser, as a member of the KEC leading elders. The SIM reconciliation efforts were finally not accepted by Ato Abebe’s group.

Instead, Ato Sabiro and Ato Shigute, with the consent of Ato Abebe, turned to the CEEC in January 1952 and pleaded for an indigenous reconciliation by Ethiopians. The result was that in April 1952 an act of reconciliation of the entire KEC was led by Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie in Bobicho (Hosanna). He was sent as the CEEC authorised representative and the AAMY President.

This was a remarkable Ethiopian indigenous and ecumenical contribution to restoring unity in the KEC. It was motivated by the Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity of the “EEC”, in this way shown to one of its members. At this reconciliation, barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism were overcome.

The result of the reconciliation was an introduction of a church constitution in the KEC. The “Church Rule”, as it was called, was based on a democratic representative system and included all “sevens”. The model of financial support to the KEC centre was also reconstructed. Ato Abebe was elected secretary of the KEC.

The rules on drinking were not an issue for compromise, however. On the contrary, they were clarified and even sharpened in 1953. This generated a renewed split among dissenting KEC members, who now clearly reacted against the discipline on drinking. They looked in different directions for outside support. Two of the early leaders of the dissenters were Ato Mersha Tesema and Ato Ashebo Wolecho. By their determined decision in 1954 to partake as a separate church at the 1955 CEEC in Addis Ababa these dissenters became the KEC-2. As they primarily were reacting against foreign cultural pressure to change their ethos, this church can be described as a local African Independent Church.
Chapter Six
Ecumenical Efforts and the Independent KEC-2

Some types of independent churches have a significant tendency to preserve indigenous customs, related to their ethos. Their doctrine, worship and polity, however, are often quite similar to the churches they have seceded from.¹ As we will see this description suited the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) well.

The KEC-2’s attendance at the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) from 1955 and onwards would prove to be very important as this provided a bridgehead to Ethiopian Evangelicals outside the Kambata/Hadiya region. The closeness to the CEEC would later have repercussions on the KEC-2’s attitude to the new evolving Evangelical body, the Mekane Yesus Church (EECMY).

In this chapter I will highlight the interaction of the KEC-2 with the CEEC. I will draw on the CEEC minutes and further explore “new” primary material.²

A. The Conference of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches in 1955

Preconditions for the CEEC in 1955

It has been noted earlier that there emerged a new awareness of denominational differences among Ethiopian Evangelicals from the middle of the 1950’s.³ From about 1953-54 there was also a new determination among the SEM missionaries to build “…a confessional church prepared to meet the storms of the time and survive”⁴. In November 1953 Rev. Lundgren and Rev. Arén approached the NLM, suggesting a joint action to organise a united Lutheran church.⁵

At the CEEC in Mendi, January 1954, Rev. Lundgren and Rev. Arne Hansson of the SEM attended. In a letter to Rev. Arén, Lundgren describes how the SEM representatives and the Sidamo Mekane Yesus group emphasised the importance of reaching a conclusion on the question of a confession, lest the CEEC would be a mere formal fellowship. As related by Sæverås the question of a confession for the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” had been at the agenda of the CEEC since 1947

² Some “new” material in this chapter is SEM-A: Lundgren to Arén 1954.01.19 (Swedish), Lundgren to SEM M.R. (Missionärs Råd), Feb.1954 and Lundgren to SEM conference 1960.11.10 (both Swedish). KM-A: Hodges to Donald 1960.07.18 is an important “new” letter from a SIM missionary in the region (Hodges) to Rev. Donald, who had left the region in 1954. SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15.
³ See above, p.91; Sæverås 1974, pp.73ff.
⁴ Lundgren 1954, p.300 (Swedish).
⁵ Sæverås 1974, pp.85ff.
but had not come to a conclusion. It is interesting to note that the motivation for Ethiopians to raise this question in 1947 was the differences in doctrine among missionaries(!). This gives us a clue to the alleged “inefficiency” of the CEEC. It had so far been united by other factors than doctrine. Missionaries were now eager to bring doctrinal “order”, however.

The Sidamo Mekane Yesus group mentioned that an evangelist in Sidamo had been dismissed owing to his teaching on baptism and “. . . it had become clearer that the roads were diverging.” Information was given on the group around Ato Biru Dubale, which was characterised as not “so small” and “. . . not standing for rebaptism”. The size of Ato Biru’s church was not known to Lundgren, however.

According to Lundgren the Swedish delegates suggested a meeting in Addis Abeba at Easter 1954, which representatives from each church group and a missionary from each co-operating mission should attend. The meeting should prepare a detailed proposal for a church constitution, including a confession of the church. This draft should then be sent out to all the church groups and the next year’s meeting, i.e. the 1955 CEEC, would decide on the matter.

It was strongly urged by the Swedes that the “Kambata-Wollamo group” and the SIM should be invited to the “next meeting”. This was not favoured “by some”, who meant that they had disassociated themselves from the fellowship. Lundgren encouraged Arén to talk to Qes Badima about the matter as it was not mentioned in the minutes that the Kambata/Wollamo group was to be invited to the April meeting. Lundgren was anxious not to give the impression of locking the others out, especially as the 1954 CEEC had been held in Mendi, which was in a Swedish “sphere of interest”.

As has been related by Sæverås the meeting in April 1954 was well prepared by the Swedes. Lundgren wrote a letter in February 1954 to the council of the Swedish missionaries, which was going to be held in Nakamte on March 1. He sketched a blueprint for a church constitution under three headings:

**A. Type of church.** A united church without confession was out of the question. A church federation or union of churches was a possible solution. A confessional church was what Lundgren suggested that the SEM should work for.

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6 SEM-A: Lundgren to Arén 1954.01.19 (Swedish). This letter on five pages is not referred to by Sæverås. The Sidamo Mekane Yesus group started to attend the CEEC in 1952. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, p.15; Sæverås 1974, pp.46ff.; GA-A: CEEC minutes 1947, p.3, no.3.
7 Socio-religious factors were more important until 1954-55. See above, pp.23, 89ff.
8 SEM-A: Lundgren to Arén 1954.01.19 (Swedish).
9 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1954, p.21, no.7. According to the CEEC minutes the meeting was suggested by “Sidamo delegates”.
10 SEM-A: Lundgren to Arén 1954.01.19 (Swedish).
12 *Ibid.* By “next meeting” Lundgren seems to mean the 1954 meeting in April. The word “meeting” can refer to the 1955 CEEC, but in that case the SIM would probably not have been invited. The SIM and its related churches did not attend the April meeting.
13 Sæverås 1974, p.65.
It is not perhaps necessary to use the name “Lutheran”, which in this environment is quite meaningless, but in its teaching it should be a clearly Lutheran church.\footnote{SEM-A: Lundgren to SEM M.R., Feb. 1954 (Swedish).}

After suggesting flexibility in organisational items Lundgren went on to the next heading:

**B. The question of the confession of the church.** Lundgren suggested the Bible, the three symbola and *Luther’s Smaller Catechism*. The third heading is called:

**C. The question of church constitution.** This should touch upon membership, administration and the question of church type, that is, either Episcopal or Synodal.\footnote{Ibid.}

Predictably, Lundgren was chosen to represent the SEM at the additional meeting of the CEEC in April 1954. Before this event he and Arén had prepared a new draft for a church constitution. This had been discussed with the NLM and the SMBV.\footnote{Sæverås 1974, pp.65ff.}

As has been related by Sæverås, the meeting in April 1954 “. . . failed in its aim to produce a basis for a united and confessional church”.\footnote{Sæverås 1974, p.67.} Instead a draft for the constitution of a federation was prepared. Some discussions on the representation of the different groups at the General Assembly of the planned federation led to a decision to table discussions on the federation to the CEEC in 1955.\footnote{Ibid.}

To sum up: 1953-54 were years when missionaries took initiatives to form churches with a clear confessional profile in Ethiopia. A first step was to let representatives from the CEEC and from the missions meet to solve the question of a confession for a united Evangelical church and to form a constitution, but it failed.

A second step was to test the idea of a federation, which could be combined with confessional churches. This would probably suit the Presbyterians well. The Swedish missionaries seem to have been anxious to invite the Kambata-Wollamo group to the deliberations at the CEEC in 1955. The aim was to give them a chance to take part in the discussions on a church federation.

As we have seen, leading missionaries in the SEM were already in 1953 pretty sure that a confessional Lutheran church was what was needed for the Mekane Yesus groups. Similar opinions had been voiced by the Ethiopian Mekane Yesus delegates from Sidamo at the CEEC in 1954. The Lutheran missionaries were influenced by their contacts with the LWF. It had encouraged the formation of a Lutheran Missions Committee in 1951 and opted for the formation of united Lutheran churches in different countries.\footnote{Sæverås 1974, pp.78ff.; see above, p.88, below, pp.134f.}
Dissenting Voices from Kambata at the CEEC in 1955

At the CEEC in 1955 the SIM-related churches, probably due to special invitations, were represented as never before or after.20 Ato Shigute led the KEC group of three persons.

For the first time a representative from the Wollamo Church attended the CEEC but as already hinted at only as an “observer”. The SIM-related Gamu Gofa Awraja Christians had two representatives.21

The KEC-2 also had two representatives, Ato Mersha Tesema and Ato Ashebo Wolecho. The KEC-2 representatives were introduced together with the KEC. The KEC-2 had the boldness to be present at this CEEC. It saw the CEEC as a chance for support. As I have discussed above this is in line with Festinger’s Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. It states that a group of people, who experiences dissonance, will try to find like-minded in order to reduce its own dissonance.22

The KEC may have reacted to the KEC-2’s presence and, perhaps, would have tried to prevent it if it had known about it beforehand. But probably the KEC delegates reckoned with renewed support from the CEEC. After all the KEC had been attending the CEEC since 1947. It was well-known to the CEEC delegates and had received their support earlier as in 1952.

The first point on the agenda, no.1, concerned the contribution of money paid to the CEEC from the different church groups. The eagerness of the KEC-2 representatives to get accepted as a “member church” is shown when it paid the sum stipulated for a member church of the CEEC.

The ordinary member churches paid E$ 25 each. The KEC and the Gamu Gofa Evangelical church paid E$ 20 each. The KEC-2, impressively paid E$ 25 on its own. There was no suggestion from the two Kambata churches of sharing the cost. The message from the KEC-2 by this gesture was clear. It wanted to be accepted as a separate member church irrespective of the KEC.

The minutes reveal confusion on how to handle the E$ 45 from Kambata. The first resolution of the conference was thus to decide to keep this money apart as it must “. . . not be mixed up” with the rest.23 The meaning of this formulation seems to have been that if the KEC-2 money had been accepted right away, it would have implied a CEEC acceptance of the KEC-2 as a separate member church.

The main item on the agenda was the discussion on a church federation, no.9. The draft of the constitution for the federation, which was prepared in April 1954, was read. It was decided that it should be studied by the delegates until the last day of the conference, January 17 (Tir 9), when it was going to be discussed anew.

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20 The following section refers to GA-A: CEEC minutes 1955, pp.22-25 unless indicated by footnotes.
21 See Cotterell 1973, p.184; see above, p.89.
22 Festinger 1962; see above, pp.27, 84, 95, 100.
The Kambata Churches’ Dividing Issue

The next item on the agenda, no.10, concerned the two groups representing the Christians in Kambata. The reason for their conflict was simply said to be the differences in their views on “. . . drinks containing alcohol”.24 As in 1952, it was decided that CEEC delegates should be appointed to solve the dispute. This time, one from the AAMY and one from the Bethel Church (Presbyterian) should be sent. It was, furthermore, decided to ask the SIM to appoint a delegate to this joint reconciliation committee, which was to go down to Kambata.

Here we must note that so far the reason for the conflict between the Kambata groups had been defined purely in terms of differences in views on drinking (ethos). The question on baptism (doctrine) is not mentioned at all at this stage of the CEEC deliberations.

It seems as if the CEEC delegates in January 1955 were certain of the cooperation of the SIM in the matter of a joint reconciliation trip to the Kambata/Hadiya region. Nothing was mentioned of comity principles or “areas”, which would hinder the CEEC from taking action. It is pertinent to infer that in January 1955 the relations between the SIM-affiliated churches (and the SIM) on the one hand, and the CEEC on the other, were still good. After all they had been invited to join in the important discussion on the federation, at least at the 1955 CEEC.25

The last day of this conference (January 17) was started by raising item no.14 on the agenda: “The draft constitution of the Federation of Evangelical Churches”. It was read article by article and discussed at length.26

The KEC-2’s Key to Acceptance

Item no.15 of the CEEC minutes reveals that in the intense discussions on the federation “. . . the Kembata delegates were anxious to join and co-operate on the conditions laid down in the first article of the (draft) constitution . . . .”27 At this point a question to the Kambata delegates concerning controversial views on baptism was posed. It seems to have been formulated approximately like this: Would the KEC accept the others’ infant baptism, or was there a need for rebaptism?

Ato Shigute’s answer was that he would ask his group and bring the answer to the next CEEC “. . . whether those baptised should be re-baptised or not seek a new baptism.” Until then he would not accept the federation, but asked for fellowship in gospel activities.28

25 See above, p.111.
26 Sæverås a bit confusingly maintains that: “The question of representation, (at the Federation’s General Assembly) which had been the only problem left, (since the meeting in April 1954) was not even discussed.” at the 1955 CEEC. Sæverås 1974, p.69. In fact it was discussed and resolved “. . . that only one delegate be elected by each member church, and that these should together make the General Assembly . . . .” (no.17). No.9, no.14-18 at the CEEC agenda concern the question of the federation. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1955.
28 Ibid.
Ato Shigute’s answer shows humility and a willingness to co-operate. In 1955 the definition of a federation was not very clear. Was the Baptist view not welcome in a federation? In that case it could hardly be said to have been the fault of Ato Shigute, when he asked for respite to reflect on the question of a federation.29

Ato Mersha, whose interest from the beginning of the 1955 CEEC seems to have been to get the KEC-2 accepted by the CEEC as a member church, took a more opportunistic standpoint. As he was in conflict with the KEC he took advantage of the situation and programmatically rejected the idea of rebaptism. As the minutes put it he “. . . accepted the fellowship as members (of the federation).”30

It seems as if Ato Mersha at this stage had got the upper hand in relation to the CEEC compared to the KEC. The expression that the KEC-2 “accepted” the fellowship as members was quite different from earlier reluctance in the CEEC vis-à-vis the KEC-2 at the beginning of the conference. Then money from two groups in Kambata was not accepted, which implied that the KEC-2 was not accepted.31

An Alternative Explanation?

When commenting on the 1955 CEEC Lundgren mentions that a dogmatic schism on baptism was evolving in the Kambata/Wollamo group “. . . many of the delegates became uncertain as to whether one could have groups with such contrary opinions in this important dogmatic question in an organised fellowship”.32 I note that Lundgren talks of an “evolving” schism on baptism. However, he does not mention the drinking question as a cause of conflict before the 1956 CEEC. According to my findings, drinking alcohol should have been mentioned by Lundgren and others as the prima causa of the conflict already in 1955.33

In fact, the issue of baptism was not mentioned at all by either of the two Kambata groups as a cause of dispute between them at the CEEC in 1955. This, however, is the impression which Sæverås conveys. He puts the two questions, drinking and baptism, together in a confusing and generalising way.34 Sæverås is probably too dependent on Lundgren, who makes a summary of several CEEC meetings from a later perspective than 1955.35

29 Perhaps the KEC was more dependent of the CEEC than has hitherto been assessed. Ato Shigute’s positive attitude to reflecting on infant baptism indicates his interest of being part of the CEEC and the new federation. As will be recalled, the relation between the KEC and the SIM had become delicate in 1952-53. See above, pp.106f.
31 See above, p.113.
32 Lundgren 1960, pp.176f. (Swedish).
33 Rev. Donald was a SIM missionary in Hosanna in 1951-54, see above, pp.78f. He says that he and his colleagues (Manley Hodges and Ralph Jacobson) never heard of infant baptism as a point of conflict in the Kambata Churches before 1960-61. The conflict was on drinking alcoholic beverages. Hodges was at Bobicho in 1954-64, Jacobson at Durame in 1952-65. SG-A: Donald June 1995, pp.1, 12f. Lundgren never visited the region. SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1993.12.08
35 Lundgren 1960, pp.176f. (Swedish).
Sæverås thus mixes details from the 1955 CEEC with later CEEC deliberations on infant baptism. He seems to refer the answer of Ato Abebe Busheero at the 1956 CEEC to the KEC representatives at the 1955 CEEC and draws the conclusion that: “One had now seen in Kambata that doctrinal differences could separate Evangelical Christians also in Ethiopia.” This conclusion can hardly be drawn from the 1955 CEEC minutes, however. The sensitive and dividing issue for the Kambata groups in 1955 was clearly the drinking question, including borde.36

The differences in view on “rebaptism” between the two Kambata churches were revealed in their response to a question from one of the CEEC delegates on the last day of the conference at item no.15 of the agenda. Thus, the discussion on baptism was not initiated by the Kambata churches.

A Paradoxical Outcome
What I have tried to emphasise here, on the basis of a careful reading of the 1955 CEEC minutes, is that the question of baptism was not the reason for the 1955 conflict between the two Kambata groups. If the issue of baptismal practice had been a strong cause of conflict between them, it would have been mentioned at the beginning of the 1955 conference, when the conflict was presented, no.10. The sensitive issue, at this stage however, and the cause of the conflict was the one on drinking that was mentioned from the start.

It is another thing that when Ato Mersha felt the impact which the question of baptism had upon the 1955 CEEC delegates, he started to use this issue as an argument in the debate, and from that point onwards, as a way of getting fully accepted by the CEEC. Still, as we will see, his main target when arguing with the KEC would continue to be the drinking question.37

Before the 1955 CEEC, the federation and its consequences were in focus among Evangelicals in Ethiopia, and the SIM-related groups had been invited to explore this issue. The outcome of the 1955 CEEC, however, was that two groups from Kambata now were attending the CEEC and the question of baptism had been introduced as a line of demarcation between the two. In fact, the group which proved to be put to the test was the KEC, which for a long time had been well known to the CEEC, whereas the KEC-2 which was the newcomer in the CEEC was more or less accepted. From now on the KEC-2 had found a new platform and a counterpart in the CEEC. Paradoxically, the outcome of the 1955 CEEC, which had aimed at unifying Evangelicals in a federation, instead raised new questions about its own longstanding members. From its very start in 1944 the CEEC itself could be described as a conference of a federation of churches, or even a church in its own right, the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”. Eleven years later questions on doctrine were put to test its basis of unity.

36 Cf. Sæverås 1974, pp.44f., 68f.; see GA-A: CEEC minutes 1955-56; see below, pp.120f.
37 See below, pp.120f., 128. The SIM missionary Rev. Donald strongly argues that the division between the KEC and KEC-2 was “a one-issue problem.” That is the use of “alcohol”. SG-A: Donald, June 1995, pp.6f.
Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity versus Missionary Comity

The boldness and freedom of mind that were characteristics of the Ethiopian Evangelicals sometimes collided with the framework of the ferenj.\textsuperscript{38} One delicate point of conflict concerned the comity principles, which had been introduced by missionaries. The members of the EIMC tried to respect certain “areas” in Ethiopia as the working-place for a certain mission. They would not start a mission of their own or support another new mission in such an area.\textsuperscript{39}

As we have seen earlier there were, however, occasionally tensions in some areas. An unclear question was how to look on local Ethiopian efforts in such areas. One example is the reconciliation task undertaken by the CEEC/AAMY in 1952.\textsuperscript{40}

The relation between foreign missions’ enterprises and indigenous initiatives of Ethiopian Christians was a problem even at government level. This is highlighted by a letter from the well-known patriot and Minister Ras Abebe Aregai to the Emperor.\textsuperscript{41} It had been discussed at the CEEC in 1954. In the letter Ras Abebe states that the question of the Evangelical churches had caused him trouble. Lundgren quotes Ras Abebe saying that:

It is possible to apply the existing agreements to the missions and their activities and prevent them starting work at a place where they lack permission. But when Ethiopians claim to be an independent Christian group, which has built churches with their own money, and these are closed down, it appears as if there is no religious freedom in the country.\textsuperscript{42}

The point made by the CEEC and the AAMY in relation to comity principles was that they as Ethiopians and as indigenous churches were free to do what they wanted in their own country. It was a deliberate choice, which the delegates of the CEEC made when they chose the AAMY as a “leader-church” for the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church” in 1949, a task which was prolonged for a three-year period in 1950. Part of this task was to represent the Evangelical churches in relation to the Government. After all it was the Government which made the laws of Ethiopia. The comity principles of the missions were a second-rank question.\textsuperscript{43}

In 1952 Ato Emmanuel Abraham, who at that time had made a break in his diplomatic career, and Qes Badima were appointed President and Vice-President of “the EEC” for one year and functioned as “legal representatives” of the “EEC” member churches.\textsuperscript{44} Without doubt their contacts with influential people at government level played a part in these appointments. When Ato Emmanuel was sent to Italy in September 1952 as the first Ethiopian ambassador since the Italian occupation, Qes Badima became the leader of the CEEC.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{38} Ferenj is an Ethiopian word for a white man, “foreigner”.
\textsuperscript{39} See above, pp.86ff.
\textsuperscript{40} See above, pp.102ff.
\textsuperscript{41} Markakis 1974, pp.206, 235.
\textsuperscript{42} SEM-A: Lundgren to Arén 1954.01.19 (Swedish).
\textsuperscript{43} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1949, p.9, c; CEEC minutes 1950, p.11, no.3.
\textsuperscript{44} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1952, pp.16f., no.3.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.; GA-A: CEEC minutes 1954, p.21, no.1; CEEC minutes 1955, p.25, no.20; see Emanuel Abraham 1995, pp.89-129.
The efforts of the CEEC and the AAMY to try to reconcile the KEC and the KEC-2 can be used as an illustration of the tensions between Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity and missionary comity. Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie retells an event, which took place probably in the autumn of 1955. He and Ato Emmanuel Abraham decided to visit the SIM headquarters in Addis Abeba to talk about the conflict in the Kambata/Hadiya region. He reports:

Mr Playfair was there on that occasion and we had a long conversation. We tried to smooth things out but at the end Mr Playfair told us in plain words, Gentlemen, mind your own business! And so we had to leave it there.

What was the crucial matter? There was no doctrinal issue at all. They only asked us why we kept interfering in their mission work and stepped into their area. We answered that as Ethiopians we considered the whole country ours. For us there was no mission limit or any mission work. The two groups had asked us to come and help them to be reconciled. We did so a few years ago and it worked. Now we only wanted to repeat that. After a long discussion with quite a group of them, we had to leave them. His Excellency could not stand it.

As there were two groups, the KEC and the KEC-2, representing the Kambata/Hadiya region at the 1955 CEEC, and the AAMY and the Bethel Church were asked to make a new try to reconcile them, it was natural for the CEEC representatives to turn to the SIM headquarters. As mentioned above, it had in fact been decided by the 1955 CEEC to ask the SIM for a representative in the new reconciliation group. If Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie’s version is right, and I suggest it is, an odd scenario evolved.

The General Director of the SIM, Mr Playfair, urged the Ethiopian Government Minister and former Ethiopian Ambassador in Italy, Ato Emmanuel Abraham, not to step into the SIM “area”, i.e., the Kambata/Hadiya region! The indigenous Ethiopian attitude, represented by Ato Emmanuel Abraham, stood against a colonial comity attitude, represented by Mr Playfair. “His Excellency could not stand it”, says Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie. Even if Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie’s verdict may be questioned as a tendentious source, it is still a fact that leading Ethiopians looked at the missionary comity in this way.

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46 Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie claims that the meeting with SIM took place “in conjunction” with the CEEC in 1954 or 1955. 1955 was the year when two groups represented the Kambata/Hadiya region at the CEEC and it was decided to contact the SIM. GA-A: CEEC minutes 1954, p.21, no.1; 1955, p.24, no.10; Arén 1972, p.8. Ato Emmanuel Abraham was the Ethiopian Ambassador in Italy from June 1952 to July 1955. According to his autobiography, he was not in Addis Abeba between 1952.06.15 when he arrived in Rome, and 1955.07.22 when he returned to Addis Abeba. Except for a trip to Marangu, Tanganyika, he stayed in Ethiopia from 1955.07.22 to 1955.12.15, when he went to London as the Ethiopian Ambassador. Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.89-129. Accordingly, the meeting with SIM was probably not in conjunction with the CEEC meeting in Jan.1955, but took place later on in 1955 when Ato Emmanuel had returned from Italy.


48 See above, p.114.


50 GA-A: Arén 1972. Arén’s interview with Emmanuel Gebre Selassie is my only source.
B. Conflicts Affect the CEEC

Continued Conflict on Missionary Comity

Strong tensions between Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity and missionary comity erupted at the 1956 CEEC. A group of influential missionaries had arrived at the meeting. A letter from the EIMC “... about comity policy of missions and related churches ...” was presented by Rev. Arén of the SEM and Mr Cain of the SIM.51

A new aspect of the comity principles was now brought forward. It seems as if the letter, which the EIMC had written to the CEEC, had the purpose of extending the comity principles to the “mission-related churches”. As just has been illustrated above, there are indications that the SIM had been reacting to so-called AAMY “interference” in the Kambata/Hadiya region.52

Mr Cain, the Field Director of the SIM, gave first a lengthy speech. He used the technique of arguing from a major problem to a minor. The large problem was probably the Jehovah’s Witnesses and their activities in Ethiopia.53

The minor problem, according to Mr Cain, was how the EIMC and the CEEC could work together and allow inner differences without separating the partners involved. Mr Cain claimed that it was important to get together and strengthen the work of the Gospel against the real enemy, who had destroyed everything in Kenya and India. The meaning of this argument was that the missions and their “related churches” should work together according to comity principles and make a front against the Jehovah’s Witnesses, who are alluded to as the “real enemy”.54

There was a strong Ethiopian reaction against Mr Cain’s point and the EIMC letter. This was formulated by Ato Amare Mamo from the Sidamo Mekane Yesus. He said plainly: “We accept the constitution of the Federation but this we don’t accept”.55 Rev. Lundgren tried to calm the feelings by acting as a mediator arguing that: “... It’s nothing new.” He suggested that the EIMC letter should be studied until the next CEEC conference. Qes Mamo Chorka from the Gulale Bethel, asked how many of the missions which were behind the letter. The answer was overwhelming: “SIM; SEM; NLM; BCMS; AUPM; General Baptist Conference and Mennonite Mission.” It was resolved “that the letter would be studied and dis-

51 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.28, no.9.
52 GA-A: Arén 1972, p.8; see above, pp.86f., 118.
54 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.28, no.9.
55 From the context I gather that Ato Amare’s reaction was directed against the letter from the EIMC and Mr Cain’s speech. Ato Amare was not reacting against the Jehovah’s Witnesses, but against the comity principles, which the EIMC now asked the Ethiopians to follow. Otherwise the following suggestion by Rev. Lundgren and the question of Qes Mamo would have been out of place. If Ato Amare argued against the EIMC letter, however, they were perfectly logical.
cussed at next conference.” However, this never came to pass according to the CEEC minutes.\textsuperscript{56}

The importance of this event was the power demonstration by the EIMC and its representatives \textit{vis-à-vis} the CEEC and its Ethiopian delegates. As will be seen, after the 1956 CEEC the Ethiopians became somewhat more cautious at entering into engagements which could disturb the comity principles of their supporting missions. From now on the characteristic comity expressions of the EIMC occur in the CEEC minutes as arguments, too.\textsuperscript{57} The churches of the CEEC were linked to the missions in such a way that they probably had to show concern for the missions’ policy, parts of which were the comity agreements.

\section*{The Kambata Churches Articulate their Positions in 1956}

The Ethiopians’ own discussions at the 1956 CEEC are even more decisive for our purposes, however. The leader of the KEC delegation in 1956 was the eloquent KEC Secretary Ato Abebe Bushero, the man who had been accused of splitting the KEC in 1952!\textsuperscript{58} He now gave the KEC answer to the question of re-baptising adults, which had been raised when the issue of the federation was discussed at the previous CEEC meeting. His answer was clear:

\ldots they would continue to baptize adults either through rebaptism or as their only baptism which means that children would not be baptized until they as grown-ups have professed their faith.\textsuperscript{59}

By this statement it was implied that the KEC did not accept the infant baptism of the other churches, in the CEEC and the EOC. This was of course a crucial statement, which could lead to long discussions. Instead another matter was focused on as the representative of the KEC-2, Ato Mersha, was eager to explain that:

\ldots he differed from Ato Abebe not only with regard to baptism - he did not practise adult baptism - but also with regard to the permissiveness of drinking.\textsuperscript{60}

After a lengthy discussion on drinking and on “the law” which had been issued against drinking and its repercussions, Ato Mersha promised that his group would follow the practice of the “Evangelical Church Mekane Iyesus”. A statement that “\ldots he had been authorized to make . . . .”\textsuperscript{61}

In fact, Ato Mersha’s statement is ambiguous. Would he follow the Mekane Yesus practice on drinking or on baptism? The narrow context speaks for drinking, but in a wider context it certainly includes also baptism. My suggestion is that Ato Mersha was willing to follow the Mekane Yesus practice in both.

\textsuperscript{56} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.28, no.9.
\textsuperscript{57} See below, p.124.
\textsuperscript{58} See above, p.98.
\textsuperscript{59} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.26, no.3. Ato Abebe and Ato Bekele Nunamo from the 1951 splinter group, strange as it was, now stood against the new splinter group. The third KEC delegate Ato Abura Bachore knew Ato Mersha well, too; see above, p.106.
\textsuperscript{60} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.26, no.3.
\textsuperscript{61} GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, pp.26-27.
Anyhow, again the drinking question had been focused by the Kambata groups, whereas the question of baptism got less attention as the watershed between the two churches. The extended discussion between the two churches was once more on drinking.62

Both churches were asked to bring a report of their numerical strength to the next conference. But the KEC-2 was asked to bring its report to the “Mekane Iyesus church”, by which most probably was meant the AAMY. The next item on the agenda shows Ato Mersha of the KEC-2 asking the AAMY to act as their host when they came to Addis Abeba.63 Why should Ato Mersha take his report directly to the AAMY, i.e. the “Mekane Iyesus church”? And from where did he get the boldness to ask the AAMY to provide lodging when the KEC-2 would be responsible for arranging the CEEC in Addis Abeba?

It seems as if Ato Mersha once more was the one who had grabbed the initiative in the contact of the Kambata churches with the CEEC and especially with the Mekane Yesus groups. Optimistically and a bit naively the minutes relate that the two Kambata churches had been asked to act as joint hosts for the CEEC delegates in Addis Abeba in 1959 (1951 E.C.).64

The KEC-2 as the Only Kambata Group at the CEEC in 1957

The list of delegates at the CEEC in 1957 gives a meagre impression of the KEC-2’s role at this conference. Ato Mersha was the only representative of the KEC-2 but his church is not even mentioned by name in the minutes. Furthermore, he did not attend the CEEC during the first two days and he was absent even when the situation in the Kambata churches was discussed. Lastly, he did not sign the minutes at the end of the conference, as the rest of the participants did.65

There seems to have been hesitancy in this conference as to how to relate to the KEC-2. The reason was that this was now the only group representing the Kambata/Hadiya region at the CEEC. A letter, written by the KEC just a week before the 1957 CEEC started, highlights the CEEC’s dilemma. Its message was that “. . . the Kembata church would not participate in the CEEC because the CEEC had accepted the others (Ato Mersha’s group) as a special church.”66

The minutes tell us that it was resolved that an answer should be written to this letter. Its contents are not known. But as the KEC now refused to attend the CEEC, due to the positive attitude taken to the KEC-2, it was natural that the CEEC’s feelings for the KEC-2 were cooled off for a while. The KEC critique was mainly directed against how the KEC-2 had been “accepted” by the CEEC.

62 Ibid.
63 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.27, no.4. The CEEC wanted help from the different church groups when arranging the CEEC in Addis Abeba. The churches in Addis would provide help with lodging.
64 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, p.28, no.11.
65 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1957, pp.29f.
As the KEC had been present at a number of CEEC meetings and probably was the largest of all the member churches, which used to attend the CEEC more regularly, this letter came as a shock. Until the situation in the Kambata/Hadiya region became clearer the CEEC delegates were cautious and kept a low profile in dealing with the KEC-2.

Unfortunately the KEC letter in 1957 is the last communication heard of from the KEC in the CEEC minutes. The reason for the KEC break with the CEEC was not said to have been due mainly to doctrinal differences on baptism, however. The reason was the CEEC’s acceptance of the KEC-2, a church in conflict with the KEC. This was not acceptable according to the KEC. From now on the CEEC was not attended by any of the SIM-affiliated churches anymore.

**Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity Differentiated**

To generalise, it can be said in retrospect that the returning missionaries from 1944 to 1952 were occupied mostly at local and regional levels in their related churches. From the middle of the 1950’s, as witnessed by the deliberations on a “confession” at the 1954 CEEC, discussions on a federation in April 1954 and the confrontation on comity principles at the 1956 CEEC, the missionaries were active at influencing the Ethiopian Evangelicals on the national level, too.\(^{67}\)

The year 1956 became a watershed for Ethiopian Evangelicals. The ambitions of the missionaries and a growing confessional attitude among Ethiopians decreased flexibility concerning denominational differences in the “Ethiopian Evangelical Church”.

We have seen how the efforts of Lutheran missionaries to form a strong national and confessional church made an impact on the Mekane Yesus groups. They were furthermore influenced by experiences from the wider Lutheran fellowship at the All Africa Lutheran Conference (AALC) at Marangu in November 1955.\(^{68}\)

The negative experiences of the KEC in connection with the formation of a federation at the CEEC in 1955-56, and the ambitions of the SIM missionaries to create a fellowship of their related churches, led to the formation of the neo-Evangelical association called the Fellowship of Evangelical Believers (FEB). The FEB was inaugurated at the SIM headquarters in Addis Abeba on May 21, 1956.\(^{69}\)

The first meeting was led by SIM missionaries, although eight SIM-related groups, including the KEC and the Wollamo Church, attended:

The meeting was opened with prayer, followed by greetings from Mr. Playfair. Mr. Brant followed with a helpful message emphasizing what fellowship meant and involved. Mr. Cain led the business discussion and covered the following points: It was pointed out that the two things which indicated a true Christian were his soundness in doctrine and Christian practice.\(^{70}\)

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67 See above, pp.110ff., 119f.
68 See above, p.110, below pp.134f.
69 PB-A: Minutes of Meeting held at S.I.M. Headquarters, A.A. on 21st May, 1956.
70 Ibid.
Right from its start the FEB accepted a detailed doctrinal statement, which took adult baptism for granted. According to the minutes the SIM’s ethos on “worldly practices” was another must for membership:

3. **Practice**: It was agreed that all who belonged to this Fellowship will abstain from all intoxicating drinks and worldly practices.\(^1\)

The formation of the Fellowship of Ethiopian Believers meant that from May 1956 Evangelical Baptist churches, which accepted the FEB statues met annually in a new association. The CEEC continued to meet as before, but now only comprised the Mekane Yesus groups, which were increasingly Lutheran in confession, the Presbyterian Bethel Church and the independent KEC-2.

My conclusion is that the Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was severely damaged by the new denominationalism. The conflicts between the churches from the Kambata/Hadiya region, mirrored at the CEEC meetings, were influenced by these new denominational dynamics.

Owing to this development I have to qualify the definition of my concept “Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity” from 1957. From c.1941 to 1956 it embraced all major Ethiopian Evangelical groups and was not much affected by denominationalism. But from 1957 the roads were definitely diverging and the solidarity between different Evangelical groups became less inclusive.

It is obviously possible to speak about an Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity among the FEB members, too, as this fellowship transcended barriers of ethnicity and status. This task lies outside the scope of this dissertation, however.

From 1957 I will therefore limit myself and use the now less inclusive concept “Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity” only for the Evangelicals attending the CEEC from this year on, and later on to the EECMY.

As we will see, this Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity so redefined still continued to influence the co-operation between the EECMY groups and the Bethel Church. As far as the Kambata/Hadiya region is concerned the CEEC and later on the EECMY would project their solidarity on the KEC-2.

\(^{71}\) **Ibid.**
C. A Last Attempt at Reconciliation

The KEC-2 in a New Framework

At the CEEC in 1958 the wind had changed. The KEC-2 was now represented by five delegates and they were active in the discussions in a new way. They had a new confidence apparently from being accepted by the CEEC.\(^{72}\) Even so, the KEC-2 was not fully satisfied. It wanted active help, not just acceptance.

The CEEC attitude to the KEC-2 was qualified by two factors. One was a growing awareness of comity, which made the CEEC cautious in its contact with the KEC-2. The KEC-2 had again applied to the NLM for help. The CEEC, however, was now using comity language when it made it clear that no mission could provide help “... as their area had been allotted to the SIM no other mission could go in there.”\(^{73}\) Instead the KEC-2 appealed “... to Mekane Iyesus Church for help”. Again Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was asked to “... look into the matter”.\(^{74}\) A certain caution is revealed also in a report referred to in the minutes by Ato Emmanuel, who asked: “... what they who were independent desired should be sent to them?”\(^{75}\) By this statement Ato Emmanuel drew a line concerning the obligations of the CEEC to the KEC-2, which seems to have been a new thing for him to do. It is possible that he still nourished a vague hope of reconciliation between the Kambata churches.\(^{76}\)

The other factor, which influenced the CEEC’s attitude to the KEC-2, was the formation of the EECMY. Many of the CEEC delegates were too occupied with the new body, i.e. the EECMY, which was now being formed. They simply did not have time to involve themselves in the KEC-2 problems.

A Picture of the KEC-2 in 1957-58 \(^{77}\)

In 1958 the KEC-2 had been an independent church for five years. The break with the KEC was mainly due to its longing to preserve its indigenous culture and independence as a local church. The KEC-2’s teaching, ways of worship and ecclesiastical outlook were very similar to the KEC’s.\(^{78}\)

Polity: The KEC-2 leadership structure was founded on elders. It was organised in districts called “sevens”. The strongest were the Dodoba “Seven” and Abonsa “Seven”. The monthly and quarterly meetings served as backbones for fellowship and communication in the “sevens”. The leadership was mobile, as the KEC-2 meetings visited different “sevens” in turn. Ato Mersha Tesema was the most

\(^{72}\) GA-A: CEEC minutes 1958.
\(^{73}\) GA-A: CEEC minutes 1958, p.33, no.10.
\(^{74}\) Ibid.
\(^{75}\) Ibid.
\(^{76}\) Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie: “We kept the Kambattas waiting for nine years. We did not like to draw them away from their own”. GA-A: Arén 1972, p.10.
\(^{77}\) In my “pictures of the KEC-2” I make use of Molland’s typology: polity, worship, doctrine and ethos. I also use ecumenism, size etc. as points of comparison. See above, pp.28f.
\(^{78}\) See above, pp.24f.
prominent leader.\(^79\) The KEC-2 covered its own small expenses.

**Worship:** The KEC-2 style of worship was similar to the KEC, but probably simpler. That is, it consisted mainly of an African type of indigenous antiphonal singing, prayer and Bible reading in case a literate person was present.

**Doctrine:** The KEC-2 standard of teaching was very low. It consisted of a mixture of the legacy of early KEC teaching and later SIM Baptist influences, and new ideas from its contacts with the CEEC. Its view on baptism seems to have been “diffuse” with different practices existing side by side.\(^80\)

The promise of the KEC-2 in 1956 to “. . . follow the practice” of the “Mekane Iyesus” was easier to give in Addis Abeba than to realise locally in the KEC-2. It did not have any educated teachers and missionary comity prevented active support from outside. The doctrinal influence of the CEEC members on the KEC-2 as a whole was minimal in 1957-58.\(^81\)

**Ethos:** The KEC-2’s moral standards were low and marked by permissiveness, especially regarding drinking. The KEC-2 was given a number of nicknames. One of the more familiar names was the *Seli-Menna* Church, i.e. the *Drinking* Church, a not very flattering name.\(^82\)

**Ecumenism:** At the national level the KEC-2 had the strength to attend the CEEC in Addis Abeba from 1955. This became very important. Its horizon widened and it gained moral support from other Ethiopian Evangelicals as a church in its own right.\(^83\)

At the regional level it turned anew to the nearby NLM missionaries in Sidamo for help in 1957, but did not receive any support.\(^84\)

At the local level the KEC-2 was a church under pressure. It maintained that it was discriminated against by the SIM. It seems that the KEC-2 members had been disallowed from attending the SIM schools for some time. The “drinkers” were not welcomed by the KEC but put under a humiliating discipline and were not allowed to take part in the Holy Communion in the KEC churches.\(^85\)

The EOC was simply uninterested in the irregular churchmanship of the KEC-2. Here was another “new” church without priests and a “proper” liturgy. As it was not “protected” by a foreign mission like the KEC was, the EOC probably saw no hindrance to putting the KEC-2 members under pressure.\(^86\)

\(^81\) GA-A: CEEC minutes 1956, pp.26f., no.3; see the CEEC minutes 1958, p.33, no.10. In 1961 the few teachers helping the KEC-2 did not have schooling above the third grade. GA-A: Amare May 1961, p.4; see below, Appendix II, p.4.
\(^82\) MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, p.13; SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15.
\(^83\) See below, Appendix II, p.4; GA-A: CEEC minutes 1955-58; see above, pp.113ff.
\(^84\) GA-A: CEEC minutes 1958, p.33, no.10.
\(^85\) GA-A: Arén 1972, p.9; CEEC minutes 1956, pp.26f., no.3.
\(^86\) EG-A: *Ezra Diary 1965*, p.6.
Furthermore, activities of the Seventh Day Adventists were reported as an additional problem to the KEC-2, especially around Durame. As the pressure on the KEC-2 went on for years, it probably led to a high rate of “internal migration”.

The KEC-2 was not content with just being an independent or a so-called “special church”. As it felt freedom and dignity in its contacts with the CEEC, it did not want to return to the KEC. However, it became very adaptable and opportunistic in its relations to the CEEC mainstream, especially to the AAMY, as these contacts provided possibilities of overcoming local pressure.

Size: In 1958 Ato Mersha Tesema claimed to be the leader of 60 churches with 10,000 members. A more realistic estimation, counting 100 members per church, would have been 6,000 members. This was anyhow quite a large group, compared to the EECMY membership figure in 1959 of c. 20,000 members. The more members the KEC-2 could present the more importance it would enjoy.

The Fateful Option

The years of 1959-60 were characterised by two decisive experiences for the KEC-2. One was the formation of the EECMY. The other was intensified reconciliation efforts from the KEC/SIM side. Ato Zelleke Luke from the Dodoba “Seven” (Hawora) was the new spokesman of the KEC-2 at the 1959 CEEC. The importance of this CEEC with regard to the KEC-2 was that it took place just before “the Founding Assembly” of the EECMY on January 21, 1959. I suggest that the KEC-2 delegates stayed in Addis Abeba to experience the outcome of this meeting.

The KEC-2 delegates had strong links with the delegates from the EECMY. Ato Tamru Segaro, for instance, was both representing the Sidamo Mekane Yesus at the CEEC in 1959 and at the EECMY Founding Assembly. The important matter for the KEC-2 delegates, however, was that Ato Tamru was from Benara/Mishgida in Kambata. He knew several of the KEC-2 members very well.

Reports and discussions with men like Ato Tamru made the KEC-2 very interested in the new Evangelical church. In 1960 the KEC-2 approached the EECMY twice and asked for membership. Consultations with the SIM had been held but had not led to any solution. The KEC-2, which now claimed to represent 80 churches, adhered to its petition to join the EECMY. In November 1960 Rev. Lundgren believed that the KEC-2 petition would be discussed again soon.

87 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1959, p.35, no.6. On SDA, see above, p.107, n.80.
88 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1957, p.29, no.6. See above, pp.24, 121.
89 GA-A: CEEC minutes 1958, p.33, no.10. This is my last contemporary written document on Ato Mersha. According to different later sources he killed a man (a balabbat?), probably after a dispute about land. He was put in prison, where he later on died. SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1998.06.15; Peter 1999, p.345.
92 Ibid.; GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1959.01.21, §51-10; SG-A: Teferi Sendabo o.i.1994.03.15. On Ato Tamru Segaro, see below, pp.154, 164.
93 SEM-A: Lundgren to SEM conference 1960.11.10 (Swedish).
The repeated petitions for membership show the determination of the KEC-2 in 1960 to join the EECMY. The founding of the EECMY transferred the interest of the KEC-2 from the CEEC to this newly formed church. The EECMY inherited its relations with the KEC-2 from the CEEC. However, the KEC had also approached the KEC-2 anew to search for reconciliation.

A Last Effort at Reconciliation

In 1960 the KEC was in fact very interested in reconciliation with the KEC-2. A letter written by Mr Manley F. Hodges on July 18, 1960, from Hosanna to Rev. Donald gives the impression that the KEC took the initiative and made very earnest efforts to make peace with the KEC-2.\footnote{KM-A: Hodges to Donald 1960.07.18. This section refers to the letter unless indicated. Hodges succeeded Rev. Donald as a missionary in the region in 1954 and was still there in 1960. SG-A: Donald to Grenstedt 1995.06.15; see above, pp.78ff., 115, n.33, below, p.201.} According to the letter, missionaries had been praying for this meeting for a month. The elders of the KEC-2 had been consulted by the KEC and the meeting was set for July 16. There was uncertainty as to whether the KEC-2 would show up. When they did the meeting started. Elders mentioned from the KEC were Ato Abebe (Bushero), Abba Gole and Ato Bekele, and from the KEC-2 Ato Marqos (Gobebo) and Ato Ashebo (Wolecho) \footnote{I have added the “Father-names” in brackets. The “Ato Marqos”, who is mentioned first among the KEC-2 delegates, is Ato Marqos Gobebo. This is evident from a report by Ato Djalatta, where it is stated that it was Ato Marqos Gobebo who posed the final question to the SIM (Hamle 9/52 E.C.) “on schooling”, which was not accepted. GA-A: Djalatta to 5th Gen. Assembly, Jan.1967, p.1 (Amharic). Ato Marqos became KEC-2 Executive Secretary 1963 and President 1965. See below, pp.163ff., 178; see GA-A: CEEC minutes 1960, p.37.}

The deliberations were started by the KEC-2 elder, Ato Marqos, who had four points he wanted to discuss. The first dealt with the question of baptising infants; the second was the question of drinking; the third point was how to be “received” by the other side; and the fourth was to get a school with a missionary teacher.

Mr Hodges was the one who began commenting on the four points. He started with the fourth question. He could not promise a special school but affirmed that the SIM “Elementary School” was open to KEC-2 as was the “Bible-School.” Question number three was simple. After peace-making KEC-2 would be received.

The second question Mr Hodges found more “touchy”. His conclusion was that he believed that most of the KEC-2 members were against intoxication. The KEC elders would leave the responsibility with the KEC-2 elders: “... that if they stated that they would not touch any drink that was in any way intoxicating that we would be willing to take them at their word”. The first point he asked them not to make an issue of but work together for the Gospel.

Abba Gole then made a statement saying that there was no need for discussion on points three and four. He agreed that the KEC elders would take the KEC-2 elders at their word not to drink any intoxicating drinks and “... having made peace we would not forbid them the Lord’s supper”. To point one he said that:
there was a time that they used to baptize their infants, but now that they had it in their by-laws that it is only those who believed on Jesus and then of their own volition asked for baptism, would we baptize them, . . . .

In an indigenous fashion the discussion then went on to 2 a.m., when food was brought in(!). Next morning the discussion continued. At last Ato Abebe (according to Hodges) made an appeal going very far towards a compromise. He said:

. . . let’s forget our differences and we’ll take you in and you come into our Bible-School and learn the Scriptures from us and become one of us in the work of the Mahabir. Why should we be going two different ways when we think and believe so much alike?

After a discussion among the KEC-2 elders, Ato Ashebo stated:

It is as we have said at the beginning, and as far as we are concerned there will be no change. Just one question, do you mean to say that if a Christian had just only one small glass of “Aricky” that you would not allow him to take the Lord’s Supper?

The letter concludes with the shock at this statement and the sad understanding that there would not be any reconciliation. The letter shows that it was the KEC and the SIM who were interested in reconciliation. We note how the similarity between the “older church” (KEC) and the independent church (KEC-2), becomes an argument on Ato Abebe’s part for reunification. His comment above supports my characterisation of the KEC-2 as very similar to the KEC, still in 1960.

The four points presented by the KEC-2 are familiar ones. The dividing point was once again not the issue of infant baptism (doctrine), which however the KEC at this stage was not willing to compromise on. The comparatively small effort expended on this question indicates that infant baptism in 1960 was still not a big question for the KEC-2. Abba Gole’s statement points to an inconsistency in early KEC baptism practices, which was now just a memory.

The watershed between the two groups was the second point: drinking (ethos). There had been allusions to the weak drink borde earlier in the meeting and if it could be allowed. Ato Ashebo knew that the strong drink aricky (in English arrack) would never be allowed by the KEC. His provocative statement of allowing aricky shows the disinterest of the KEC-2 for reconciliation and a longing for cultural freedom. The KEC-2 stood up to the KEC (SIM) pressure to change its ethos on drinking and instead sensed the possibility of joining the EECMY as a member church. That was felt a better solution than reconciliation with the KEC (SIM).

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96 KM-A: Hodges to Donald 1960.07.18.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid. Aricky is the Ethiopian aquavit or arrack.

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Chapter Seven
The KEC-2 Faces a “New” Partner

It was within the framework of the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) that the representatives of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) from 1955 onwards had met and been assisted by leaders of the evolving Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). From its very inception the Mekane Yesus Church opted for an all-Ethiopian outlook.

In the course of 1960 the KEC-2 leaders decided to explore the possibilities of more intimate working relations with that new and flourishing Ethiopian Church. To them the church was not “new” in the sense that many of the members in the CEEC and the EECMY were the same. However, it did take some time and effort for the EECMY to respond to the challenge from Kambata/Hadiya. But when the response came it was indeed far-reaching.

In this chapter I will explore how the newly constituted EECMY handled the application of the KEC-2 for co-operation with, and membership in, the new Ethiopian Evangelical church. There are some useful studies on the formation of the EECMY. The interaction of the EECMY with the KEC-2, however, has not hitherto been sufficiently assessed. I will draw on minutes of the EECMY and on the minutes of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF/CWM).

A. The All-Ethiopian Outlook of the Mekane Yesus Church

One Church with Four Free Synods
When the EECMY was established as a church in January 1959 its membership was estimated at 20,000. The constitution of the church was based on synods, which were yet to be formally instituted.¹

The synods sent their representatives to the General Assembly, which met every second year. Each congregation was allowed to send one representative for every 300 members. The Executive Committee was to meet at least once a year but could be summoned more often. Besides the President and Executive Secretary of the Church, each synod was represented by its own President and Treasurer.

The EECMY Church Officers consisted of the President, the Vice-president, two Secretaries and the Treasurer. They met weekly and executed the decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee. The Church Office was situated in just one room(!) in the AAMY compound. Except for the secretaries the

Church Officers had ordinary jobs and did church-work on a voluntary basis.²

When scrutinising the structure of the EECMY constitution in 1959, Rev. Lundgren pointed out that it was clear that the current model gave great freedom to the different synods. Each synod should take care of its own budget and was free to decide about its liturgy and congregational organisation. The choosing and ordaining of pastors were synod responsibilities. Pastors ordained at synod level were, however, accepted as pastors by the whole church.³

I interpret this construction as a way to meet the demands of the four different low-church missions in the EECMY. It was, in fact, an ingenious solution to unify the heterogeneous views of the missions, which concerned different emphases on polity, doctrine and worship. Even so, common doctrine was the unifying factor for the Lutheran missions.

As to **polity** Bakke is correct in identifying the *priesthood of all believers* as a common basis of the missions. The four missions were also agreed as to the necessity of the ordained ministry. The Norwegian Lutheran Mission’s (NLM) approach was however pragmatic rather than principal in this matter in contrast to others’.⁴ As to **doctrine** the NLM and the German Hermannsburg Mission (GHM) emphasised Lutheran confessional documents more than the Swedish Evangelical Mission (SEM) and the American Lutheran Mission (ALM). As to **worship**, liturgy and the “right” administration of the sacraments were more emphasised in the GHM than by the others. NLM was the most “free”. As to **ethos**, discussions often focused on polygamy at this time. There were different emphases in the approach. Abstention from tasting alcohol and smoking was not particularly emphasised like in the SIM. A certain freedom was allowed in line with the Lutheran tradition of adiaphora, but Pietistic influences made themselves known, too.⁵

Three areas, which needed special attention to promote a functional leadership in the young Church, were mentioned by Lundgren:

1. The development of strong and healthy congregations.
2. The training of an indigenous leadership.
3. The financial organisation of the church.⁶

The backbone of the early EECMY was the revival groups in western Wollega and in Sidamo, together with the AAMY, Nakamte-MY and smaller groups in the north of Ethiopia. These groups formed the four first synods of the EECMY.

The strongest synod at this time was the “Gimbi Synod” or the Western Wollega Synod (WWS), which was established in 1960 and had about 15,000 members.⁷ The core of the synod was “The Evangelical Churches of Gimbi Awraja” or the “Ghimbi Awraja Board”, which received an indigenous status in 1949 in co-

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² Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.251ff.
⁴ NLM regards a call at the mission field decisive to pastoral functions. Bakke 1987, pp.103ff.
⁵ I have based this analysis mainly on Bakke 1987, pp.93-106 and Sæverås 1974.
operation with the SEM and later the GHM. Qes Daffa Jammo was President of the “Gimbi Synod” with congregations from Mendi, Nejo, Boji, Challia and Aira.8

The Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod was formed in 1961 and was divided into the Nakamte section, the Backo section and the Addis Abeba section in 1962.9

In 1960 the NLM working field was developed into two “Presbyteries”, which together had about 3,000 members. In 1962 the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod was established.10 A report delivered to the Lutheran World Federation’s Commission on World Mission (LWF/CWM) in 1958 gives the following statistics:

In the NLM field there are 29 organized congregations, 1970 Christians, 4128 catechumens, 140 scattered Christian groups, and 114 lay evangelists. So far we have only one ordained national pastor in this comparatively new field. . . In our Bible School, 70 students are enrolled, training for full time evangelistic service. This year a theological seminary was opened to students qualified for pastoral work.11

In the North, the Wollo-Tigré Synod was formed in 1959. It consisted of three congregations: Adua, Dessie and the International Church Mekane Yesus in Addis Abeba. Since 1957 the work in this region was supported by the ALM. The first Church Officers of the EECMY were: President Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, Vice-president Dr Herbert S. Schaefer, Secretary Ato Hagos Legges, Assistant Secretary Ato Gebreab Biadgilign and Treasurer Rev. Manfred Lundgren.12

In August 1960 the young EECMY was described by Dr Schaefer as the church of the Lutheran congregations of Ethiopia, now brought together into one church of four synods, as were the Norwegian, Swedish, German and American Lutheran Missions. He gave the following statistics on membership: “31,539 souls”, baptised members 18,961 and 12,578 communicant members.13

There were 135 autonomous congregations and more than 200 preaching-centres. There were 27 Ethiopian pastors and 50 schools with 5,300 students. A Joint Theological Seminary and a Joint Literature Centre were planned to start in 1960. The EECMY was characterised as autonomous (“independent”), and “. . .. largely self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating.”14 The most pressing needs were the lack of evangelists and pastors. Another was:

. . . that as a new church much has yet to be done in order to organize the congregations and Synods into functional groups.15

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13 LWF-A: LWF/CWM Field Reports Africa 1960, p.5, Schaefer. According to Schaefer’s official statistics, EECMY membership increased from 20,000 in 1959 to c.30,000 in 1960. This illustrates the dilemma of obtaining dependable statistics.
14 Ibid. Schaefer uses the term “independent church” for the EECMY. In my context autonomous is a better term. See above, p.23.
15 Ibid.
Dynamics within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus

Dynamics in the young EECMY in 1960 can be described from different angles. Different areas were influenced by different socio-political contexts. The area covered by the evolving Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod in the South was probably the most complex in this respect. “Amhara” nobles and administrators were in control among a multitude of ethnic groups. The dynamics of the SIM-NLM relations, discussed above, and the significant support paid by Kambata/Hadiya and Wolayta evangelists to this synod made it special.16

The Wollega Province, where two EECMY synods were situated, was more homogenous, having the Oromo as its dominating group. The legacy of early regional indigenous Oromo rulers in Nakamte, in contact with the Addis Abeba centre, influenced later relations, too. It probably improved living conditions for the Oromo population. The closeness to Sudan and relations to smaller ethnic groups complicated the picture.17

The Wollo-Tigré Synod’s context was special in relation to the EOC. As we have seen above, Dessie and Adua were in an “Ethiopian Church Area” (“closed” area). This did not hinder the Emperor from supporting the (Swedish) school in Adua, which (re-)started at the beginning of the 1950’s. As Adua is historical ground in Ethiopia, situated not far from the EOC centre in Axum, one would have expected a more cautious attitude in line with the Decree on Missions to the SEM (EECMY) ambitions.18 When a new American mission arrived in 1957 in a synod where comparatively large institutions and small congregations were gathered, dynamics became even more complex. As the EOC was well integrated in the society in the area, the context of this synod was different compared to others.19

Being the capital, Addis Abeba would need a chapter of its own. It was a place where all streams came into a confluence.

As indicated above, there were tensions between Lutheran missions due to their various missiological and historical legacies. This demanded flexibility and imagination when the EECMY was formed into a united Lutheran church. The differences among missions now affected the synods where they were working.20

Ethiopian Evangelicals and foreign missionaries were also influenced by the EOC legacy within the EECMY represented by men like Qes Badima Yalew. He introduced a liturgy in the AAMY, which followed the ritual of the Church of Sweden (Lutheran), augmented with Orthodox prayers and “suitable” traditions.21

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17 Donham 1986, especially chapters 1-2.
20 The tension between the Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) in Addis Abeba and local theological seminaries of the EECMY Missions is one example. Bakke 1987, p.212.
Another example of EOC influence is the AAMY lectionary called *Merahut*, (the keys), which was printed in 1949 as a booklet. It is a mixture and compromise between the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden lectionary of 1942 and EOC influences. The origin of the lectionary can be traced to Qes Badima Yalew and the Swedish missionary Rev. Stjärne. The epistle and gospel were read according to a Lutheran fashion but followed the indigenous four-year cycle of the Ethiopian calendar: *Zemene Matheos, Markos, Lukas and Yohannes*. Ethiopian festivals with appropriate bible-passages were included in the lectionary.  

Holy Communion was, furthermore, prepared for by fasting and celebrated in the morning before the Sunday service. Such practices are most easily explained with reference to an EOC frame of reference, which influenced the AAMY (EECMY). As has been noted, the AAMY had a powerful impact on various EECMY groups and synods. One pertinent example is how the NLM was forced to abstain from changing to a new, and in the NLM view more suitable title for the pastors in the South, in favour of the traditional EOC-title Qes.  

The “EEC”/CEEC legacy of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was brought into the EECMY by Ethiopian church leaders. As mentioned, many of the leading Ethiopian personalities in the EECMY were moulded together by common experiences for years in connection with the “EEC”/CEEC. As we recall, the legacy can be traced even further back. It served as a unifying factor also among EECMY members and overcame barriers of ethnicity, status and denominationalism.

The links of the “EEC”/CEEC members to the Kambata/Hadiya region were brought into the EECMY, too. When the EECMY was founded, missionary comity principles became less binding to the Ethiopians instead Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was reinforced in the young and enthusiastic church.

To characterise the EECMY as an autonomous (“independent”) church, as Dr Schaefer did in 1960, is a matter of definition. At congregational level it was a relevant term; at the evolving synodal and central level, however semi-autonomous would have been more appropriate. The EECMY was a fairly dependent church financially, but much of the work, also at central level, was at this time done on voluntary basis and with a low budget. The central budget for 1962 (1954 E.C.) was 4,950 Birr, of which 3,000 were reserved for funding the next All Africa Lu-

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25 See above, pp.69ff.; 89ff.
26 See above, p.131. Schaefer uses the word “independent”.
theran Conference. Synods and missions were expected to provide half of this budget each.²⁸

The EECMY decision-making bodies were fairly autonomous. Several of its leaders were distinguished Ethiopian characters with impressive international experiences and great capacity. Missionaries were, however, also part of these bodies and the missions’ funding was often needed to implement decisions.²⁹

To characterise the EECMY in 1960 as a church functioning in line with the three-self model of Venn and Anderson is according to my understanding not realistic but wishful thinking.³⁰ As has been seen above, the AAMY had been autonomous since 1941 and provided its own budget. Otherwise the KEC-2 in fact was a more self-reliant church than the EECMY of 1960. It had to depend entirely on its own local resources (self-supporting), was self-governing and self-propagating. This conclusion illustrates perhaps more of the limitations of the three-self model than of the young EECMY.

The EECMY within the Fellowship of the Lutheran World Federation

When the first Commission on World Mission (CWM) of the LWF was held in Oxford in July 1949, the Lutheran missions active in Ethiopia were well represented. Rev. O. Lie of NLM, A. Elfers of GHM, Director C. Rendtorft of the Danish Missionary Society (DMS) and Rev. J. Hagner of SEM were present.³¹

As will be recalled, the LWF influenced the formation of the Lutheran Missions Committee (LMC) in Ethiopia in 1951 and encouraged the formation of united Lutheran churches. Via the LMC the Lutheran missions in Ethiopia, including the SMBV, gained a network for co-operation inside Ethiopia. Parallel to this development Lutheran mission leaders met in an international network at the LWF/CWM annual meetings. They presented their “Field Reports” and functioned as chairmen and delegates of, for example, the “Ethiopian Sub-Committee”. It prepared a budget for Ethiopia and reported to the Commission.³²

These two Lutheran networks mingled and influenced the evolution among Evangelicals in Ethiopia and in the EECMY. The LMC brought requests for financial support to the LWF/CWM for matters like the production of literature, an Evangelical college and a seminary for pastors. The CWM gave support for such enterprises. When the EECMY had been formed in 1959, Ethiopians started to make use of the LWF/CWM network in a new way. Already earlier there were strong bonds between Ethiopian church leaders and the LWF. As will be recalled an important point of contact had been the AALC in Marangu in Tanzania in 1955.

²⁹ For a contemporary analysis of EECMY’s dependence on foreign funds, see Jonsson 1998.
³⁰ The model is analysed by Beyerhaus, idem 1956. See above p.58, below pp.145, 149f., 223f.
³² See above, pp.88, 112; LWF-A: LWF/CWM minutes 1951, pp.1ff., Exhibit Section, Summary of Field reports. Nils Dahlberg of the SEM was the chairman of the Ethiopia Sub-Committee in 1953. LWF-A: LWF/CWM minutes 1953, pp.2, 6ff.
Ethiopia was represented by Ato Emmanuel Abraham, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, Ato Amare Mamo, Ato Markina Maja(!) and Ato Ephraim Isaac.33

Ato Emmanuel Abraham characterises this conference as “epoch-making” when writing the preface of the report of the Marangu Conference from the Ethiopian Embassy in London. Later on he a bit humorously referred to Marangu as the time when he understood that he was a Lutheran. The Kiswahili word *Lutheri* had been so intensely repeated there that he had become curious about its meaning.34

The Marangu Conference broadened the Ethiopian leaders’ identity as Lutherans and made them aware of the LWF fellowship. A pertinent example is a missionary of the Finnish Missionary Society in the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church in South West Africa (later Namibia), Rev. Alpo Hukka. He attended Marangu and would later on come in close contact with the EECMY.35

After the Marangu Conference, the AAMY received an interim membership in the LWF in 1957. The same year Ato Emmanuel Abraham was elected to serve on the LWF Executive Committee. As President of the EECMY Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie became one of the six “members” of the LWF/CWM 1959-61. He acted as chairman and member of the Ethiopia Committee 1959-62. This gave him a considerable influence on the LWF/CWM budget process in those years.36

At the second AALC in September 1960 in Antisirabé in Madagascar, both Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Ato Emmanuel Abraham attended. The other Ethiopians were Qes Daffa Jammo “President, Gimbi Synod . . .”; Qes Gamachu Danu, “Principal, Mekane Yesus Bible School; Mendi, Nakamte, . . .”, Qes Gudina Tumsa, “Pastor; Nakamte, . . .”, Ato Hagos Leggese, “Secretary,” EECMY and Ato Gabre Egziabihre Zelleke “Presbyter of Norwegian Lutheran Mission . . . .”37

The huge evolving LWF-project in Ethiopia at this time was the LWF Radio Station for Africa and Asia, the Radio Voice of the Gospel (RVOG). It was inaugurated in 1963. It is thus an understatement to say that Ethiopia was a well-known country to the LWF, when an idea of an EECMY “Home Mission” in Kambata unofficially was discussed among EECMY and LWF officials.38

To sum up: Relations with the LWF enlarged the perspectives of the Ethiopian leaders both at theological and personal level. It introduced an African and international Lutheran network, which they were keen to make use of. It provided spiritual and financial support, which enabled the EECMY to take bold steps into an unknown future, like an extended outreach in the Kambata/Hadiya region.39 The other side of the coin was that this relationship reinforced the dependence on foreign funds in the EECMY.

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33 Markina Maja, the son of the SIM-related Wollamo Church leader Dana Maja, is an example of how Ethiopians changed Evangelical preferences. He was the first pastor ordained by NLM. Later on he returned to the Wollamo Church. GA-A: Arén 1972; Bakke 1987, p.171.
36 Sæverås 1974, pp.98ff.; LWF-A: LWF/CWM minutes 1959-62; see below, p.149.
37 LWF 1961, p.182.
38 Lundgren 1983.
The Addis Abeba Synod is today called Central Ethiopia Synod (It was earlier part of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod).

The South Central Synod was earlier called the Kambata Synod and in 1977-83 the South Central Ethiopia Synod.

The South Synod was earlier called the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod (from 1967 South Ethiopia Synod).

The Western Synod was earlier called the Western Wollega Synod.

The Central Synod was earlier part of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod.

The South West Synod was earlier part of the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod.

The North Ethiopia Area Work is the former Wollo-Tigré Synod.

The Bethel Synods: IBS, KIBS and WWBS were earlier (before 1974) part of the Presbyterian Bethel Church. See above, Map 1, p.38.

EFS Årsbok 1992 (SEM Year-book), p.126. No.1 The Addis Abeba Synod is today called Central Ethiopia Synod (It was earlier part of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod). No.2 The South Central Synod was earlier called the Kambata Synod and in 1977-83 the South Central Ethiopia Synod. No.3 The South Synod was earlier called the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod (from 1967 South Ethiopia Synod). No.6 The Western Synod was earlier called the Western Wollega Synod. No.7 The Central Synod was earlier part of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod. No.9 The South West Synod was earlier part of the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod. No.10 The North Ethiopia Area Work is the former Wollo-Tigré Synod. No.4, 5 and 8 The Bethel Synods: IBS, KIBS and WWBS were earlier (before 1974) part of the Presbyterian Bethel Church. See above, Map 1, p.38.
A Picture of the EECMY in 1961

By way of applying Molland’s typology the following tentative picture emerges.\textsuperscript{41}

**Polity:** There were four established or evolving synods in the EECMY. The WWS with centre in Boji was by far the largest. The EECMY Synods and joint projects were dependent financially on mission support. Local congregations were self-supporting. The AAMY was autonomous at all levels. The *priesthood of all believers* was emphasised in the EECMY. An elite of independent-minded leaders paved the way for laymen even as Presidents. The EOC concept of a Qes provided a silent background to the EECMY ordained ministry. The position of ministers in the NLM-related area was weaker than elsewhere in the EECMY.

**Worship:** The sacraments were important although Holy Communion was celebrated sparingly. Infant baptism was practised and the EOC baptism recognised. EECMY churches in Wollega and the AAMY were more sacramental than elsewhere. Confirmation was important. The songbook, *Sebhat le Amlak*, had its origins in hymns found in the SEM songbook, *Sions Toner*, and other western hymns. Versicles from the Psalms were included in the EECMY songbook.\textsuperscript{42}

**Doctrine:** The most important doctrinal documents for the Ethiopians were the 66 books in the Bible and *Luther’s Smaller Catechism*. The context of doctrine had since early on been related to disputes with the EOC. Evangelicals referred to the Bible, while EOC referred to documents and Church Fathers. Evangelical influences from abroad were mixed with a legacy of indigenised Pietism since the Evangelical Pioneers. Bible-study, prayer, songs and spiritual discussions mirrored the justification by faith and a personal every-day trust in God. The revival areas’ experiences of “Christus Victor” added strong belief in the power of prayer.\textsuperscript{43}

Two examples of overseas’ influences will suffice. In 1932-34 Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie studied at the Evangelical Interdenominational Bible Training Institute in Glasgow, inspired by the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. A few years later Ato Emmanuel Abraham visited this place, too, and the Keswick Convention. He, furthermore, attended Westminster Chapel in London regularly and listened to Bible expositions by the Congregationalist preacher G. Morgan Campbell.\textsuperscript{44}

Lutheran doctrinal awareness was in general fairly weak in the young EECMY. Members referred to themselves as Evangelicals. The Lutheran confessional books were included in the EECMY doctrinal basis by missionaries. Besides the Bible it comprised the three Symbola (*Apostolicum, Nicenum* and *Athanasianum*), *Luther’s Smaller* and *Larger Catechisms*, and *Confessio Augustana*. Some Ethiopians were probably prone to add some of Aleqa Taye Gebre Mariam’s books. EECMY doctrine in 1960 can be described as more complex than the missionaries’.

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\textsuperscript{41} I base this picture mainly on Sæverås 1974, Bakke 1987, Ezra Gebremedhin 1988 (Swedish) and on SG-A: Emmanuel Abraham o.i.1996.11.12; Emmanuel Gebre Selassie o.i.1997.03.24.

\textsuperscript{42} Arén 1999, pp.205f.

\textsuperscript{43} See for example, Hagner 1948 (Swedish); Eide 1996, p.314. On *fides qua*, see above, p.28.

\textsuperscript{44} SG-A: Emmanuel Abraham o.i.1996.11.12; Emmanuel Gebre Selassie o.i.1997.03.24; Grogan 1993, pp.75f.; Clark in Douglas, (ed.) 1974, p.677.
was a unifying factor but personal experiences and affiliations since the CEEC and the Evangelical Pioneers were very important factors, too.

**Ethos:** Since the time of the CEEC practical concerns were often raised concerning polygamy, reconciliation and various practical matters in an evolving *confessio in actu*. Drinking alcohol and smoking were not forbidden but also not encouraged. As a church based on voluntary membership the EECMY felt free to practise discipline in connection with Holy Communion services.

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**B. The EECMY Faces the Challenge of the KEC-2**

**The KEC-2 Applies for Membership**

As can be inferred from the previous section above, the young EECMY was not a very homogenous church in 1960 when it was approached by the KEC-2, who applied for membership. One can imagine that the EECMY had enough problems of its own at this time.

As has been seen, there was an urgent need for the training of leaders in the EECMY which I estimate as having about 20,000-30,000 members in 1960. To take in the poorly educated members of the complex KEC-2 with different spiritual and ethnic background than the other EECMY synods would increase the already heavy burden of the EECMY. It could prove too much for the young church. It would definitely mean an open break with the SIM and its affiliated churches.

Another problem was the size of the KEC-2. It was at this time estimated to have 25,000 members. Even if this was an exaggeration, it was in fact the official figure accepted by the leading Ethiopians and missionaries of the EECMY in 1961.45 What would happen to the EECMY if it accepted such a huge body as the KEC-2 as an EECMY synod?

Certainly, according to numbers, it would become a dominating synod. A new power structure would emerge in the EECMY. These were risks for the young EECMY to ponder when considering the KEC-2’s application for membership. To be able to meet the need of the KEC-2 and still remain the EECMY, a young Evangelical Lutheran church with a profile of its own, something extraordinary was needed.

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45 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1961, p.63, §9-53; A Program of Help to the People of Kambata, p.3, n.d., u.s. (1961 Schaefer and Lundgren); see below, Appendix III, p.3. “They said they were 25,000 at that time when they joined us. Their figures have kept decreasing.” Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, in GA-A: Arén 1972, p.10
The EECMY Decides to Support the KEC-2

The second EECMY General Assembly, 18-22 January 1961, became a turning point in the EECMY - KEC-2 relationship. The discussion on the KEC-2 at the General Assembly had been prepared by a meeting held between leaders of the AAMY and the KEC-2 the same day as the General Assembly started.46

One of the big issues of the second EECMY General Assembly, which gathered 42 delegates from the four synods, was to decide on full membership in the LWF.47 The LWF-EECMY relationship was presented by Ato Emmanuel Abraham in an “excellent” speech.48 The positive sides of this relation were stressed and Ato Emmanuel reminded the Assembly of the All Africa Lutheran Conference, which was going to be held in Addis Ababa in 1965. The LWF radio station and its importance for the church was also mentioned. No wonder that the Assembly’s decision to apply for membership in the LWF was unanimous.49

The KEC-2 application for membership in the EECMY was one of the last items on the agenda. The minutes relate that the question was discussed for a long time. The Church Officers were then given authority to take the necessary measures. The idea was to send a delegation to the Kambata/Hadiya region to study the situation. There is a certain ambiguity in the formulation of the minutes:

The assembly resolved that the officers, after having studied the reason for the Kambata Church to unite with us and what the cause of the conflict is, should do what is necessary and give full support.50

What in fact was said was that both an investigation should be made and full support given. This gives a hint of a very strong wish in the EECMY at this stage to give active help to the KEC-2. In an earlier discussion at the General Assembly it had been said that the first KEC-2 application for membership in the EECMY was made 12 years ago.51 This was an exaggeration, as the EECMY was founded two years earlier and the reconciliation achieved in 1952 by the “EEC” was just nine years ago. The statement can be interpreted as to how anxious the feelings were in the discussions. The KEC-2 was on this occasion said to have 25,000 members, which should be compared to the 43,550 members of the EECMY, which in 1961 was mentioned as the official figure by the EECMY President.52

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46 The issues were the EECMY relations to the KEC-2, to the Ocholo Christians and to the SIM; GA-A: CEEC minutes 1961, p.38, no.8, 11; see the CEEC minutes 1960, p.36, no.4.
48 SEM-A: Lundgren 1961, Gemensamhetsbrev: Report from the EECMY first General Assembly (Swedish). In fact it was the second General Assembly, when counting “the Founding Assembly” in 1959 as the first.
49 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
The General Assembly in January 1961 became the start of active EECMY support of the KEC-2 for the next eight years (1962-69). It was not a coincidence that the EECMY General Assembly first decided to join the LWF as a full member and then to investigate and give “full support” to the KEC-2. The new determination of the EECMY to help the KEC-2 was based on the knowledge expressed by Rev. Lundgren in a letter to his missionary colleagues that “. . . the LWF is interested in giving support”, i.e., to Kambata.\(^{53}\) The informal contacts between the EECMY and the LWF had an influence on the EECMY. It now hoped to get resources enough to be able to support the KEC-2 actively and to treat the KEC-2 application for membership in the EECMY seriously.\(^{54}\)

### The Special Commission to Kambata

As noted above, the EECMY General Assembly had authorised the EECMY Church Officers to investigate the situation in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The Church Officers should: “. . . do what was found necessary . . . .”, it was stated.\(^{55}\) Three persons were elected to an EECMY delegation: Ato Amare Mamo, Qes Gamachu Danu and Ato Zacheus Edamo. They were instructed to study the main cause of the conflict in the Kambata churches and the situation in the KEC-2.\(^{56}\)

Why were these three men chosen? Ato Amare Mamo had been the Vice-secretary of the EECMY Church Officers since January 1961. He was from Yirga Alem in Sidamo and had attended the first NLM teachers training seminar from 1951 to 1953. As mentioned above, he had been a prominent delegate at the CEEC, representing the Sidamo Mekane Yesus group. He had, furthermore, been on a scholarship to Norway in 1958-59. He was working at the EECMY Yemiss-rach Dimts Literature centre in Addis Abeba, when sent to Kambata. Speaking Sidamo, he would understand most of what was said in the local languages spoken in the Kambata/Hadiya region.\(^{57}\)

Qes Gamachu Danu was from Nejo in Wollega. He had been working as a teacher at the SEM-school in Mendi. He was ordained in Nakamte in 1958 and was attached to Bible-schools in Wollega. He represented the EECMY at the AALC in 1960 and “the Gimbi Synod” at the EECMY General Assembly in 1961. He was regarded as an intelligent and humble leader by Swedish missionaries.\(^{58}\)

Ato Zacheus Edamo was from Mishgida in Durame and thus a Kambata. He had been connected to the SMBV-school in Asella and had worked in different hostels in Debre Zeit, Addis Abeba and in Dessie. He had represented the Wollo-
Tigré Synod at the EECMY General Assembly in 1961 and was recommended strongly for the coming new venture by Dr Schaefer. As a local Kambata, he of course became a key-person for the planned investigation.59

At least three of the four EECMY synods were represented by the three men. They set out for a “... ten days’ stay in Kambata...”, as “... delegates: sent by the Church...”.60 In a way this was a repetition of the indigenous mission of Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie to Kambata on behalf of the CEEC nine years earlier.61

The Report

The Report of the Special Commission, which was first written in Amharic, was presented at the EECMY Church Officers meeting on May 9, 1961. A week later it had been translated into English.62 As such it is a well-structured indigenous effort to describe the KEC-2 situation in April 1961.63

The report is based on the ten days’ stay of the delegation in the Kambata/Hadiya region.64 Eight of these days had been used for visits to the five “sevens” of the KEC-2. One congregation in each “seven” had been visited, as well as Hosanna. The delegation is said to have come in contact with 2,000 persons. Questions had been put to elders, ordinary members of congregations and at special meetings. Especially questions on the split and motives for the KEC-2 to join the EECMY were focused on by the EECMY delegation.

Some of the details given in the report were based on hearsay, others were based on the delegates’ own experiences. Thus the delegates have “heard” of a large KEC-2 meeting of more than 3,000 people attending. At that meeting 543 people (observe the order of the numbers in this detailed figure) have been baptised, among them 100 children. This information should be compared to the statement, which maintains that baptisms “are not registered.”65

Statistical estimations were made without much reference to specific sources. The membership of the KEC-2 was thus estimated at 25,000 people. The number of congregations in each of the five “sevens” is estimated at 20, i.e., a total of 100 congregations. According to the rule of thumb mentioned above, using 100 mem-

59 The personalia on Zacheus Edamo. GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1961, p.2; List of Delegates (Amharic); MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, p.15; SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1994.02.01; Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1995.10.23.
60 GA-A: Amare May 1961; see below, Appendix II, p.2. The team met with the KEC “Big Three” but with no missionaries. They felt that the KEC-2 members were like “lost sheep”. SG-A: Gamachu Danu o.i.1997.08. 20.
61 See above, p.104.
62 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, pp.51f., Ginbot 1, 1953 E.C. (1961.05.09 Amh.).
63 The journey was obviously made between the two Church Officers’ meetings on Miazia 9 and Ginbot 9, 1953 E.C. (Apr./May 1961). GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.50, §44-53, Miazia 9, 1953 E.C. (Amharic); EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.51, Ginbot 1, 1953 E.C. (1961.05.09 Amharic); see below, Appendix II.
64 The section below refers to the pages in the report (1-5) unless indicated by footnotes. GA-A: Amare May 1961; see below, Appendix II.
65 See below, Appendix II, pp.2, 5.
bers per church, a realistic figure would have been 10,000 members.\footnote{See below, Appendix II, p.4.}

To judge by the signatures at the bottom of the English version, I infer that the report in its original Amharic version was written by Ato Amare Mamo. The context of the report was defined by the terms set by the EECMY General Assembly in January 1961, which had been eager for an EECMY action towards the KEC-2. It was also defined by the EECMY Church Officers’ obligations to implement an investigation of the KEC-2 and provide “full support”.\footnote{See below, Appendix II, p.5; see above, p.139.}

My impression is accordingly that the report is far from a neutral source. Its purpose is to describe the KEC-2 situation and the split in order to motivate EECMY support in the Kambata/Hadiya region and must therefore be characterised as biased. This impression is reinforced by the way the report refers to Catholic and SDA activities as threats. The effectual conclusion of the report reads:

\begin{quote}
It is clear that the groups who wish to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church-Mekane Yesus need educational, organizational and medical helps.
\end{quote}

If these helps are not forthcoming, they will sooner or later fall into the ever-outstretched arms of the Seventh Day Adventists and Catholics.\footnote{See below, Appendix II, p.5. On SDA see above, p.107, n.80.}

The message of the report can be characterised as voices from the KEC-2. One example may suffice:

\begin{quote}
The reason we want to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus is because we agree with its teachings.\footnote{See below, Appendix II, p.5. On rules for source criticism, see above, p.31, n.77.}
\end{quote}

These voices are mixed with reflections and suggestions made by the delegates of the Special Commission and possibly of the EECMY Church Officers.

This is not the place to give a detailed account of the message of the report, but three things should be highlighted:

1. The need for EECMY support of the KEC-2 is strongly and effectually argued in the report.\footnote{E.g. by focusing on: Differences on infant baptism (pp.1, 3); SIM discrimination (p.4); Lack of schools (p.4); “Threats” by other denominations; Links between the “EEC” and the KEC-2, which makes the KEC-2 understand that the EECMY stands on “the foundation of the Apostles” (p.4). See below, Appendix II.}

2. The report gives a positive description of the KEC-2 and the part it played in the conflicts with the KEC and the SIM. Problems within the KEC-2 are not described in a straightforward way. Instead euphemisms are used.\footnote{Nothing is mentioned of drinking problems or quarrelling in the KEC-2. Instead expressions like “. . . the educational standard . . . is not as it should be,” are used (p.5). The SIM is blamed for the KEC-2’s “stagnation” (p.4). The KEC-2’s responsibility for its own problems is thus minimised. See below, Appendix II.}

3. In at least two references to the split between the KEC and the KEC-2, (pp.1, 3; see below, Appendix II), infant baptism is emphasised as the primary cause of the conflict in 1951 (1943 E.C.).
As I have illustrated above in Chapter Five and Six, it is not in line with my sources that infant baptism was causing the conflicts in 1951-52 and 1953-54. Although other familiar arguments, like drinking and finance are mentioned, it is hard to avoid the impression that the upgrading of infant baptism as the primary reason of the conflict was an effort to make the KEC-2’s arguments and the expected EECMY support to the KEC-2 look more decent. The report does not mention that the EECMY delegation had witnessed any baptisms during their stay except by hearsay. It does, however, mention that the KEC-2 “...mode of baptism is immersion in a river.” Thus, the report indirectly witnesses to Baptist influences in the KEC-2 of 1961.

It is possible that a common EECMY view in 1961 was to regard the cause of the splits in the Kambata churches as controversies over infant baptism. If this was a primary cause of the split in 1951 and onwards and if infant baptism was widely used in the KEC-2 in 1961 are other matters.

As far as I see it, the value of the report of the EECMY Special Commission as a historical source is limited by its historical context and its tendency to find arguments for EECMY support to the KEC-2. Especially the description of the KEC/SIM and of the reasons of the split in the Kambata churches ought to be read parallel to other earlier sources as related above in Chapter Five and Six.

C. A New Start in the Kambata/Hadiya Region

Towards an EECMY “Home Mission”

The report of the Special Commission obviously made a strong impression on the EECMY Church Officers and led to great activity. On May 9, 1961 they decided to assist the KEC-2 “...in every way possible in view of the difficulties that Church is facing.” Furthermore, they decided to send some young people of the KEC-2 to NLM-schools, to educate KEC-2 leaders about the EECMY constitution, to establish an elementary school led by Ethiopians, to inform the synods of the situation and to send the report of the Commission to the EECMY-connected missions. With these decisions the point of no return was passed.

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72 See above, pp.99f., 108, 114ff., 120f.
73 See below, Appendix II, p.3. Matti Hirvilammi quotes Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi’s report from 1970: “Baptisms took place in a river. The view on baptism was diffuse and many Christians had been baptised several times.” Hirvilammi 1989, pp.40ff. (Swedish). Rev. Perttilä from the same time states that children who “stood on their own feet” were baptised. “Real infants I didn’t see baptized.” SG-A: Perttilä to Grenstedt 1995.08.07. Ato Djalatta in 1966 emphasised that before the “Kambattas” had pastors: “Baptism was usually done when the person to be baptized was big enough to go himself to the river.” GA-A: Djalatta 1996.01.21, p.2. Even if baptism in a river is taken as an African characteristic rather than a Baptist it is dubious if we can speak of infant baptism in a strict sense in the early KEC-2.
On May 17, the next Church Officers’ meeting was held. It decided to distribute the report of the Special Commission to the synods and to the co-operating missions. As already noted, the report had then been translated into English. The Church Officers decided to call the EECMY Executive Committee to a meeting on June 12 to discuss the question of EECMY support to the KEC-2. They also declared that they accepted a new “report” on how to help Kambata, which had been prepared by Dr Schaefer and Rev. Lundgren.  

The new report had been prepared in a very short time by these hard-working men. It gives interesting information on how two leading missionaries in the service of the EECMY viewed the situation in the Kambata churches in 1961. The headline of their report is “A PROGRAM OF HELP TO THE PEOPLE OF KAMBATA.” The sub-title says that it was accepted by the Officers of the EECMY: “On the Basis of the Special Investigation Report”.

Rev. Lundgren affirms that he and Dr Schaefer had been asked by the Church Officers to prepare a program after the report of the Special Commission had been received. The Schaefer and Lundgren report, on how to help Kambata, is very well structured. It has a modesty in tone and reveals a great deal of theological knowledge. It consists of four parts headed: 1. Situation, 2. Need, 3. Problems and 4. Suggested Actions.

The first part Situation starts by giving the background of the KEC. It characterises the SIM strategy as being a failure:

... to establish a strong self-governing church - instead it tended to lead and dominate the elders. The inconsistency of the S.I.M. past polity gave rise to difference of doctrine and deed.

The KEC members are described as divided on issues of infant baptism and legalism “... first expressed in the prohibition of alcoholic drinks ...” Accordingly, Schaefer and Lundgren regarded drinking as an early primary cause of the KEC split. They also mention prohibition of infant baptism and rebaptism of adults as dividing the believers. They maintain that some missionaries “(. . . baptised children and others rebaptised the baptised), . . .” From the context I gather that they imply some SIM missionaries. They, however, do not specify when baptism became a controversy in the Kambata churches. As I have argued above, I disagree that SIM missionaries baptised infants.

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76 GA-A: A Program of Help to the People of Kambata, pp.1-4, n.d., u.s. (1961 Schaefer and Lundgren); see below, Appendix III.
77 Ibid. “A Program . . .” was written by Schaefer and Lundgren. It was accepted by the EECMY Church Officers 1961.05.17. GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.52, §56-53 (1961.05.17 Amharic and English); SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1994.01.29.
78 GA-A: A Program of Help to the People of Kambata, n.d., u.s. (1961 Schaefer and Lundgren); see below, Appendix III. References in the section are made to this source unless indicated by footnotes.
79 See below, Appendix III, p.1.
80 See above, pp.62ff., 99f., 143.
The missionaries’ evaluation of the relation between the KEC-2 and the KEC in 1961 was that:

It has become clear that fundamental differences of doctrine and faith have grown so large that possibility of compromise and reunion is no longer possible.\(^{81}\)

The motivation given for an EECMY action was explained:

\[
\ldots \text{as it is a matter of doctrine, and as a failure to act will surely drive many to the fold of the Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists, the time for a decision by the} \]

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus is at hand.\(^{82}\)

The second part, called **Need**, highlights the EECMY responsibility:

\[
\ldots 1) \text{Any help given should be given by the Church and not directly by the Lutheran Missions or the Lutheran World Federation . . . .}
\]

3) Any help given to the Kambata Christians will mean acceptance into the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. This means that . . . ,

b. Help should be provided in organizing the Kambata Christians into congregations and a Synod of the Church,

c. The Church should be prepared to answer criticism from the other Protestant missions and churches.\(^{83}\)

The anticipated critique referred to was certainly expected to come from the SIM. To give direct support to the KEC-2 at this time would be interpreted as breaking comity principles as “. . . their area had been allotted to the SIM . . . .”\(^{84}\) Accordingly, as such critique was serious to a foreign mission the Ethiopians’ responsibility for this new EECMY venture was of utmost importance.

The third part, called **Problems**, shows a very honest effort to count the cost of the operation. The problems were vast and of two categories. The **first problem** formulated in various ways was the very weakness of the EECMY itself. How could the EECMY provide pastors, evangelists, men and money when its own need was so great?

The **second problem** was how to preserve the indigenous character of the KEC-2 and not to destroy its strong points, like self-government, self-propagation and self-support. The last point of the section gives the challenge of the whole operation:

8. How to assimilate twenty to thirty thousand souls into the Church at this time when the Church numbers only between thirty-five to forty-five thousand souls.\(^{85}\)

In the second and third part of the project prepared, Schaefer and Lundgren have been anxious to give a clear picture of the problems involved in the operation and

\(^{81}\) See below, Appendix III, p.1.

\(^{82}\) See below, Appendix III, p.2.

\(^{83}\) Ibid.

\(^{84}\) GA-A: CEEC minutes 1958, p.33, no.10. See above, pp.86ff.

\(^{85}\) GA-A: *A Program of Help to the People of Kambata*, n.d., u.s. (1961), p.3; see below, Appendix III, p.3.
to avoid an over-optimistic approach. This is emphasised by the first words of the section on “Need”. “If the EECMY responds to this call for help, it must realise that . . . .”, and by point 8 of the section on “Problems” quoted above. Schaefer and Lundgren wanted the EECMY to assess the costs of this new and daring Ethiopian venture. The anguish of the missionaries with regard to the KEC-2 challenge can be read between the lines.

Nevertheless, the last part of the report: Suggested Actions gives ten concrete suggestions, which show a determination to implement the program.

The first suggestion was to inform the KEC-2 of the EECMY assistance, but make it clear that membership in the EECMY had to wait. The other suggestions concerned how to give education to elders, to establish an “Evangelist Training Center in Kambata”, establish an 8th grade elementary boarding school run by Ethiopians, provide six scholarships at the Debre Zeit School, find candidates to study in the Mekane Yesus Seminary, establish a Bible-school in Kambata, encourage elementary schools led by congregations, ask the synods to give help to the program “in men and money” and lastly to “Conduct a Literacy Campaign for three years.”

This was indeed an impressive program. On the one hand it tried to maintain the Ethiopian leadership of the project and on the other to meet the need of education in the KEC-2. In fact, many of the “suggestions” of this “Program” would later be implemented. The ideas and principles laid down in the report by Schaefer and Lundgren on the basis of the previous investigation of Ato Amare and his colleagues were going to become the backbone of the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP).

Without the knowledge of possible LWF-support, the two missionaries would probably never have formulated a program like this. It is evident that they did not believe in an incorporation of the large KEC-2 into the EECMY, at least not as early as in 1961. An incorporation would have created an imbalance in the whole EECMY. This could have had dangerous consequences for the young church and its synods. A “Home Mission” led by the EECMY and sponsored by the LWF looked like an ingenious solution under the prevalent circumstances. It guaranteed indigenous leadership of the project and solved comity problems in a creative way.

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86 See below, Appendix III, p.2.
87 See below, Appendix III, pp.3f.
88 In fact, according to the program they emphasised that the “help given” should not be given “directly” by the missions or by the LWF, but via the Church. This shows their conviction that support would be received from the LWF and their own concerns for not breaking comity rules. See below, Appendix III, p.2.
Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity in Practice

The EECMY Executive Committee was called at short notice for its second meeting on June 12, 1961. The main issue was to discuss and come to a final decision on questions relating to the KEC-2. The four synods of the EECMY were represented by eight men. In addition to the five EECMY Church Officers, Qes Badima Yalew had been invited as a guest.89

The history of the Kambata churches was presented to the EECMY Executive Committee in four ways:

1. Firstly the EECMY President, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, gave a short introduction on developments from 1947 to 1961. These concerned the conflicts in the KEC and the Kambata churches’ petitions to the CEEC and to the EECMY. The final decision on how to relate to the KEC-2 was now going to be made, he declared.

2. Secondly the report of the Special Commission to Kambata was handed out to the Executive Committee’s delegates and read, probably by Ato Amare Mamo. He was the only one of the Special Commission attending the meeting.

3. Thirdly the CEEC minutes from 1947 to 1961 were read in short.

4. Fourthly Qes Badima was asked to speak on what he knew of the matter.

This was the background given to the Executive Committee to act upon.

As has been shown above, Qes Badima and Ato Emmanuel were indeed the right men to relate the history of the CEEC contacts with the Kambata churches. The written report of the Special Commission to Kambata provided a fresh illustration of the situation.

The EECMY presentation provided quite an elaborate basis for decision-making. The importance of the CEEC legacy to the EECMY was highlighted by the reading of the CEEC minutes since 1947. This was, as we have seen, the first year of KEC attendance at the CEEC.90 The links of the EECMY leaders to the CEEC, which the Kambata churches were part of, were spelled out by this elaborate indigenous Ethiopian presentation!

The main decision of the EECMY Executive Committee was to help the KEC-2 “according to its capacity” and to approve of a provisional budget for this purpose.

Another decision was to call some church leaders from the KEC-2 to Addis Abeba for education in church administration and an introduction to the constitution of the church. The Executive Committee delegates were also encouraged to take a copy of the budget and try to find support for it in their synods.91 Lastly the

89 GA-A: EECMY Executive Committee minutes 1961.06.12, pp.54-55, §62-53 to §66-53 (Amharic) is referred to in this section unless indicated by footnotes.
90 See above, pp.89ff.
91 A draft for a budget had already been prepared. At once the Wollo-Tigré Synod enthusiastically was prepared to support the project with E$ 300(!).
delegates unanimously decided to inform the SIM of the EECMY decision to help the KEC-2 according to its petition.

This was the final step in a row of decisions taken on the KEC-2 since the EECMY General Assembly in January 1961. The process of decision-making described above shows what a delicate and challenging question the KEC-2’s application for membership was to the EECMY. In fact, it dominated the EECMY second Executive Committee totally. By this decision in June 1961 the EECMY character of an autonomous all-Ethiopian church was reinforced. The somewhat adventurous decision on the KEC-2 rekindled the CEEC legacy of an enthusiastic Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity in the EECMY. The caution among EECMY leaders, which had been generated by missionary comity since the CEEC in 1956 and onwards, was now definitely on the decrease.92

**A Smooth Arrangement**

The whole matter of preparing a “Home Mission” was very timely planned. From January 1961 to June, everything needed for a project request to the LWF in view of assisting the KEC-2 had been smoothly arranged. Necessary decisions had been well founded among the EECMY synods, a delegation had been sent to Kambata, a program of help to the KEC-2 had been worked out and a budget had been drafted. Such things, of course, do not happen by coincidence. Lundgren’s words that Dr Søvik had encouraged the EECMY to apply for money from the LWF come to mind.93 The LWF support was a necessary precondition.

The Schaefer and Lundgren report was “Submitted to Dr Arne Sovik, Director, LWF, Geneva by EECMY, Addis Abeba, June 20 1961. Ref.Nr 71/61.”94 Probably the Report of the EECMY Special Commission to Kambata, and certainly the budget draft, were submitted as well.95 The same material was also distributed to the SEM missionaries.96 This smooth arrangement for handling the KEC-2 question in the spring of 1961 had an explanation. The goal of the EECMY Church Officers was to include the Home Mission Program for Kambata in the 1962 LWF/CWM budget. In 1961 the challenge of the KEC-2 was too large a question for the young EECMY to handle on its own.

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92 See above, pp.118ff., 124.
93 See above, p.140, n.54.
95 GA-A: *Suggested Budget*, n.d., u.s. (1961 Lundgren). This budget corresponds to the “Suggested Actions” of the report *A Program of Help to the People of Kambata* sent to Geneva 1961.06.20; see below, Appendix IV. The budget corresponds to the EECMY request for Kambata for 1962. I suggest that this is “the temporary budget” approved by the Executive Committee, June 1961. LWF-A: LWF/CWM minutes 1961.07.26-08.02, p.27.
96 SEM-A: Lundgren 1961.06.26, Gemensamhetsbrev (Swedish).
Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie Links Kambata with Geneva

As we have seen above, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was a key-person in the CEEC and in the AAMY. In 1952 he had been sent to Hosanna by the CEEC on a reconciliation mission to the Kambata churches. At the LWF/CWM annual meeting in Berlin July/August 1961 he, as the first Ethiopian ever, gave the EECDMY “Field Report” on Ethiopia. He did it in the capacity of one of the six “members” of the LWF/CWM and as the chairman of “the Ethiopia Committee”.  

Ato Emmanuel was indeed the right person to present the EECDMY Program on Kambata to the LWF. And he did! The minutes speak for themselves:

Upon recommendation of the Ethiopia Committee, CWM,

Resolved  
a) That CWM encourage the Evangelical Church – Mekane Yesus in its plan of assistance to the Kambata Christians;  
b) That CWM refer to the Budget Committee the request for $ 14,800.- for 1962 . . . .

This sum was altered to $ 13,754, “. . . taking into consideration local contributions of $ 1,000 . . . ” It was included in the 1962 LWF/DWM Program Budget, as an expenditure called “Educational Program, Kambata, Ethiopia 13,754.00”. This meant that the EECDMY request for the Home Mission Program 1962, which in Ethiopian $ was 36,885, had been approved by the LWF/CWM. The detailed budget of the Kambata Program had the following structure:

1. Evangelist Training Center (12 months)  
2. Elementary School. Elementary School Boarding  
3. Six Scholarships - Debre Zeit  
4. Bible School (12 students)  
5. Teacher-adviser (300x12)  

First Year Needs—E$ 36,885.

With this budget one of the fundamental SIM-principles applied in the Kambata/Hadiya region, i.e., not to pay for Ethiopian indigenous enterprises with foreign money, was abandoned. Salaries for an adviser, two pastors, two teachers and guardians had been included in the budget for 1962.

There had not been much discussion in the EECDMY on this change of principles in the Kambata/Hadiya region, in addition to the deliberations prepared by Schae-
fer and Lundgren. They had posed the question on how to provide help “... without destroying the self-governing, self-propagating, self-supporting nature of the Christians already there.”\textsuperscript{104} When discussing church-mission relations concerning the EECMY on an earlier occasion, Rev. Lundgren was anxious not to build a church which would depend on mission budget. All churches and schools should be built by congregations, and all workers be employed and salaried directly by the church. This was what Lundgren opted for, but the principles should be used wisely.\textsuperscript{105}

It seems that there was neither enough time nor enough interest for such a discussion in the EECMY, when it came to the point. Here again the EECMY leaders acted pragmatically and with an Ethiopian purpose. From now on Ethiopians would pay salaries to Ethiopians with foreign funds in the KEC-2.

**A Picture of the KEC-2 in 1961**

In 1961 the KEC-2 had been on its own as an independent church for eight years.\textsuperscript{106} As a whole it still was very similar to the KEC except on its teaching on moral and traditional issues.\textsuperscript{107}

**Polity:** The KEC-2 consisted of five “sevens” (districts). The two strongest were the Dodoba “Seven” with Ato Zelleke Luke’s congregation in Hawora and the Abonsa “Seven” with Ato Ashebo Wolecho’s congregation in Mishgida as strongholds. The Endara Congregation north of Hosanna in the Lemu “Seven” and the Sorgago Congregation in the Soro “Seven” were places of interest, too.\textsuperscript{108}

Four times a year baptisms were held at quarterly meetings.\textsuperscript{109} These meetings can be compared to kinds of KEC-2 “General Assemblies”. The KEC-2 was heavily dependent on local elders. The model was conservative and authoritarian.

**Worship:** As there were almost no church-buildings, the services were held in private homes and thus became dependent on the good-will of the house-owner/house-elder.\textsuperscript{110} Singing and prayer in local indigenous manner dominated KEC-2 services and liturgy.

**Doctrine:** When the link to the EECMY became stronger in 1961, the interest in following EECMY practices on baptism increased among KEC-2 leaders. But as no mission or the “EEC”/EECMY had yet come to the Kambata/Hadiya region to teach the KEC-2, and as the educational level of the KEC-2 elders and leaders

\textsuperscript{104} See below, Appendix III, p.3.
\textsuperscript{105} Lundgren 1960, pp.189f. (Swedish).
\textsuperscript{106} This section refers to GA-A: Amare May 1961 unless indicated by footnotes; see below, Appendix II.
\textsuperscript{107} See Abebe Bushero’s argument above, p.128; KM-A: Hodges to Donald 1960.07.18.
\textsuperscript{108} The Dodoba “Seven” was a middle-ground, where Kambata and Hadiya ethnic borders met. According to one of my maps, the Shonkolla Mt. was situated inside the Dodoba “Seven”. It would be too simplistic to refer to this “seven” as only Kambata. MP-A: Palmu 1977; see above, p.51, below, pp.164, 219.
\textsuperscript{109} GA-A: Amare May 1961, p.2; see below, Appendix II, p.2.
\textsuperscript{110} GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21.
was very low, three years of schooling or less, not much teaching was accomplished in the church.

Instead the legacy of the SIM, where confession was emphasised in connection with the sacraments, still lingered on in 1961. The KEC-2 form of baptism was immersion in a river and a baptisand was expected to profess “... Jesus Christ as his personal Savior publicly...” Then he also became a communicant.

Because liberalism on moral issues was common, the KEC-2’s legacy of public confession became formalistic and confusing. The contradiction between profession and practice made the KEC-2 vulnerable.

Map 6 The KEC-2 Five “Sevens” in 1961

Ethos: The KEC-2 attitude to drinking and polygamy was liberal.

Ecumenism: At a national level the KEC-2 delegates had been attending each CEEC in Addis Abeba 1955-61. The CEEC at this time functioned as a lifeline of moral support to the KEC-2 but the CEEC representatives did not involve themselves actively in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Since 1961 the KEC-2 was happily aware of an increasing support from the EECMY. Ato Zelleke and Ato Ashebo and others had met with AAMY elders in Addis Abeba on January 18, 1961. This became the final step of the KEC-2 to an open acceptance by the EECMY.\(^{112}\)

\(^{111}\) GA-A: Amare May 1961, p.3; see below, Appendix II, p.3.

In April 1961 the EECMY Special Commission to Kambata visited all the five “sevens” of the KEC-2. In June, when the EECMY support to the KEC-2 received official status, six elders were invited to come to Addis Abeba in July to study the EECMY Constitution and church administration. These things were an anticipation of what was to come and filled the KEC-2 leaders with optimism.

At local level the KEC-2 leaders’ opinions of the SIM and the KEC were very critical. The KEC-2 felt discriminated against.

**Size:** In 1961 the KEC-2 claimed to have 20 congregations in each one of the five “sevens” and a membership of 25,000. This was probably a huge exaggeration as 100 congregations normally would be estimated to approximately 10,000 members.

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**Photo 2** Qes Gudina Tumsa

*Photo: Leif Gustavsson, Svenska Kyrkans Bildbyrå, Uppsala*

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114 $5 \times 20 \times 100 = 10,000$ using “the rule of thumb”. See above, p.67.
Chapter Eight

The Double Strategy of the EECMY

The new framework of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) since 1962 was the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) with its four synods and Church Officers in Addis Ababa. In 1962 the EECMY developed what I call a “double strategy” in its contact with the KEC-2.¹

One part of the strategy was to release Qes Gudina Tumsa from the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod (Nakamte) for some time and make use of his talents in the KEC-2. His task was to integrate the independent church KEC-2 as a synod of the EECMY. This was a primary concern of the EECMY strategy.

The other part of the strategy was to ask Ato Zacheus Edamo to leave the Wollo-Tigré Synod and be appointed the local Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) Executive Secretary in the Kambata Hadiya region. His task was to implement various indigenous EECMY projects in KEC-2 within the KHMP budget.

The process of communication between the KEC-2 and the different EECMY representatives would prove vital for the future. In this chapter I will follow developments from 1962 to 1964 on the basis of EECMY minutes.

A. A Kambata Approach to the EECMY “Home Mission”

Ato Zacheus Edamo’s Mission

The new status of the KEC-2 as a major concern of the EECMY was publicly revealed at the EECMY third Executive Committee in January 1962, to which four KEC-2 elders and Ato Zacheus Edamo were invited.²

It was now suggested that Ato Zacheus should be released from his work in the Wollo-Tigré Synod and take office as Executive Secretary of the KHMP in his native area, that is, the Kambata/Hadiya region. At the same time Qes Gudina Tumsa should be asked to give his services to the KEC-2 for a short time before using a scholarship for studies abroad. In 1962 his services were seen to be more valuable in the KEC-2 than in Nakamte, where conflicts hampered the work.³

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¹ “Double strategy” is not an EECMY expression but seems to have been the way followed.
³ The suggestion was made by Rev. Lundgren. GA-A: EECMY Executive Committee minutes 1962.01.17, p.3 (Amharic); Arén 1972, p.10; see Sæverås 1974, p.138; GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.74, §52-54, Megabit 19, 1954 E.C. (Mar.1962, Amharic).
As Ato Zacheus was from Mishgida near Durame in the south of Kambata, he found it natural to settle there among his own relatives. In fact he was the first EECMY employee living and working in the Kambata/Hadiya region. As such he was paid by the KHMP budget. He now started to implement the KHMP visions of an elementary school, a Bible-school, and an evangelist training centre and scholarships. He did it as the Executive Secretary of the KHMP with “full support” from the EECMY.⁴

On June 8, 1962 Ato Zacheus bought a piece of land from his relatives, 15,000 square meters, for the sum of E$ 2,000 “. . . in an area of active Christians”, as he put it.⁵ The place bought was situated just outside Durame in a place called Benara, which is part of the wider Mishgida area. Two provisional houses were soon erected for an elementary school and a Bible-school. The school was supposed to cover grades 1-6 with the assistance of the KEC-2 Mishgida (Benara) congregation, which should teach grades 1-3.⁶

As the SIM policy of schools was to offer only grade 1-4 at this time, there was a great demand for higher education in the region. When the Mishgida School tried to meet this need and offer higher grades, it was very well received. Land transactions were not easy to accomplish in the Ethiopia of 1962. The most simple way was probably to purchase land from relatives.⁷

Ato Tamru Segaro, also from Mishgida, and Ato Mamo Fetene were employed as teachers in July 1962, with a salary of E$ 115 and 110 a month paid by KHMP money.⁸ Ato Tamru was from a strong Christian family in Benara. His father Ato Segaro Selato was a strong KEC elder of the Amburse “Seven” in the KEC. Ato Tamru had been employed by the NLM in Sidamo in the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod and was working at the NLM school in Wondo Gennet when he was invited to Mishgida. As we recall, Ato Tamru represented the Sidamo Mekane Yesus group at the CEEC in 1959 and at the EECMY’s first General Assembly in 1959.⁹

The Bible-school, too, was now started in Mishgida. It used the same premises as the elementary school. It started with a one-year course for approximately 20 students. It seems to have used a Bible-orientated curriculum very similar to the SIM Bible-schools. Ato Erjabo Handiso, who had been a Bible-school teacher at the SIM centre in Bobicho, was one of the first teachers together with Ato Kasa Arficho. As Ato Tamru and Ato Kasa had been among the first pupils in Bobicho when the SIM Elementary school started in 1949, and had been sent out for SIM literacy teaching in 1952, they had some perspectives of what now was going to

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⁴ GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, Miazia 10, 1954, p.78 (Apr.1962, Amharic); Suggested Budget, n.d., u.s. (1961 Lundgren); see below, Appendix IV.
⁶ GA-A: Zacheus Jan.1963; see below, p.166. More realistic is to maintain that the Mishgida School covered grades 1-4 at the start; see GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.4.
⁷ SG-A: Ayele Asale o.i.1998.01.24.
⁹ SG-A: Teferi Sendabo o.i.1994.03.15; 1995.07.26; see above, p.126.
According to Ato Zacheus the elementary school had 300 students and the Bible-school 20 at the start of the Ethiopian school year in September 1962. Scholarships were provided for promising students to the NLM Bible Training School in Dilla in Sidamo. Two students, Ato Tarekegn Adebo and Ato Bekele Basore, had been sent to the Evangelical College in Debre Zeit. Two others, Ato Petros Wontamo and Ato Leggesse Segaro, the younger brother of Ato Tamru, were sent to the Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS) in Addis Abeba.

The EECMY representative in the Kambata/Hadiya region, Ato Zacheus, was given considerable authority. He was trusted by the EECMY Church Officers and by the KEC-2 elders. Indeed he made an impressive start in the area around Durame in 1962. The Abonsa “Seven”, where Mishgida is situated, and other “sevens” of the KEC-2 were filled with optimism in 1962. The other “sevens” were waiting for their piece of the KHMP cake, probably without much envy at the Abonsa “Seven”, as rumours had it that the resources of the EECMY were endless.

The NLM had not been willing to support the KEC-2 in 1953 and 1957. Owing to influences of missionary comity on the EECMY since approximately 1957-58, the EECMY doors had been closed to activities in the Kambata/Hadiya region, too. The EECMY’s change of attitude in favour of giving practical support to the KEC-2 in 1962 compared to some years ago was remarkable. Ethiopians connected to the NLM-work crossed the Sidamo border in order to teach the KEC-2 and scholarships were provided for studies in NLM-schools. Kambata and Hadiya students like Ato Molla Wontamo and Ato Gobena Mugoro (from Lemu), were sent as far as to the Teachers Training School in Adua in September 1963. Indeed a remarkable change!

The construction of a “Home Mission” led by Ethiopians and supported by the LWF (and the Lutheran missions) solved the dilemma of comity for the missions and supported EECMY activities. In the eyes of the ordinary Kambata/Hadiya farmer, the key-person in all these “miracles” was - Ato Zacheus. He was treated with respect in the now flourishing KEC-2.

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14 See above, pp.108, 124.
15 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, Hamle 10, 1954 E.C., p.82, §77-54 (July 1963, Amharic); see GA-A: EECMY General Assembly 1963, p.52, The President’s Address.
Full Support but a Lack of Integration

From the horizon of the EECMY Church Officers, in far away Addis Abeba, all seemed to be functioning well and achievements had obviously been made. As it was more complicated to communicate directly with the KEC-2 elders, the EECMY Church Officers mainly depended on their representative Ato Zacheus and his information. The reports were indeed very positive. In November 1962 it was time to make a check-up with Ato Zacheus and to discuss the program for the coming year. Ato Zacheus was called to Addis Abeba to present a working-plan and discuss a budget for the KHMP for 1963 (1955 E.C.).

On that occasion it seems as if the EECMY Church Officers became a bit worried that Ato Zacheus was concentrating too much on developments in Durame. Ato Zacheus, however, was convinced that Durame was the best place as a centre for the KHMP work. After all the KEC/SIM centre was in Hosanna and Durame was at some distance from that place. In 1962 this was probably convenient. The road from Arba Minch to Addis Abeba was not too far away from Durame, whereas Hosanna lacked a good road to Addis. The Church Officers emphasised, however, that the school must serve the whole KEC-2 area. They asked Ato Zacheus to encourage KEC-2 congregations to open their own primary schools.

Even so, Ato Zacheus was authorised to sign for the firm of the KHMP in the Bank of Kambata. Thus his authority increased even more in November 1962, after the successful start of the school in Durame. He was now in charge of the KHMP finances at local level and had authority over the KHMP workers.

It is likely, however, that the EECMY Church Officers felt somewhat uncertain of Ato Zacheus’s leadership of the KHMP. They needed a trustworthy reporter, as the complicated process of communication made the situation in the KEC-2 hard to judge from Addis Abeba. They also wanted to reinforce the EECMY profile on the work started by Ato Zacheus. It was thus decided to call the new school in Mishgida “. . . the Mekane Yesus School”.

The Church Officers complained that they lacked people who could create growth and unity in the KEC-2. It is, however, questionable whether the unity and maturity of the EECMY congregations were that much better in other places, such as Nakamte or Mendi, than in the KEC-2 at this time. The situation of the young EECMY in 1962 was by no means easy or ideal. The Church Officers’ concern was motivated. Not only was the KHMP centre placed in Durame, almost
all of the scholarships in 1962 were given to people from Durame. Most of the pupils in the Mishgida School were probably from the surroundings.\footnote{24 See below, p.158.}

So far the relation between the KEC-2 elders and Ato Zacheus, as the local KHMP Executive Secretary, had not been clarified by the EECMY. This led to a lack of integration of the KHMP into the KEC-2 structure. Accordingly, Ato Zacheus dominated as the one chosen by the EECMY. The KEC-2 elders, who represented all the KEC-2 “sevens”, however, seemed to have lost their former contact with the EECMY Church Officers. As this was only the start of the KHMP and the resources were great, according to rumours, the KEC-2 elders of the other four “sevens” waited for their share.

The EECMY Opt for Optimism

In spite of actual problems in the Kambata/Hadiya region the third General Assembly of the EECMY in Addis Abeba, January 1963, was very optimistic when discussing the EECMY “Home Mission” in the KEC-2. In the minutes the “Kambatta-Mekane Yesus Church”, with nine elders from the region attending in addition to Ato Zacheus, is introduced after the four synods of the EECMY. Ato Zacheus is presented as one of six EECMY Directors under the heading “DIRECTORS OF CHURCH SPONSORED PROJECTS” together with Rev. Arén, Ato Djalatta Djaffero and others. He also belonged to the group of five in the Nominating Committee for the election of new EECMY Church Officers together with Qes Daffa Jammo, Qes Gudina Tumsa and others.\footnote{25 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, pp.2f., 7.}

The President of the EECMY, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie characterised the EECMY assistance given in 1961-62 to the KEC-2 by saying that EECMY “... is now doing what it can to help the Evangelical Churches of Kambata to help themselves.” He spotted the main problems of the KEC-2 as “... the lack of organisation and the shortage of trained, dedicated Christian workers.”\footnote{26 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, p.52.}

His summary of the EECMY contributions given to the KEC-2 since 1961 is that it has:

\begin{itemize}
\item[] provided special lessons in church organisation and administration to selected elders; sent its own people to meet and council with the leaders of Kambata; sent and supported a pastor of the EEC-MY to serve among the people of Kambata (We hope to send him again soon);\footnote{27 See above, p.153. The allusion was to Qes Gudina.} supported many young men in schools in Sidamo, in the Ethiopian Evangelical College, and in the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis Abeba; and sent young teachers from Yirgalem to teach in Kambata.\footnote{28 \textit{Ibid.}}
\end{itemize}

One must say that the young EECMY indeed was keen to use the resources available in trying to support the KEC-2. The keywords for the “Home Mission” enterprise were - EECMY education, EECMY administration and Christian dedication.
Ato Zacheus’s title at this General Assembly was Director of the KHMP. His report is called “First Annual Report on Kambata Programme”. Its tone is very optimistic and no problems are mentioned. It ends with a statement:

... It is hoped that within two years, not only will the congregational structure be set, but also that Kambata will be one of the self supporting Synods of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus.

Although this might have been the sort of rhetoric used in reports of this kind, it was far from a realistic statement. In fact, it shows a naive attitude to the complex situation of the KEC-2. The people “... from all over Kambata are very happy to have this school in this province” he maintained, referring to the Mishgida School.

However, Ato Zacheus did not mention that the other “sevens” in the KEC-2 had made strong requests for grants of land, similar to those the Abonsa “Seven” had received. The KEC-2 elders probably hoped for a similar development in their own “sevens” to what they had seen evolve in the Abonsa “Seven”. They now applied for money “... to purchase three portions of land for work in the Kambatta area ...”. This was said to be impossible, however, and the Assembly resolved:

That the Church purchase a centrally located plot of land on which a center can be established for directing the work in Kambatta.

The KEC-2 also requested the EECMY to send five pastors, probably one to each KEC-2 “seven”. The EECMY response was that the WWS could provide two pastors, whereas the other synods should “... take this matter to heart.”

There is an obvious discrepancy between Ato Zacheus’s “happy” report and the message of the KEC-2 elders’ requests. As mentioned, Ato Zacheus reported that all people, “... from all over Kambata ...”, were happy with the school in Mishgida. The request for a centrally located plot of land with a centre to direct the work in “Kambatta”, however, conveys a message that problems lay ahead.

The centre of the KEC-2 and the KHMP was now regarded by the EECMY to be located in Mishgida. The “Director”, whose task naturally was to “direct” the EECMY work in the region, was Ato Zacheus. Therefore, it appears that the EECMY General Assembly in 1963 turned out to be a disappointment for the KEC-2 elders. When their requests for land and pastors were turned down or altered by the EECMY, they were not happy at all. When the EECMY view of Ato Zacheus’s position as the one in charge in “Kambatta” dawned upon them, they became suspicious of Ato Zacheus and the new order. It challenged their own positions as KEC-2 elders directing the church according to their own understanding and traditions. The centralised KHMP model of the EECMY was in many ways a novelty to them.

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30 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, resolution no.9.
31 Ibid.
32 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, resolution no.12.
33 GA-A: Zacheus Jan.1963, p.31. The EECMY General Assembly in 1965 would convey another message. GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.3: “Since it has always been felt that the benefits of the school at Mishgida would reach only a limited part of Kambata ... .”
The LWF’s Armchair Speculations on Finance

The idea behind the KHMP five-year budget was to reduce the LWF grant each year and to increase the KEC-2 contribution, according to a certain scale “... with the understanding that the Kambata area should be a self-supporting group within this time”. The EECMY Treasurer, Rev. Lundgren, stressed the importance of a unified EECMY support to the KEC-2 with prayers, personnel and money in order to develop a strong leadership.34

In LWF the KHMP was not looked upon as an ordinary LWF-project but as an EECMY responsibility at one instance called “Special Evangelistic ministries”. It could be presented in the following way in Geneva:

A group of young Christians, products of an indigenous awakening in a remote district and numbering thirty to sixty thousand, have asked the Evangelical Church-Mekane Yesus for help in consolidating their congregations, training their leaders and young people and teaching them the meaning of their new faith. This new work is the entire responsibility of the Ethiopian Church, but it has asked for a subsidy of $14,000.35

Another way of describing the KEC-2 would have been to say that it was the result of a church split, and owing to missionary comity only Ethiopians were “allowed” to give support. In financial deliberations the latter arguments were less effectual.

Lundgren knew, however, that the EECMY did not have the resources to provide a substantial financial and spiritual support to the KEC-2. The EECMY, too, needed help from external sources.36 The budgets of the EECMY synods were dependent on grants from foreign missions. Therefore, it was optimistic to believe that the KEC-2 would manage what the EECMY synods would not dream of for themselves - to become self-supporting in five years time.37

The KHMP income-budget for the years 1963-64 was expected to amount to approximately half of the total EECMY central income-budget in these years(!). For 1963 the expected grant from the LWF budget to the “Home Mission” was E$ 25,000 of a grand total of E$ 50,552.38 The corresponding figures in 1964 were E$ 20,000 out of E$ 48,000. The LWF grant to the “EEC-MY Home Mission” in 1962 was, according to the 1963 financial report, E$ 25,916.62. The Wollo-Tigré Synod had contributed E$ 300 and the “Eastern Wollega” Synod E$ 72,20 to “Kambata”. The EECMY income for “Kambata” in 1962 was thus E$ 26,288:82. The expenses for the “EEC-MY Home Mission” in 1962 were E$ 10,744:56.39

It should be kept in mind, however, that the central budget of the EECMY was not very large in those years, as the contributions from supporting missions went

34 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, p.43, Explanations to the Budget Proposals.
36 See above, pp.145f.
37 It is obvious that the word “self-supporting” in these years had another meaning than being financially independent; cf. LWF-A: LWF/CWM Field Reports Africa 1960, Schaefer, p.5.
38 The exchange rate used at this time was 2.5, i.e., the Ethiopian $ (Birr) was worth 40 US cents. Ullendorf 1965, p.206.
directly into the treasury of the respective synod. Anyway, the impression given to the General Assembly delegates was that the KEC-2 and the KHMP received a large amount of money from the LWF. This did not encourage the EECMY synods to support the KHMP financially. Bearing the LWF contributions to the KHMP in mind, it is relevant to wonder whether the KHMP representative Ato Zacheus, who was the EECMY local “Treasurer” in the Kambata/Hadiya region, was considered a very important man in 1962. He certainly was.

**B. Qes Gudina Tumsa’s Attempt at Integration**

**The EECMY’s Search for Integration**

As has been mentioned earlier, the EECMY already in July 1961 had begun to educate KEC-2 elders in Church administration and in the EECMY constitution in accordance with the EECMY Executive Committee’s resolution in June 1961. This indicates an interest from the EECMY side to integrate the KEC-2 as a synod from the very start of the more active EECMY support.41

A year later, in 1962, Qes Gudina Tumsa paid a first visit to the Kambata/Hadiya region and met with KEC-2 elders.42 Accordingly, the link between Qes Gudina and the KEC-2 leadership was already well established, when in November 1962 the EECMY Church Officers wrote a letter and asked the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod to send him to the KEC-2 for a longer period of time.43

Qes Gudina proved to be an excellent person to bring trustworthy information on local developments to the EECMY Church Officers and above all to start the integration of the KEC-2 into the EECMY. In February 1963 he was able to involve himself and went to the Kambata/Hadiya region with the view to prepare the KEC-2 for its integration as a synod into the EECMY. As mentioned above, this integration was the overall and primary concern of the EECMY with regard to the KEC-2. The KHMP was meant to serve this purpose, too.44

Qes Gudina Tumsa was from Boji in Wollega, and born in 1929. He had been working as the first indigenous pastor in Nakamte since his ordination in 1958. He was a strong preacher referred to as “our Billy Graham” by Ato Emmanuel Gebre

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40 For example, the EECMY did not have an office of its own in 1963 but rented a house from the AAMY Congregation for this purpose. GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, Resolution no.2; Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.252ff.
42 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.83, §75-54, Hamle 10, 1954 E.C. (July 1962, Amharic); see EECMY General Assembly minutes 1963, p.52, The President’s Address. 
43 Ibid.
Selassie. With the Mishgida centre in the Abonsa “Seven” as his base, Qes Gudina started his new venture, which would go on for about six months.\(^{45}\)

The charisma of the tall Qes Gudina, when teaching and preaching, made a strong impression also on KEC elders. But they (and KEC-2 Christians) were confused because he smoked a pipe. They were told that he had been advised by his doctor to smoke due to health reasons(!).\(^{46}\) Apparently the theological paradigm of Qes Gudina and the SIM ethos on “worldly practices” differed on this point.

After three weeks on March 9, 1963 he returned to Addis Abeba, where a “special session” with the EECMY Church Officers was arranged. Qes Gudina gave a short report on how KEC-2 congregations were starting to “establish themselves” and to arrange their work “properly”, as he put it. Qes Gudina presented a plan on how congregations should be organised and the work be directed.\(^{47}\)

His ambition was to visit as many congregations as possible in all the “sevens” and teach EECMY doctrine and worship. His idea on polity was to organise the small KEC-2 congregations into larger units. Thus the dominance of the house-fathers in the family-based churches of the KEC-2 would be broken and a more democratic system, similar to the EECMY model, would be introduced. He also aimed at introducing a synod structure of EECMY model in the KEC-2.\(^{48}\)

**The KEC-2 Elders Speak their Mind**

Qes Gudina was accompanied to Addis Abeba by a delegation of elders from the five “sevens” of the KEC-2.\(^{49}\) They were angry and disappointed with the current development of the KHMP because of two reasons. One was that the EECMY school was built in Mishgida. The other was that they felt forgotten by the EECMY as partner. They asked “… why don’t you ask us for advice, when you give your support?”\(^{50}\)

The elders, except for the one from the Abonsa “Seven”, maintained that there had been an agreement in the KEC-2 to build a school in Dodoba. The elders explained that they had not wanted to bring this matter up before, as they “… did not want to oppose the man, whom the EECMY had chosen and sent.” Now, however, was the time to take an “authorised letter” from “the five sevens” of the KEC-2, asking for a Bible-school and a synod centre to be established in Dodoba.\(^{51}\)


\(^{46}\) SG-A: Yacob Baffa o.i.1997.06.23; Teferi Sendabo o.i.1993.09.02.


\(^{49}\) GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, p.100, *A Special Session on Kambata, 1963.03.09* (Yekatit 30, 1955, E.C. Amharic, English). The following section is based on this source unless indicated by footnotes.

\(^{50}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{51}\) *Ibid.*
As we have seen above, the two strongholds in the KEC-2 were the Abonsa “Seven” and the Dodoba “Seven”. The EECMY General Assembly, held less than two months ago in January 1963, had resolved to buy a “centrally located plot of land” in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The KEC-2 elders now wanted to challenge the EECMY on that decision.\(^{52}\) In fact, Dodoba is situated in the centre of the region and was in 1963 in the actual centre of the KEC-2. Some of the elders obviously meant that Dodoba ought to become the centre of the synod-to-be.

This KEC-2 approach to the EECMY was an important event. It was in fact a demonstration of its local legacy of independence, with links to Ambaricho and Shonkolla. The KEC-2 elders wanted to re-establish a direct contact with the Church Officers of the EECMY and to regain their authority with regard to the KHMP representative.\(^{53}\)

After all, the real leaders of the KEC-2 were the elders. They had been accustomed to attending the CEEC meetings since 1955 and to consulting the EECMY directly. Qes Gudina obviously was in favour of the direct approach of the KEC-2 elders to the EECMY. He understood that his plan on integration would not be successful, if it did not get the support of the majority of the KEC-2 elders.

What is illustrated here is a failure of the EECMY in its early communication with the KEC-2 on at least two points:

1. The EECMY Church Officers neglected the importance of a direct contact with the KEC-2 elders instead of unilateral contacts with their own KHMP representative. This made the KEC-2 elders frustrated.
2. The relation between the KHMP “Director”, Ato Zacheus, and the KEC-2 elders had not been sufficiently spelled out by the EECMY. Thus Ato Zacheus did not base his decisions on proper consultations with the KEC-2 elders.

The EECMY’s lack of communication had brought the KEC-2 elders to Addis Abeba. As an “outsider” Qes Gudina sensed their disappointment. Now the KEC-2 elders used Qes Gudina as a spokesman in an indigenous KEC-2 effort to get things sorted out with the EECMY Church Officers. I identify their interaction as a test of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.

### Restructured Congregations

Qes Gudina’s option provided a comprehensive attitude towards his attempt to integrate the KEC-2 into the EECMY. He returned to the Kambata/Hadiya region together with the KEC-2 elders. Soon after, he set up a team in order to implement his plan to reconstruct the KEC-2 into a less family-dominated form and to introduce democracy in accordance with the EECMY constitution and by-laws.\(^{54}\)

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\(^{52}\) See above, p.158.

\(^{53}\) EECMY-A: Meeting on Kambata, Schaefer 1963.03.09.

\(^{54}\) The section below is based on GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21; MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, pp.19f.; Sæverås 1992, pp.50f.
The team was led by Qes Gudina himself. Ato Tamru Segaro was used as his interpreter, as Qes Gudina spoke Amharic and not any of the local languages. He could not use his own mother tongue, Oromiffa. Ato Marqos Gobebo from Dodoba and the evangelist of the Abonsa “Seven”, Ato Mattheos Dattago, were the other members of the team. Ato Zacheus was just an outside supporter.\textsuperscript{55}

An ambitious visiting program was arranged in order to preach, teach on the EECMY constitution and rearrange the KEC-2 at local level. The five “sevens” were visited in turn. However, neither the effort to rearrange the KEC-2 “family churches” into larger units was a success, nor the so-called “organisation” of the “sevens” into EECMY parishes.\textsuperscript{56}

As already mentioned, the KEC-2 congregations usually met in ordinary houses or huts. The house-father accordingly had a strong influence on the congregation, which he was not willing to discard. If a so-called “proper” church was built outside his land and a new set of elders was chosen, he and his colleagues might risk losing their influence. It seems as if the team members had to abandon the idea of bringing smaller congregations together, owing to a stubborn resistance to this enterprise. Instead they concentrated on rearranging the KEC-2 at a higher level.\textsuperscript{57}

**A Synod Structure**

In April and August 1963 Qes Gudina arranged two conventions where he tried to apply a synod structure to the KEC-2. At the first “Synod Assembly” at Mishgida in April (Miazia 17-19), the purpose was to introduce the constitution and by-laws of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod in the KEC-2, and to elect a president and a secretary.\textsuperscript{58} From the sources available I identify three administrative levels of a kind of “EECMY set-up”:\textsuperscript{59}

1. A kind of “Synod Assembly” with two representatives from all the congregations in the KEC-2 was the wider base. The number of delegates could amount to approximately 80 delegates.

2. A kind of Executive Committee, consisting of five Church Officers plus eighth other delegates. It was called: “The Board of the Kambata Church”.

3. The KEC-2 conventions first elected three Church Officers, who soon were extended to five.\textsuperscript{60} The first Church Officers of the KEC-2 were the following:

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\textsuperscript{55} GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.6.
\textsuperscript{59} GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.1; FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.27 (Finnish); GA-A: Djalatta May 1965, p.1; MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, pp.20f.; see FELM-A: Kambata Synod 1\textsuperscript{st} Convention 1971.02.12-14, List of Delegates. This section refers to these sources unless indicated.
President Ato Tamru Segaro “Seven” Mishgida
Vice-President Ato Zelleke Luke “Seven” Hawora
General Sec. Ato Marqos Gobebo “Seven” Dodoba
Assistant Sec. Ato Wondafresh Selato “Seven” Endara
Treasurer Ato Erjabo Handiso “Seven” Dinika

We note that the stronger “sevens” Dodoba (3), Abonsa (1) and Lemu (1) were represented among the Church Officers. Qes Gudina’s interpreter Ato Tamru, who was the best educated of the five men, was elected President.

Most of the Church Officers were probably of Kambata origin, but as already mentioned Dodoba created a middle-ground for both Kambata and Hadiya. Dinika, for example, is close to Mt. Shonkolla. Ethnic borders were less strict in such areas and sometimes even hard to define. According to my sources Ato Erjabo Handiso’s father, for example, was Kambata but his mother Hadiya. Ato Erjabo speaks both languages well. From a patriarchal point of view he is a Kambata but one may ask what such a definition really explains. Mixed marriages and other close relationships makes the picture rather complicated.\(^{61}\)

With the new arrangement the KEC-2 elders’ desire to regain influence had been satisfied. The outline of an EECMY synod structure had been introduced to the KEC-2, at least on paper. From now on the KEC-2 was now and then referred to as “the Synod”, by the EECMY.\(^{62}\)

The transformation of the KEC-2 into an EECMY synod structure had been a very fast process. The rearrangement of the KEC-2 congregations into larger units created new tensions. The future would prove how wise the new measures were.

**C. Repercussions**

**Ambivalent Primary Concerns**

The “double strategy” of the EECMY influenced the KEC-2 to a great extent. Its primary concern was to integrate the KEC-2 into the EECMY synod structure. Accordingly, the EECMY strategy favoured an integration of the KHMP and its “Director” into the “new” KEC-2, or the so-called “Synod”, and under the KEC-2 Church Officers.\(^{63}\)

As we have seen Ato Zacheus implemented the KHMP strategy through the support of various projects. He was a key-person in the process of communication between the EECMY and the KEC-2. He felt content with his position as “Direc-

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\(^{61}\) See above, pp.25f., 150, n.108; In the 1980’s the Dodoba Sebaka (“Seven”) was divided into two sebakas: The Shonkolla Sebaka (Hadiya) and the Ambaricho Sebaka (Kambata). The division was made mainly along ethnic lines. SG-A: Mauranen to Grenstedt 2000.06.08.


\(^{63}\) The section below is based on the following sources, unless indicated. GA-A: Attachment, Suggestions for Remediing Problems in the Kambatta Program, n.d., u.s. (Dec.1964); Djalatta May 1965, p.1.
tor” of the KHMP. It is apposite to suggest that his primary concern was not to reduce his own influence in favour of the newly elected KEC-2 Church Officers.

Qes Gudina’s arrangements for a KEC-2 synod model created a new leadership structure in the KEC-2. On one hand the KEC-2 elders were eager to transform the KEC-2 into an EECMY synod. On the other hand, as noted earlier, the KEC-2 had a legacy of a congregation-centred polity and a mobile leadership of elders, which was appreciated by many. Thus, Qes Gudina’s rearrangements were not happily received by all KEC-2 members. When he left the KEC-2 in summer 1963, he left two strong bodies of the KEC-2 behind him.

One body revolved around the KHMP leader Ato Zacheus and the Abonsa “Seven”. The other body was the new KEC-2 “Synod” led by the Church Officers with a majority of its members from the Dodoba “Seven”. They were keen to demonstrate the “central” importance of Dodoba compared to Abonsa. The former body was now expected to co-ordinate its efforts and projects more closely with the latter. In fact the KHMP was subordinate to the KEC-2 and its Church Officers. At that time there was also a third disappointed “body”, i.e. the elders, who had lost their positions because of Qes Gudina’s new arrangements. They were “the losers” and fanned the flames of discontent with the new order whenever an opportunity occurred.64

Indeed, the EECMY “double strategy” was hard to realise.65 In fact Qes Gudina’s short, intense campaign had opened up an implicit tension. The main combatants were both strong characters, they came from the same “seven” and even from the same area - Mishgida.

Internal Power Struggle

Qes Gudina was about to leave Ethiopia for studies in the USA, when reports of a conflict arose in the KEC-2. The main combatants were the new KEC-2 President Ato Tamru Segaro and the KHMP “Director” Ato Zacheus Edamo.66

Ato Zacheus had been enjoying a lot of authority as the EECMY local representative in the KEC-2. As his power decreased in favour of the Dodoba dominated group of KEC-2 Church Officers, the conflict was unavoidable. The ranking order of the new KEC-2 power structure at the EECMY Executive meetings, which from now on were attended by three representatives of the KEC-2, was to place Ato Zacheus after the KEC-2 President and Treasurer.67 Ato Zacheus’s title was not any longer the KHMP “Director” but the Director of the Mishgida Mekane Yesus School.68

64 GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.3.
65 For the expression “double strategy”, see above, p.153.
66 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1963.07.08, p.2, no.5; 1963.08.29, no.3 (Amharic).
68 Ibid.
The rising conflict between Ato Tamru and Ato Zacheus caused a considerable amount of damage to the realisation of the KHMP ideas. It was, of course, a nuisance to the EECMY, when two main leaders with experience from other EECMY synods became involved in a far-reaching conflict. The comparatively large sums of money distributed by the KHMP seem to have created a breeding-ground for conflicts and suspicion in the new tense situation in the KEC-2.\(^{69}\)

Ato Zacheus was still in charge of the local KHMP finances. The President and the Secretary of the “new” KEC-2 were from 1963 paid by the KHMP budget.\(^{70}\) The tense atmosphere when these employees received their salaries from the hand of Ato Zacheus is not hard to imagine. There are numerous EECMY Church Officers’ minutes on financial matters, which indicate that money was lacking or should have been brought to Addis Abeba as the KEC-2 local contribution to the KHMP.\(^{71}\)

The EECMY Church Officers checked up on some of the KHMP pleas for money. In some instances they went to Kambata to check if the money was used in a proper way.\(^{72}\) I will explore this issue further but must first summarise the actual KHMP achievements up to 1964.

**Achievements of the EECMY “Home Mission”**

Although the atmosphere in the KEC-2 changed considerably owing to the internal conflicts, the KHMP still generated some positive results from 1963 onwards.

- The Mishgida Mekane Yesus School added two grades and evolved to an elementary standard, offering grades 1-6. At the end of 1964 it became a junior high school with 8 grades. There were six teachers employed in the school and c.200 students. Lower classes were supported by the Benara Congregation.\(^{73}\)

- The school was inaugurated by the EECMY Church Officers, on March 7, 1964 with Ato Emmanuel Abraham, Ato Bayssa Jammo, Ato Amare Mamo, Ato Djalatta Djafero and Ato(!) Ezra Gebremedhin attending.\(^{74}\) Ato Emmanuel Abraham was at this time the Ethiopian Minister of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones.\(^{75}\) This inauguration was the climax of the Kambata KHMP efforts under Ato Zacheus’s leadership. The centre of the EECMY visited its periphery in Mishgida. It emphasised the importance of the Mishgida School as the peak of the EECMY “Home Mission’s” efforts.

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\(^{69}\) See above, pp.149, 158, below, p.190; see GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, pp.1ff.

\(^{70}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.27 (Finnish); EECMY-A: *Report on annual conference Kembatta*, n.d., u.s. (March 1964, Ezra Gebremedhin?).

\(^{71}\) In 1963 the treasurer did not seem to pay salaries, but Ato Zacheus did. GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, §56-39, §56-41, §56-42, §56-67, §56-84, §56-175, etc. (Amharic).


\(^{73}\) GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.1; Djalatta 1996.01.21, pp.4f.

\(^{74}\) GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1965, *The President’s Report*. Ato Ezra Gebremedhin was ordained in Apr.1964. SG-A: Ezra Gebremedhin o.i.1995.06.07.

\(^{75}\) Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.191ff.
• The Bible-school continued its work and provided a base for a deeper knowledge of the Bible. In September 1964, the program was changed to two four-month courses given each year mainly for young people.\textsuperscript{76}

• In 1964 about 12 students were on scholarships in different EECMY institutions. The base of recruitment for scholarship had been broadened and soon the scholarship program paid back to the KHMP. It brought native educated teachers and leaders into the KEC-2.\textsuperscript{77}

• Another positive initiative independent of the KHMP but complementing it in a very useful way was the EECMY Literacy Campaign, which the EECMY at the end of 1963 discussed starting in the Kambata/Hadiya region.\textsuperscript{78} It provided the basic literacy needed for the implementation of the KHMP efforts. The Literacy Campaign was the start of an immensely important development, which would affect the entire situation of ordinary people living in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

**Problems of the EECMY “Home Mission”**

In spite of these real achievements there were problems inherent in the agreed KHMP structure.

• It seems that some elders of the KEC-2 outside the Abonsa “Seven” could never forgive Ato Zacheus for placing the Mekane Yesus School in Mishgida. Their description of the situation at the end of 1964 was that “... it has always been felt that the benefits of the school at Mishgida would reach only a limited part of Kambata ...”\textsuperscript{79} Even if this may have been an overstatement, it shows their disappointment with the Mishgida School.

• The Bible-school did not have a building of its own. Thus it became dependent on the Mishgida School and Ato Zacheus’s good-will. The Dodoba “Seven’s” striving for a Bible-school in a “central place” probably affected the Mishgida Bible-school in a negative way.\textsuperscript{80}

• Other problems of the Bible-school were its narrow educational curriculum and the low standard of teaching. It seems in fact that what was taught in one year could have been taught in four months.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{78} GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, Nehase 23, 1955 E.C., no.2 (1963.08.29 Amharic); see Ezra Jan.1965, p.2. For an analysis of the Literacy Campaign, see Sjöström 1983.
\textsuperscript{79} GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.3.
\textsuperscript{80} GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes, §57-189, Meskerem 28, 1957 E.C (1964.10.08 Amharic); Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.2; see above, pp.161f.
\textsuperscript{81} FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, p.37 (Swedish); MYS-A: Beredo Bekalo 1990, p.17.
• The EECMY problem of communication with the two conflicting bodies in the KEC-2 is highlighted by the situation of the Bible-school in October 1964. At that time the Bible-school had been closed for a while and was going to be re-opened. The minutes state that the EECMY Church Officers had decided that: Ato Zacheus should inform the KEC-2 how many students there was place for in the Bible-school; as mentioned, the Bible-school should give a Bible course for four months, two times a year; the KEC-2 should choose new students from different congregations and send them to the Bible-school; Ato Zacheus should employ new teachers for the Bible-school, after having consulted with the KEC-2 Church Officers on the matter. Ato Zacheus was not exactly on speaking terms with the KEC-2 elders at that time. Thus, detailed directions from Addis Abeba had to be given.82

• The expected contribution of money from the KEC-2 to the KHMP was not realised. The KHMP had introduced a centralised system of salaries. Some main leaders were paid by money coming from “outside”. Salaries were paid whether the KEC-2 contributions were delivered or not. The new system was not appreciated by the KEC-2 members. On the contrary it created jealousy.83

An Issue of Relevant Contextualization

The KEC-2 was a church that earlier had reacted to pressures from outside. Its negative reactions to the KEC (SIM) were mainly generated by cultural reasons. As has been shown above, the KEC-2 evolved as an independent church owing to such reasons.84

The problems confronting the EECMY in its realisation of its “double strategy” in the KEC-2 can be described from different perspectives. One perspective is to describe them as due to a lack of EECMY understanding of the KEC-2 context and thus a failure of “contextualization” of the KHMP efforts into the KEC-2 reality.85

As we have seen above, the young EECMY showed little interest in the “Schaefer and Lundgren” deliberations, which emphasised a preservation of the KEC-2’s indigenous legacy. The shift of principles from not paying salaries from external

84 See above, pp.23ff., 108, 123.
85 A simple definition of the concept “contextualization” in a mission process is that the sender (e.g. a mission) must pay careful attention to the receiver’s environment and culture, i.e., his “context”, in order to communicate successfully. Stress is put on the appreciation and preservation of this context and its indigenous utterances, when conveying the Christian message. The importance of this issue in a mission process is dealt with in brief by the Lausanne Covenant of 1974 (“LC 10”) and more fully by the Willowbank Consultation (1978): “The consultation approved the principle that all churches must “contextualize” the Gospel in order to share it effectively in their own culture.” Scherer 1987, pp.167ff., 179; see Hallencreutz 1983, pp.127, 145 (Swedish); Hiebert 1987; Bosch 1991, pp.420ff.
funds to indigenous work, applied by the SIM for years in the Kambata/Hadiya region, to the opposite, was not carefully assessed by the EECMY.\textsuperscript{86}

The centralised EECMY approach with a dominant KHMP leader was foreign to the KEC-2 collective polity built on elders. Was it recommendable to let one man employ people and pay their salaries in a fast-expanding program? the KEC-2 elders may have asked. The idea of collecting money into a centralised budget had been a main reason for the KEC split in 1951. When this idea eleven years later came dressed in KHMP “clothes”, it did not look much better to the KEC-2. Why, did the EECMY introduce such a foreign idea anew? The collecting and sending of money to an “unknown” place filled KEC-2 Christians with suspicion!

Why, were some prominent people like the KHMP “Director”, the KEC-2 President and the KEC-2 Secretary receiving salaries, while others were not? How could someone believe that the Kambata/Hadiya farmers would support such a foreign idea? The KHMP was interested in quick results. The KEC-2 procedure was slow and demanded considerable time for discussions.

The new synod structure of the KEC-2 was furthermore foreign to the KEC-2 indigenous ideas. The KEC-2 elders were used to a mobile system of meetings, visiting all the “sevens” in turn. The EECMY approach was to make one place, Mishgida, a dominating centre. This reinforced tensions with other “sevens”, especially with the other KEC-2 stronghold Dodoba.

The EECMY system of a centralised democracy, with five Church Officers as dominating representatives, brought new ideas too fast into the KEC-2 pattern of collective leadership. The KEC-2 indigenous leadership with all its shortcomings had the support of the KEC-2 elders and ordinary Christians. This was hardly the case of the new KEC-2 in its “EECMY synod set-up” in 1963.\textsuperscript{87}

\subsection*{Roots of New Conflicts}

It seems as if the centralised approach of the EECMY to the KEC-2 in 1962-64 and the lack of contextualization were major reasons for the problems generated in the early period of more intense EECMY/KEC-2 relationships. One can not speak of a long-range plan on the part of the EECMY in its behaviour towards the KEC-2 in 1962-64. On the contrary, the pace of the EECMY actions seems to have been guided by the LWF budget process. When money was available EECMY chose a suitable man, Ato Zacheus, and appointed him the KHMP Executive Secretary.

Qes Gudina was sent to the KEC-2 from an unsolved conflict in Nakamte on his way to studies abroad.\textsuperscript{88} He made a concerted effort in the KEC-2 and used a model familiar to him, that is, the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod Constitution and by-laws, as a means of reorganising the indigenous independent KEC-2. He

\textsuperscript{86} See above, pp.145f., 149f.
\textsuperscript{87} See above, pp.124f., 150f.; GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, pp.1ff. The custom of the independent KEC-2 was to have monthly and quarterly meetings. The latter alternated between “sevens”.
\textsuperscript{88} See above, pp.153, 166.
was in a hurry as he was going to leave the country. He probably had little time for reflection on the Kambata/Hadiya context and the KEC-2 legacy.

The lack of understanding of the KEC-2 legacy and its context on the part of the EECMY at this early stage proved to be very negative to the KHMP results in 1962-64. The evident problems of communication experienced by the EECMY Church Officers in their contacts with the KEC-2 and local KHMP representatives were signs of this lack of contextualization. Ato Zacheus’s central position and his favouring of the Abonsa “Seven” were already established when Qes Gudina started his mission with a view to implement EECMY democracy. His arrangements came both too late and too early. Actually they reinforced an inherent conflict and further dissonance.

It is tempting to try to find simple explanations and scapegoats when analysing conflicts of this kind. As has already been made evident this can hardly be done in the complicated framework of the EECMY - KHMP - KEC-2 interaction with its various aspects. The idea of the KHMP was to bring educational, administrative and spiritual support to the KEC-2. Furthermore the EECMY aimed at integrating the KEC-2 as one of its synods. Yet, it has been noticed above that the EECMY Synods in 1961 and onwards were in need of the same support as the KEC-2 when they enthusiastically were trying to bring it into the EECMY.89

As already noted, however, the KHMP generated positive results, too. Yet there were obvious weaknesses in the EECMY approach to church problems in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The results of the KHMP were not as good as the EECMY had expected. From the autumn of 1964, this state of affairs led the EECMY leaders into a period of analysis and reflection on how to continue its operations in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

The EECMY change of attitude to the KHMP can be illustrated by the EECMY reports delivered to the annual CWM meetings of the LWF for the years 1962-64.

Ato Emmanuel Abraham proudly describes the EECMY involvement for the year of 1962 in a written report:

Although the church is a very young church, it has not neglected to initiate its own home mission program. In the Kambata area of Ethiopia, it has established, with the help of the LWF a home mission program which is directed by the church and has no foreign missionary personnel serving in it. There are no exact figures as to how many are now seeking admittance in the church in this area, but estimates run from 25 to 45,000 individuals. The church has instituted a five-year program during which time it hopes to be able to organise, teach and bring into the church those in Kambatta who have declared themselves so interested.90

The new EECMY Executive Secretary, Qes Ezra Gebremedhin, made the following presentation for the year of 1963:

89 See above, pp.145f.
The home mission program of the church in Kambatta is proceeding under the leadership of Kambata Christians. In the year 1963 a synod was organised, a new elementary school completed and a literacy campaign launched.91

The report for the year of 1964, which was presented by Qes Ezra, did not mention the KHMP.92

A Picture of the KEC-2 in 1962-63

In 1962 the independent church KEC-2 had set out for an unknown destiny. This Ethiopian church tried to adapt to an EECMY synod structure. This was especially the aim of some leaders and elders who tried to direct its course. The real dynamics from our point of view, however, were hidden. This part of the KEC-2 was not that easy to influence.

**Polity**: The transformation of the KEC-2 leadership functions, from a more flexible, collective system based on consensus and long discussions to a more centralised administrative system based on democratic principles of majority voting, was introduced by the EECMY pastor in Nakamte, Qes Gudina Tumsa. In the spring of 1963 he led an intense campaign that aimed at rearranging the KEC-2 according to EECMY patterns.

In the summer of 1963 the KEC-2 adopted an EECMY synod structure consisting of three administrative levels, hence from now on it was occasionally referred to as the “Synod”:

- A kind of “Synod Assembly”, which corresponded to the former quarterly meetings, consisted of two members from each congregation in the KEC-2.
- A kind of Executive Committee consisted of the five Church Officers plus eighth others. It was called “The Board of the Kambata Church”. It corresponded to a certain extent to the monthly meetings of the KEC-2.
- The executive leaders were five men called “Church Officers”. The majority of them were from the Dodoba “Seven”. The President and Secretary of the “Synod” were paid by KHMP budget.

The KEC-2 five “sevens” were now taught how to adapt to an EECMY parish (sebaka) structure with central administrative functions. These were however not easy to implement in the “sevens”. Instead tensions between the KEC-2 strongholds, the KHMP-dominated Abonsa “Seven” and the Dodoba “Seven” increased. The mobile character of the KEC-2 leadership structure was challenged by the KEC-2 new static centre in Mishgida. A new class of paid KEC-2 church-workers evolved.

At a congregational level the “new” ideas of drawing smaller congregations together after some time met a stubborn and even violent resistance.93 Especially strong was the reaction to collect and send away money for common purposes.

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93 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.6; see below, p.211.
This was probably due to previous experiences of KEC-2 members before the KEC restructure in 1952.\textsuperscript{94}

The efforts of restructuring the KEC-2 polity thus led to the situation that from the summer of 1963 two ecclesiastical systems were competing for influence in the KEC-2: an independent congregation-centred collective KEC-2 type and a centralised administrative EECMY type. The competition fanned the flames of discontent in an evolving multi-faceted conflict, which was induced by the new KHMP budget-system introduced into the KEC-2. The tensions generated a big conflict, which shook the KEC-2 from the summer of 1963.\textsuperscript{95} Numerous conflicts between elders of smaller congregations were reinforced by former discontented elders, now “losers” in the new system and the poor examples set by the new KEC-2 “Synod’s” top leaders Ato Tamru Segaro and Ato Zachaeus Edamo.\textsuperscript{96}

**Worship:** The same as in 1961.

**Doctrine:** Subjective aspects of faith dominated KEC-2 doctrine. Qes Gudina’s teaching was actually the first time ordinary KEC-2 Christians and local elders were influenced by a systematic EECMY teaching on the sacraments. Qes Gudina, furthermore, emphasised the necessity to start Sunday schools and confirmation classes in the congregations.\textsuperscript{97} When it was functioning, the Bible-school provided traditional basic knowledge in the Scriptures, probably augmented with some Lutheran doctrine. As the Bible-school itself was a tool in the conflict its teaching was not effectual, however.

**Ethos:** The same as in 1961.

**Relations to the EECMY:** At national level the KEC-2 elders and “Church Officers” from 1963 took part in the EECMY General Assemblies and Executive Committee Meetings. At regional level there was a flow of Ethiopian contacts between the KEC-2 and the neighbouring NLM-related Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod. Scholarships were distributed for education in different institutions. At local level the lack of contextualization of the EECMY approach led to strong reactions against the EECMY novelties. This had not been anticipated by the EECMY representatives.

**Size:** In 1963 the KEC-2 membership was estimated at about 30,000. As in 1961 this was a gross exaggeration.\textsuperscript{98} There were still five “sevens” in the KEC-2.

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\textsuperscript{94} See above, pp.97, 105.
\textsuperscript{95} GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, pp.1ff.; Djalatta 1966.01.21, pp.6ff.
\textsuperscript{96} *Ibid.*
\textsuperscript{97} GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.6; EECMY-A: Gudına Tumsa, Nehase 6, 1955 E.C. (Aug. 1963, Amharic); see below, p.211.
\textsuperscript{98} See above, p.152.
Map 7 The KEC-2 Five “Sevens” in 1963

Approximate Scale 1:1,000,000
The initial “double strategy” of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) started to change in favour of a more integrated course in 1965. The various projects of the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) and the administrative functions of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) should from now on be co-ordinated in a better way within one central EECMY structure. The influence of the KEC-2 elders should be reinforced.

As a co-operating partner the EECMY opted for a reassessment of what had been achieved so far. In the process, however, the approach soon became very activist. This would have great consequences on further KEC-2 developments and on the process of communication.

EECMY workers tried to take more responsibility for the KHMP at the local level. The leader of the EECMY Literacy Campaign, Ato Djalatta Djaffero was called upon to supervise the KHMP as its Director. He was supported by his colleague from western Wollega, Ato Geletta Wolteji, who was appointed the local EECMY Adviser. Furthermore, an ecclesiastical integration of the KEC-2 into an EECMY structure was reinforced by a team led by the EECMY Executive Secretary, Qes Ezra Gebremedhin.

In this chapter I will follow developments from the end of 1964 to 1966 on the basis of the EECMY minutes. A new important source is Qes Ezra Gebremedhin’s Diary describing the tour made by the EECMY evangelistic team in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1965, a source which so far has not been used in EECMY missiography.

A. A New Approach to the EECMY “Home Mission”

The EECMY Reassesses its Involvement
Owing to the problems in the KEC-2 and the analyses made by the EECMY, there was a searching attitude on the part of the EECMY in its attitude to the KEC-2 at the EECMY General Assembly in January 1965. Four KEC-2 delegates, two from the Dodoba “Seven” and two from the Lemu “Seven”, were presented after the four synods as representing the “Home Mission Program-Kambatta”. Ato Zacheus and Ato Tamru were introduced under the heading: “Observers, Guests, Others.”

The KHMP was characterised as a “Missionary Activity”, called the “Kambatta Evangelical Program” with one Ethiopian missionary.2

The EECMY President Ato Emmanuel Abraham showed a cautious optimism when he presented the KHMP under the heading: “The EEC-MY Program in Kambata”. He concluded by saying: “Even though the Kambata program has had many obstacles, the Mishgida School, the Bible-school, the evangelism work and the various scholarship programs are still going on.”3

An analysis of the situation in the KEC-2 had been made by the EECMY Church Officers at the end of 1964, prior to the Assembly. Some initiatives had already been taken.4 These were now presented to the delegates of the General Assembly by Qes Ezra in a “Report concerning the Kambatta Evangelical Church”. The report gives a thorough analysis of the achievements and problems of the KHMP and the KEC-2 situation.5 The conflict between Ato Zacheus Edamo and Ato Tamru Segaro is presented in a frank way. Then comes a presentation of measures suggested to “...rectify matters in the Kambata program”. It shows the new approach of the EECMY Church Officers, which now was in need of support.

The measures taken so far can be summarised like this:

1. The EECMY Church Officers had decided to recall Ato Zacheus from his duty from January 10, 1965.
2. The payments of salaries from the KHMP to Ato Tamru Segaro and Ato Marqos Gobebo should be terminated on April 9, 1965.
3. The EECMY had set up “a special committee to follow up the work of the Kambata program”. It was called: “The Advisory Committee of the Kambatta Evangelical Programme”.6

**Recommendations and Decisions**

Nine recommendations were made. The EECMY failure in communication is more or less openly stated in the two first points. This shows a humbleness of attitude a far cry from the enthusiasm shown two years earlier at the EECMY General Assembly in 1963.

The program should “...be completely restudied and re-structured”. An evangelistic team should be sent to preach but also, “...to gather ideas as to what directions the Kambata program should follow in the future, ...”. The outcome of the EECMY analysis was thus a recommendation that the EECMY leaders make

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5 GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, pp.1-4. The following section refers to this report unless indicated.
6 Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie was the chairman, Ato Djalatta secretary, Dr Schaefer and Qes Ezra members. GA-A: Attachment, Suggestions for Remedying Problems in the Kembatta Programme, n.d., u.s. (Dec.1964); Djalatta minutes 1964.12.29; Ezra Jan.1965, p.4.
themselves more acquainted with the situation of the KEC-2 in order not to guide it just from the Addis Abeba horizon. Therefore the Church Officers suggested a combined tour of preaching and “field-research” in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The tour was to go on for four to six weeks.

The principal idea of the EECMY analysis was to recognise the authority of the KEC-2 elders in order to avoid creating an external body beside the local Christian community. This is in fact the theme of recommendations three to five and eight to nine of the report. The KEC-2 should have the right to employ and to dismiss its workers, take care of all finances and direct its work. The KEC-2 was asked to find a new Director for the Mishgida School. It should also set up an education committee, which would oversee the work at the school. Instead of letting the KHMP become an end in itself, it would now be integrated into the KEC-2.

The EECMY furthermore should try to employ evangelists in the “sevens” and place a permanent representative in Kambata to oversee the KHMP, although it had a shortage of educated people of its own. The idea of having an EECMY representative located in the region had been conceived with a view to improving the communications between the EECMY and the KEC-2.

It seems that the idea of directly paying the salaries of workers was self-evident to the EECMY and not even an issue for discussion. It would now also spread to the “sevens” through evangelists paid by the EECMY. Thus the paradox is that the EECMY, while talking of self-support as a necessity, step by step was reinforcing the change of the KEC-2 into a body dependent on salaries paid by the EECMY. Though weak, the KEC-2 had in fact been a self-supporting body before 1962.7

The Assembly decided to accept the measures concerning the dismissals of workers and the setting up of a team of evangelists recruited from the four synods. “All 4 synods agreed to provide 1 person each for the projected evangelistic team,” it was said.8 With the amendments in the new plan, the EECMY General Assembly was now ready to continue its “Home Mission”. The seriousness of the situation had aptly been presented by Qes Ezra. The principal idea was to let further arrangements depend more on KEC-2 involvement than before.

The decisions of the EECMY Church Officers did not just affect the Director of the KHMP, the President and Secretary of the KEC-2. It aimed at a redirection of the KEC-2 top structure and a bridging of the gap between the KEC-2 rank and file and its own Church Officers.

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7 See above, pp.125, 145, below, Appendix III, p.3.
8 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1965, p.6, Resolution no.25.
Ato Djalatta Djaffero’s Mission

The purpose of the new “Advisory Committee” was to “... administrate the program of the EECMY on behalf of the church officers”.9 A dominating role in the new committee was going to be played by its Secretary, Ato Djalatta Djaffero. When the EECMY Literacy Campaign, “Yemissrach Dimts Literacy Campaign” (YDLC) started in 1962, Ato Djalatta was employed as its Director. He was regarded as an effective administrator by Swedish missionaries. He had earlier been a teacher in the Nejo area in Wollega and a school-inspector.10

Ato Djalatta was authorised to supervise the Mishgida School and he took over the local financial responsibility of the KHMP after Ato Zacheus.11 The new job as Director, which his new assignment in the KHMP soon was called, was however just a part-time job for this hard-working man.12

In the beginning of January 1965, Ato Djalatta went to Mishgida with his driver and started the reconstruction of the KHMP.13 He then continued south to Yirga Alem in Sidamo and attended the EECMY General Assembly there in January 19-24. After the Assembly on January 28, he presented a report to the EECMY Church Officers with his new plan, or “scheme”, on how to run the work of the KHMP and the KEC-2. He saw an urgent need to fill the vacancies in the KHMP.

A colleague from Mendi, Ato Geletta Wolteji, who attended the General Assembly as a delegate for the WWS, was employed for three months from February 24. Ato Geletta was from the Boji area in western Wollega. He was an educated teacher and a bit younger than Ato Djalatta. He had served as a lay-preacher besides his post as a teacher in Wollega. He was now to fill the vacancy after Ato Zacheus. The assignment was soon prolonged and Ato Geletta became “... headmaster of the Mishgida School” with a salary of ES 300 a month.14

Ato Djalatta stayed in the Kambata/Hadiya region for four months.15 He introduced his administrative plan to the KEC-2, which aimed at integrating the local church into the EECMY, according to his ideas. On March 2-5, representatives from all the KEC-2 congregations were gathered in Mishgida for what can be called a second “Synod Assembly”. They studied and “fully approved” his new “scheme”. It was then called the “New Organizational set up on the Kambatta Church”. On March 3 the EECMY evangelistic team arrived in Mishgida, led by

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10 SG-A: Lundgren to Grenstedt 1994.02.01. Ato Djalatta’s reports are voluminous, but often called “a brief report”. In Jan.1966 he calls himself Director of the Literacy Campaign, acting Direct. of the Program, Direct. of Mishgida School. GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, pp.5, 7.
13 The following section is based on GA-A: Djalatta May 1965; Djalatta minutes 1964.12.29 with Attachments; Geletta, Two-Year Report, Jan.1967 (Amharic).
Qes Ezra Gebremedhin. As will be recalled, it was appointed by the EECMY General Assembly in January 1965. It was now able to follow the deliberations of the KEC-2 guided by Ato Djalatta.\textsuperscript{16}

The New “Scheme”

One immediate outcome of the March 2-5 meeting of the KEC-2 elders was that the Hadaro “Seven” was divided into two “sevens” - the Ilgira “Seven” and the Tembaro “Seven”. There were now six “sevens” in the KEC-2.

Ato Djalatta had the idea of changing the KEC-2 “synod structure” into a “district” of the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod. Furthermore, “the Board of the Kambata Church”, initiated by Qes Gudina, was rearranged and was now called “the Committee of Administration”. It would consist of four Church Officers and two representatives from each “seven”. This was the new top structure of the KEC-2. Approximately six to eight committees of different kinds would be linked to it.\textsuperscript{17}

The integration of the “sevens” into the EECMY would follow a similar pattern. Each “seven” was now expected to choose a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Committees in each “seven” should be arranged similarly: an education committee, an evangelism committee, a finance committee, a committee for women, a youth committee and an administrative committee.\textsuperscript{18} The latter was also the top structure of the “seven”. Each “seven” should be responsible for the employment and dismissal of its workers and make its own budget. An incentive to realise the new “scheme” was a hope to establish a school and a clinic in each “seven”. This hope was formulated openly by Ato Djalatta in his reports.\textsuperscript{19}

The new “top structure” of the KEC-2 held its first meeting in accordance with the new model on March 4-5. New Church Officers were then elected to the KEC-2. The outcome was that Ato Tamru Segaro and Ato Marqos Gobebo simply changed positions(!). Thus Ato Marqos became the new President and Ato Tamru Secretary of the KEC-2. In this way both of them were able to keep their salaries from the KHMP. The future of the Mishgida School was also discussed at the meeting.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{16} GA-A: Djalatta May 1965; EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965} with Attachment. The following section is founded on these two sources. On the first “Synod Assembly”, see above, pp.163f.

\textsuperscript{17} GA-A: Djalatta May 1965, pp.1ff.; EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965}, Attachment.

\textsuperscript{18} EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965}, Attachment.

\textsuperscript{19} GA-A: Djalatta May 1965, p.5; Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.4.

Did Ato Djalatta’s Administrative Church Suit the KEC-2?

While the evangelistic team started its visiting program, Ato Djalatta had started implementing his administrative ideas in the “sevens”. The results were that by the time Ato Djalatta returned to Addis in April 1965 the Abonsa “Seven” and the Dodoba “Seven” had organised themselves according to the new “scheme”.

Four of the “committees” of the Abonsa “Seven” had held their first meetings before the middle of April. The Abonsa education committee would, it was hoped, take over the responsibility for the Mishgida School. The Committee of Administration of the KEC-2 held its second meeting on April 9, when a budget for the rest of the year was prepared.21

Any question raised by a KEC-2 local elder was from now on to pass through a committee in the new administrative structure of the “seven”. If it was positively received there, it was communicated further on to the KEC-2 Committee of Administration. It could then be sent on to the EECMY Church Officers, or rather to the Advisory Committee, which was to administer the KHMP on behalf of the EECMY Church Officers. In this committee, Ato Djalatta was the Secretary.

Indeed, it looked like the process of communication between the KEC-2 elders and the EECMY Church Officers had become even more complicated and bureaucratic than during Ato Zacheus’s term of service. For a while the impression is given that the KEC-2 had become a rather administrative type of church with a multitude of committees, seven or eight in each “seven”.22 There were, however, soon indications that an essential element was lacking in the arrangements.

Repercussions

Ato Djalatta’s approach in the Kambata/Hadiya region can hardly be characterised as listening to the voice of the KEC-2 or based on an attempt “... to gather ideas ...”.23 That was after all the essence of the directions given at the last General Assembly. In the beginning of Ato Djalatta’s mission it seems that he did not at all question his own ambitious and rapid administrative approach.

Soon, however, Ato Djalatta had to complain that the KEC-2 was young and inexperienced in church administration. People got so involved in the work in committees that according to him even their “family income” decreased.24 The treasurers could not be trusted. The secretaries were losing interest in writing on a “... voluntary basis”. They even lacked the ability to do the writing, according to Ato Djalatta. Illiteracy was probably the greatest hindrance to Ato Djalatta’s administrative approach.25

23 See above, p.175.
24 Almost all people in the Kambata/Hadiya region were farmers, without a special income.
25 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, pp.7f.; Rev. Ojanperä says that every “seven” tried to work like a sub-synod in theory, but due to illiteracy the practice was very weak. His estimation in
Ato Djalatta’s new organisational set-up obviously did not become the success he had hoped for. In April 1965 he and Qes Ezra discussed the way ahead for the KHMP. Both were unsure of how to proceed. They were forced back to reassess in line with the recommendations of the General Assembly in January. In discussions with Qes Ezra, Ato Djalatta indicated that the new organisational set-up was too unstable. He suggested three alternatives for the future:

1. The EECMY terminates its engagement at the end of the five-year period, i.e., in 1966.
2. An introduction of a supportive program on the congregational level, without a heavy financial commitment.
3. An application for more money from external donors for a thorough-going continuation of the Kambata program.  

To his credit it must be said that Ato Djalatta was not inhibited by the difficulties he experienced. The scholarship program now began to pay back. Educated teachers like the Hadiya Ato Gobena Mugoro, returned to the Kambata/Hadiya region. Ato Gobena became in fact “assistant head master” at Mishgida. The school was said to have a good reputation.

There was, however, a considerable lack of contextualization in Ato Djalatta’s administrative approach, too. He did not sufficiently consider the need of an indigenous Kambata/Hadiya leadership, built on the elders. Self-support was part of the KEC-2 legacy, even if this word was not part of its vocabulary. Instead a system of salaries and allowances coming from an external source was reinforced and spread down the lines of the “sevens.” Administration and the making of budgets were part of the EECMY structure but so far not of the KEC-2 context.

It was increasingly clear to Ato Djalatta that a long-range effort was needed to produce lasting results. Such an effort had actually already been started in the region by the EECMY Literacy Campaign in line with the EECMY plan of 1961.

In the course of Ato Djalatta’s stay in the Kambata/Hadiya region the EECMY Literacy Campaign was reinforced and became part of the YDLC five-year plan. During his stay in spring 1965 inspectors for literacy instruction were installed in all the “sevens” and literary teachers were introduced.

Ato Djalatta’s goal was that each congregation in the KEC-2 should be active in the literacy work. He stressed that all the members of the congregations should take part in the literacy and community development activities. In 1966 the number of students taking part in literacy classes was about 2-3,000. Adults were

1967 was that the Mishgida School board seemed to function in practice, other committees existed more on paper. FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.27 (Finnish).
26 EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.16.
27 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, pp.4f.; see above p.155.
29 See above, pp.146, 167.
30 The following section is based on GA-A: Djalatta May 1965, pp.2, 4, 5; Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.3; Djalatta to EECMY 13th Executive C. 1966.06.17.
taught free of charge. Ato Djalatta enthusiastically reported that KEC-2 morale was increasing.\footnote{GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.3.}

**Ato Geletta Wolteji - the Adviser**

As already noted, from February 1965 Ato Geletta Wolteji assisted Ato Djalatta as the EECMY Adviser of the EECMY “Home Mission”. Both were non-residential leaders in support of the KEC-2. Ato Geletta stepped in and replaced Ato Zacheus as the EECMY local representative in the region. Having started as substitute for the Mishgida School Director, he was now making his upward career. He was once even entitled “Field Representative of the EEC-MY in Kambatta”(!).\footnote{GA-A: EECMY Executive Committee minutes, June 1966 (Sene 10, 1958 E.C.), p.19.} His most frequent title was “Adviser to the Kambatta Church”.\footnote{Ibid.; GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.7; Djalatta 1966.06.17.}

This meant that he was regarded as the EECMY permanent local representative of the Kambata Program.\footnote{GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.4, no.7.} Ato Djalatta himself, however, remained the Director of the KHMP and the Mishgida School. The two men were the primary contacts between the EECMY and the KEC-2. Ato Djalatta wrote the reports, which he and Ato Geletta then commented on at the EECMY General Assemblies and Executive Committees.\footnote{GA-A: EECMY Executive Committee Exhibit A, June 1966 (Sene 10, 1958 E.C.), pp.19ff.} As “adviser” Ato Geletta started to write reports of his own. Sometimes the KEC-2 President, Ato Marqos, delivered his report, too. Thus, three reports(!) were delivered from the Kambata/Hadiya region to the EECMY General Assembly in Backo 1967.\footnote{GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1967.}

The purpose of the reconstruction of the KHMP had been to promote the KEC-2 leadership. Thus it was somewhat strange that the EECMY representatives became so dominant. It seems that Ato Djalatta had been too quick in his structural innovations and attempt to employ new people. He did not give the KEC-2 a fair chance to come into this process. Severe criticism of the dominance of the two Oromo leaders of the KHMP was raised by Kambata leaders, later on. One point in the criticism was that:

Applications and written complaints from leaders in Kambatta never got through to the leaders of the EECMY or if they are, explained away by Ato Jaleta and Ato Geletta.”\footnote{GA-A: Ezra 1969.03.25. On the short form “ECMY”, see below, p.213, n.32.}

The KEC-2 leaders felt that they again had lost contact with the EECMY Church Officers. This is the background to the complaints against the new administrative strategy adopted by the KEC-2 from March 2-5, 1965 onwards. As we have seen Qes Ezra and his team at that time had arrived in Mishgida to fulfil their part of the EECMY integrated strategy.
B. Qes Ezra Gebremedhin’s Attempt at Integration

The EECMY General Assembly’s intention, when sending an evangelistic team to the KEC-2, was that it should preach, gather ideas and prepare a large meeting of believers.\textsuperscript{38} The original idea had been to have a representative from each EECMY synod in the team. The group sent in March 1965 consisted of just three persons, all living in Addis Abeba. They did represent different synods, however.

As already mentioned, the leader of the team was the EECMY Executive Secretary, Qes Ezra Gebremedhin. The two others were Ato Wondimagegnehu Hailu from the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod (AAMY), and Ato Alemu Derseh, from the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod.\textsuperscript{39}

Qes Ezra Gebremedhin, was the EECMY Executive Secretary from August 1963 to September 1966. He was a student of the University College of Addis Abeba, ordained in April 1964 a year after his return from a scholarship in the USA. Qes Ezra is an Eritrean, born in Addis Abeba in 1936. His parents were considered to be “... among the pillars of the Evangelical Congregation ...”\textsuperscript{40}

Ato Wondimagegnehu Hailu was working with the Yemissrach Dimts Literature Program in Addis Abeba in 1965. He had taken part in the first pastors’ course in Nejo 1949-52, with the view of being employed as a pastor in the AAMY Congregation. Owing to his relations to the Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society (BCMS), whose aim was to renew the EOC from within, he was never ordained but continued as an evangelist and teacher. He was considered a mature Evangelical leader with a good knowledge of the EOC.\textsuperscript{41}

Ato Alemu Derseh was also acquainted with the BCMS. In 1965 he was working as an evangelist in the Urael Church in Addis Abeba, connected to the NLM.\textsuperscript{42}

The visit of the team in the Kambata/Hadiya region lasted from March 3 to April 17, that is, 46 days or almost seven weeks.\textsuperscript{43} As mentioned above, the team started its mission by attending Ato Djalatta’s meeting with KEC-2 elders in Mishgida, where new Church Officers were elected. It also attended the first meeting of the new leadership of the KEC-2, the “Committee of Administration”.\textsuperscript{44}

The Sunday service, on March 7, was celebrated in the Benara Church, situated

\textsuperscript{38} GA-A: Ezra Jan.1965, p.4; see above, pp.175f.
\textsuperscript{39} GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1965, List of Delegates. Both attended the 1965 General Assembly according to the List of Delegates showing the synods they represented.
\textsuperscript{41} SG-A: Arén to Grenstedt 1994.03.20; Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30; see Bakke 1987, p.167. Ato Wondimagegnehu was partaker of the second EECMY Executive Committee in 1961, which decided to support the KEC-2. See above, pp.147f.
\textsuperscript{42} SG-A: Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30.
\textsuperscript{43} The details given on the evangelistic tour are based on EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, see above, p.174, n.1. By comparing Qes Ezra’s Diary with two detailed maps of the region, the List of Delegates of the Kambata Synod’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Convention and my own knowledge of the area, I have been able to localise the itinerary of the tour almost in detail. GA-A: Kambata. Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geography Institute 1971, Scale 1:100,000; MP-A: Hand-made map 1977.03.31, Scale 1:200,000; FELM-A: Kambata Synod 1\textsuperscript{st} Convention 1971.02.12-14. See above, pp.177f.
close to the Mishgida School. Then on Monday, March 8, the team started its evangelistic ministry in the Abonsa “Seven”. The tour would take them to all the six “sevens” of the KEC-2. The three men preached, taught, baptised and celebrated Holy Communion. They led ordinary services, held sessions of reconciliation and ordained pastors according to EECMY liturgy and traditions. To be more precise, according to AAMY traditions and liturgy. This was an essential part of the ecclesiology of Qes Ezra and Ato Wondimagegnehu. But, as it was considered easier to follow, they were using the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod’s ritual.45

The EECMY evangelistic team, which was a living demonstration of the EECMY ecclesiology, got a good grip on the situation in the KEC-2. They came close to the reality of ordinary congregational life in the KEC-2.

About 36 congregations were visited by the team. Each “seven” was visited in the following order - first about 12 congregations in the Abonsa “Seven”, about four in the Ilgira “Seven”, about four in the Tembaro “Seven”, about three in the Soro “Seven”, about seven in the Lemu “Seven” and about six in the Dodoba “Seven”. Longer pauses were made at the Mishgida centre, which was the base of the team, and in Hosanna.46

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45 SG-A: Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30; EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.16. The team used the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod’s ritual, which perhaps was a bit simpler than the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod’s. The concepts of the teachers, however, were more of an AAMY type. SG-A: Ezra Gebremedhin o.i.1995.08.11.

46 See below, Map 8, p.184.
Pastors in the KEC-2

The KEC polity of elders carrying out pastoral functions had been transferred from the KEC to the KEC-2. As an independent church the KEC-2 had adopted a kind of congregation-centred understanding of the church and the sacraments. The sacraments did not seem to have had a central place in the life of ordinary KEC-2 congregations, however.

From the very start of the visiting program of the evangelistic team pastors were ordained(!). Thus on Monday March 8, after having preached to the small Ambo Congregation, Qes Ezra ordained a local elder, Ato Wolde Mariam Bachore. Qes Wolde was the first ordained pastor of the KEC-2.

On the basis of recommendations from the KEC-2 elders, suitable candidates for ordination were selected. Most of the candidates already had pastoral func-

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47 The numbers and different arrows refer to the different stages of the tour from Mishgida to:
1 Abansa “Seven” ➔ 2. A long tour from Mishgida to the other five “sevens” by foot and by mule ➔ 3. By car back and forth from Mishgida to the pastors’ course in Dodoba ↔

48 The 29 years old Qes Ezra, had been ordained himself less than a year before. See above, pp.166, 182.

49 SG-A: Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30.

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tions as elders. Some of them had attended the Mishgida Bible-school.\textsuperscript{50} In the course of the evangelistic tour seven pastors were ordained while visiting the “sevens”. The weaker “sevens” to the west, that is, the Ilgira “Seven” and the Tembaro “Seven”, got two pastors each.\textsuperscript{51} The Abonsa “Seven”, the Dodoba “Seven” and the Soro “Seven” got one pastor each, while the Lem u “Seven” awaited the concluding ministerial training course.

This course was arranged in the Dodoba Congregation in the Dodoba “Seven”, from Monday 12.4 to Friday 16.4. A balance between the two leading “sevens” of the KEC-2, Abonsa and Dodoba, was thus preserved. Lessons on liturgy and the sacraments were held. On Friday afternoon a service was given with the purpose of demonstrating the different rites and rituals of the EECMY. The service consisted of baptism, Holy Communion and as the grand finale of this course 11 new pastors were ordained. The total number of pastors in the KEC-2 increased to 18.\textsuperscript{52} Thus, as a very tangible result of the “spiritual ministry” of the team, the KEC-2 had received pastors with an EECMY ordination in each “seven”.

One must say that the early ordination of pastors looked a bit adventurous. The team did not reduce its mission to a “gathering of ideas” for a reconstruction of the KHMP. Nor was it just a matter of spiritual visitations. The ordination of pastors was a decided step towards a change of ecclesiastical offices from a more informal and independent model to a more mainstream approach. In other words, it was a big step towards the EECMY (AAMY) polity and doctrine of the Church and the Ministry.

\textbf{Reasons for Ordination}

When trying to understand this rapid move towards ordination, the background of the team members and the conditions they met in the Kambata/Hadiya region have to be borne in mind. Part of the spiritual legacy of the EECMY has to be seen against the background of the EOC heritage, which demanded a “Qes”, that is, an ordained priest. The members of the evangelistic team were certainly not untouched by this “latent” heritage of the EOC.\textsuperscript{53} As just mentioned two of the team members had been in active contact with the BCMS, which emphasised the value of the EOC legacy. All three of them were well acquainted with the EOC.

\textsuperscript{50} Qes Getachew Gensato was the youngest man ordained by Qes Ezra. Later on he went to GHM’s Bible-school in Aira for theological education. SG-A: K. Mauranen o.i.1993.10.15.

\textsuperscript{51} In the Zergicho Congregation in the Ilgira “Seven”, Ato Abiyo and Ato Haibano were ordained on Mar.19. Ato Abebe Dolago and Ato Getachew Gensato were ordained in the Hama Ancho Congregation in the Tembaro “Seven” (later the Donga “Seven”) on Mar.20. Ato Gage Heme was ordained in the Bulshana Congregation in the Soro “Seven” on Mar.21 and Ato Johannes Sabiro in the Bokata Congregation in theDodoba “Seven” on Apr.8. EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965}, pp.2, 8, 9, 15; see FELM-A: Kambata Synod 1\textsuperscript{st} Convention 1971.02. 12 -14, List of Delegates. On Qes Getachew Gensato, see below, p.242.

\textsuperscript{52} EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965}, pp.16f.

\textsuperscript{53} Ezra Gebremedhin 1988, p.71 (Swedish). Qes Ezra maintains that the EOC legacy had a silent normative function on some CEEC view-points of confessional character by its sheer existence. This could probably be said of its influence on the EECMY team members, too.
Their spiritual background and understanding of the Church implied a “Qes” as the administrator of the sacraments. The Lutheran concept of a “right” administration of the sacraments as a sign of the true Church was important to the team.\textsuperscript{54}

The ministry did not necessarily imply the concept of a “professional ministry”, however. In contrast to many other categories of workers, which were introduced by the EECMY “Home Mission” in the region, the new pastors were actually not employed.\textsuperscript{55} To use a Pauline term it was a tent-making ministry.

The situation of the KEC-2 and the dilemma of the EECMY evangelistic team can be interpreted in the light of Qes Ezra’s own words in his Plenary Paper: \textit{The Nurture of the People of God}, given at the third All Africa Lutheran Conference (AALC) in Addis Abeba six months after the KEC-2 ordinations.\textsuperscript{56} In this paper he argued for a broader understanding of the ministry. He wanted to guard against the failure of a narrow “professionalisation” of the ministry.

Under the heading, \textit{An Inadequate Ministry}, he particularly stresses the importance of the sacraments and the special African context where:

> A thousand lay Christians in a locality may have to spend months without the ministry of the sacraments for lack of an ordained man among them . . . .\textsuperscript{57}

As a recommendation in the discussion following on Qes Ezra’s paper, it was stated that:

b. In areas of emergency: that the churches consider the possibility to meet the present emergency situation by a temporary “second avenue” to the pastoral ministry, that is by ordaining experienced and reliable catechists and evangelists;\textsuperscript{58}

These words in fact correspond to what was achieved in the Kambata/Hadiya region, which had just preceded the conference. The team seems to have interpreted the KEC-2 predicament as a case of “emergency”. In line with their frame of reference, they felt that something drastic had to be done in order to improve the situation of the KEC-2. A church without pastors was incomprehensible to them.

In this perspective the early ordinations can be understood as an act of solidarity. The team reinforced the prevalent KEC-2 leadership of elders, but transformed it into a pattern conforming more to EECMY polity. It gave the KEC-2 a more Lutheran outlook. The whole venture was an effort to reinforce an EECMY understanding of the sacraments.\textsuperscript{59}

The ordinations can hardly be recognised as being in line with the recommendations of the 1965 EECMY General Assembly, though. It is possible that Ato

\textsuperscript{55} GA-A: Djalatta to 5\textsuperscript{th} Gen. Assembly, Jan.1967, p.4 (Amharic).
\textsuperscript{56} Ezra Gebremedhin 1966, pp.61-70.
\textsuperscript{57} Ezra Gebremedhin 1966, pp.65, 86.
\textsuperscript{58} Ezra Gebremedhin 1966, p.87.
\textsuperscript{59} The ordinations can be called an act of solidarity but hardly an act of an enthusiastic solidarity. The team members felt inadequate and pressed, when confronting the problems of the KEC-2 and sometimes did not know what to do. EG-A: \textit{Ezra Diary 1965}, pp.2ff.

Qes Ezra describes the situation as almost chaotic. The team did not have time to give a long course. The ordinations were efforts to make the best of a difficult and pressing situation. SG-A: Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30.
Djalatta’s activist approach had influenced the team. The team members came to the conclusion that an introduction of the ordained ministry into the KEC-2 was the best way forward. With the EECMY ordinations of pastors, the traditional **polity** in the KEC-2 with elders as administrators of the sacraments was reduced. Instead a model of spiritual leadership in accordance with EECMY (AAMY) standards was introduced. The change was encouraged by the two Oromo leaders from Wollega. As has been implied the position of pastors was strong in the WWS.

It is probable that more attention would have been given to differences in function between elders and pastors before ordinations were held in the KEC-2, if the nearby Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod had had a stronger representation in the evangelistic team. Certainly this would have been the case if the nearby EECMY foreign missionaries of NLM background in Sidamo had been involved. However, they were not, as the EECMY “Home Mission” in the Kambata/Hadiya region was led solely by Ethiopians and thus reflected Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity.

**A New Liturgy**

From questions put to the team by KEC-2 elders, it is obvious that even experienced KEC-2 elders had little knowledge of the EECMY understanding of the sacraments. Abba Denoro, an elder at Mishgida, was probably representative for the KEC-2 when after the Sunday service in the Mishgida Church on March 14, he asked the team to demonstrate EECMY ways of carrying out baptisms and services of Holy Communion. If the knowledge of the EECMY interpretation of the sacraments was small at the Mishgida centre, it can be imagined how it would have been in the periphery of the KEC-2, like in the Tembaro “Seven”.

Probably as an answer to his request, a communion service was held in the Mishgida Church on the Sunday four weeks later, on April 11, when the team had returned to Mishgida. On this occasion it is specifically stated that the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod’s ritual was used.

This order was also used at the five days pastors’ course in Dodoba. The course was actually started by the students’ copying the order of baptism from the Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Synod. From April 13 to 16 intense teaching was given by the team members and Ato Djalatta on different subjects, like liturgical performance and the doctrine of the sacraments.

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60 Ato Djalatta was eager to argue that the already existing functions of the KEC-2 elders, as administrators of the Word and Sacraments, should be consolidated by an EECMY ordination. SG-A: Ezra to Grenstedt 1994.03.30.


64 EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.16. As just mentioned, this order was considered as easy to follow, therefore it was used in the KEC-2. SG-A: Ezra Gebremedhin o.i.1995.08.11.

65 EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.16.
On Friday afternoon April 16, a demonstration service was held. It consisted of baptism and Holy Communion. Finally there was the ordination of the 11 candidates. A primary concern was to show how the EECMY rites and rituals were carried out.

Thus an important part of integrating the KEC-2 into the EECMY was to introduce EECMY liturgy and worship to the new pastors. Except for Qes Gudina’s efforts, the experiences of the KEC-2 scholarship holders, a couple of elders’ courses and experiences of KEC-2 members at the EECMY General Assemblies and Executive Committees from 1962, not much direct influence from the EECMY had hitherto reached the KEC-2 concerning doctrine and worship. The teaching of the evangelistic team was in fact the second systematic effort to introduce the EECMY polity of the Church, EECMY worship and a more consistent teaching on the doctrine of the sacraments to the local KEC-2.66

An Issue of Relevant Contextualization
The longer the team stayed in the Kambata/Hadiya region, the more they started to reflect on the EECMY approach to the KEC-2 context. In their reflections and discussions it sometimes occurred to the team members that the EECMY was foreign to the Kambata milieu and that the congregation-centred approach of the SIM was a better model for the KEC-2.67

The elections held in the “sevens” and in the KEC-2 top structure, according to Ato Djalatta’s new “scheme”, were discussed critically with the KEC-2 elders, as were the weaknesses of the “... system of majority vote”.68 The possibility of trying to reconcile the KEC-2 and the KEC anew was considered several times by the team members. Perhaps this was the solution to the KEC-2 - EECMY dilemma of lack of resources and proper contextualization?69

Ato Djalatta’s deliberations on the need of a long-range plan touched on contextual aspects, too. In fact he was pondering whether the whole administrative approach, which he was pursuing, was too foreign to the KEC-2 context:

Since the traditional Kambatta way of running affairs is only through group discussions and collective decisions, to be a Director or President or Committee Chairman or Secretary is not an easy job in Kambatta.70

As in 1961 there did not seem to be enough time or resources in the EECMY to develop the contextual analysis further than to discussions, however.71 Both Ato Djalatta and the team members had to continue their work trusting in faith.

66 EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.17. Qes Gudina Tumsa’s efforts were the first; see above, pp. 161, 172.
69 EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, pp.8, 12, 13f.
70 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.8. Some of Ato Djalatta’s statements like his report of May 1965, p.3 were later criticised as pejorative to the Kambata people. GA-A: Ezra 1969.03.25; see above, p.181.
71 See above, pp.145, 149f., 168f.
C. Prolonged EECMY “Home Mission”

As the LWF budget came to an end in 1966 a key-issue for the EECMY became how to continue the KHMP. Ways of assistance from other EECMY synods were explored when the KHMP situation was analysed.72

Dr Schaefer, who now was the EECMY Treasurer, emphasised three important points at the EECMY Executive Committee:

1. The priority of the Bible-school.
2. A scheme for the continuation of assistance of the KHMP and sources of financial assistance for it.
3. Recognition of the part the EECMY had to play in this assistance. A scheme for the continuation of assistance to the KHMP was to be presented at the EECMY Executive Committee in June 1966.73 It was decided that Dr Schaefer would prepare a new five-year plan to be sent to Geneva before the end of March.74

At the LWF/CWM annual meeting in Oxford on April 14-20, 1966, both Dr Schaefer and Rev. Lundgren were now part of the staff of the LWF’s Department of World Mission (DWM). Qes Ezra became the chairman of the Ethiopia Committee at the meeting.75 One can imagine that the KHMP received a strong recommendation from these men at the LWF/CWM. As we have seen above Dr Schaefer and Rev. Lundgren had previously provided the outline of the first five-year plan of the KHMP together.76 Now they clearly supported a continuation.

The minutes tell that the Ethiopia Committee recommended and the LWF/CWM resolved: “That the Budget Committee be requested to include an amount of $ 8,400.00 in 1967 for continued support of the Kambatta program”. The requested money was approved as an “A” item. A one-time capital grant for a Bible-school was referred to the Budget Committee but was listed as a “B” item and was not implemented.77

The support of the LWF/CWM for 1967 was characterised as a “one time financial grant” by the EECMY Executive Committee in June 1966. It was stated that a new five-year plan would soon be presented to the LWF.78

Thus the decision of the EECMY concerning its involvement in the Kambata/Hadiya region was not to withdraw but to prolong the KHMP for another five years. More resources had to be secured and the keywords used were now “a long-term plan” and “Christian nurture”. The atmosphere in which these concepts were used is highlighted by Qes Ezra at the 1965 AALC:

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73 Ibid.
74 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1966.02.11.
76 See above, pp.144ff.
78 GA-A: EECMY Executive Committee minutes, June 1966, p.7.

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Hit and run methods of tackling the problems of Christian nurture are bound to fail. The results from such efforts will be fragmentary and short-lived. Therefore the Church should envisage a long-range, comprehensive, graded and uninterrupted program for the implementation of Christian nurture. Since no single church can produce a program of such massive proportions, ideas on Christian nurture have to be pooled from many sources.79

The expressions “hit and run methods”, “long-range program” and “Christian nurture” are repeated in various reports and reflect the EECMY attitude to its Home Mission Program in 1966.80

In the first KHMP five-year period, 1962-66, the budget from the LWF had been based on a system, where the support from the LWF was supposed to decrease and the KEC-2 was hoped to be self-supporting at the end of this period.81 This goal was clearly not reached.

After the reconstruction of the KHMP in 1965 the contribution of the KEC-2 to the KHMP seemed a little bit better. As contributions in cash and in labour were not differentiated in the budget reports, however, it is not easy to get a clear picture of the financial contribution of the KEC-2.82 The LWF contribution to the KHMP 1962-66 had been:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>U$</th>
<th>(E$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>13,754</td>
<td>(34,385)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(25,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>(20,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>(16,500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>6,200</td>
<td>(15,500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44,554</td>
<td>(111,385)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was not possible to make a more detailed prognosis for the following years.

Some important changes of positions of the EECMY personnel that affected the KEC-2 took place in 1966. Qes Ezra left his position as the Executive Secretary of the EECMY and was replaced by Qes Gudina Tumsa in September 1966. Rev. Lundgren left the LWF/DWM staff as Secretary of Africa and as the DWM Assistant Director. He returned to Ethiopia to become Adviser of the EECMY at central level. Dr Schaefer started as a consultant on Christian education at the LWF/DWM and thus left the EECMY. The new LWF/DWM Secretary of Africa from 1966 was another Swede, Dr Carl-Johan Hellberg, with missionary experience from Tanzania.84

79 Ezra Gebremedhin 1966, p.70.
81 See above, pp.149, 159.
82 Lundgren found the sums presented misleading, as they did not differentiate the KEC-2 contribution given in cash from the contribution given in labour. GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1966.02.19. See FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.26 (Finnish).
The KEC-2 and the EECMY Policy of Missionary Integration

The integration of the missions into the EECMY opened a new door for the KEC-2 to gain support from a foreign mission without breaking comity principles. By the end of 1966 all the EECMY Synods were preparing themselves for transfer in an integrated pattern and all the missions seem to have been ready to take this step.\(^8^5\)

Ato Djalatta in June 1966 formulated what was now discussed more and more openly inside the EECMY:

I believe that it would have been much better if the church call a mission with the same Christian belief to take over and run the Kambatta Evangelical Programme.\(^8^6\)

In order to avoid a confrontation on comity principles with the SIM in the Kambatta/Hadiya region in 1962-66, the solution had been to let “only” Ethiopians lead the KHMP in the region. The idea was now to let the missionaries come in “under” the church as workers of the EECMY, to whom comity principles were irrelevant.

The EECMY was facing the challenge of the KEC-2 but had to recognise the limited resources available in its own synods. It therefore seemed reasonable for them to ask for help from a mission within an integrated church-mission structure.

The LWF was worried that the KHMP had become too dependent on the LWF budget and was interested in a solution to this problem.\(^8^7\) At the end of 1966, the idea of a supporting mission “under” the church had thus become attractive both to the EECMY and the LWF. This is the background to the new involvement of the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) which will be explored in Part Three.

A Picture of the KEC-2 in 1965

In 1965 the KEC-2 was a church in transition. This was clearly seen in the KEC-2 changes of polity. Efforts to influence its worship and doctrine were also made.

Polity: The KEC-2 centre was still in Mishgida but the President, Ato Marqos Gobebo, was from the Dodoba “Seven”. Tensions between the “sevens” led the EECMY to question whether it would be possible to unite the KEC-2 into one synod. In 1965 ideas were launched to make the KEC-2 a “district” in the Shoa and Eastern Wollega Synod or to let congregations apply for membership in this synod. The executive leaders were now four in number. Two representatives from each “seven” together with the four Church Officers formed the KEC-2’s “Committee of Administration”, similar to an EECMY Executive Committee.\(^8^8\) The Hadaro “Seven” had been divided into the Ilgira “Seven” and the Tembaro “Seven.” This augmented the number of “sevens” to six.\(^8^9\)

The centralised EECMY administrative system had been reinforced by Ato Djalatta. It created a bureaucracy of committees, which made the process of com-

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\(^{8^5}\) Sæverås 1974, p.135.  
\(^{8^6}\) GA-A: Djalatta to EECMY 13\textsuperscript{th} Executive C. 1966.06.17.  
\(^{8^7}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.26 (Finnish).  
\(^{8^8}\) EG-A: Ezra Diary 1965, p.17; see above, pp.163f., 178f.  
\(^{8^9}\) See above, Map 8, p.184; GA-A: Djalatta May 1965, pp.1f.
munication clumsy. The KEC-2 Christians, some of whom were literate, tried to prepare budgets and write minutes in an EECMY style, while the more spontaneous ways of the monthly and quarterly meetings were challenged. A salary system of workers paid by external budget was introduced at the level of the “sevens”, too. Inspectors and teachers of the literacy program were a new group of employees, paid by the YDLC. Not called a “Synod” anymore, the KEC-2 in 1965 was more similar to an EECMY synod than ever. It was clear that integrating the KEC-2 into the EECMY as a synod would demand great resources and take a long time.

The introduction of pastors in the KEC-2 had been a rapid procedure. The 18 new pastors were too few to meet the real needs of the Church in their new roles. They had too little education to be able to strongly influence the KEC-2. The relation between them and the remaining elders had not been sufficiently assessed.

**Worship:** Pastors as administrators of the sacraments tried to do their best to follow the new rituals introduced to them. The former role of elders as leaders in worship became vague.

**Doctrine:** Different understandings of the sacraments were now mixing, mainly among the pastors and their congregations. Subjective aspects of faith were focused among the rank and file.

**Ethos:** The moral standard of the KEC-2 was still low. Drinking, polygamy and financial irregularities were not uncommon. The spiritual leadership was characterised as weak and the church gave priority to material and financial matters. A great need of reconciliation and education was felt in the KEC-2.

**Relations to the EECMY:** At national level the KEC-2 reports to the EECMY were mainly delivered by Ato Djalatta with support from Ato Geletta. Accordingly, the KEC-2 elders again felt that they had lost direct contact with the EECMY Church Officers. At local level there was, however, an atmosphere of hope evolving around the EECMY Literacy Campaign. Each “seven” hoped that it would get a school and a clinic of its own. Ato Leggese Segaro, a student of the Mekane Yesus Seminary (MYS), would return to the region in 1966 and lead the Bible-school. He had already led a refresher course for the new pastors in Mishgida and visited congregations in the steps of the EECMY evangelistic team.

**Ecumenism:** The ecumenical climate was strenuous. “Internal migration”, for instance, from the KEC-2 to the SDA and from the KEC to the KEC-2 was common. KEC-2 Christians were furthermore pressed to pay tax to the EOC.

**Size:** The KEC-2 statistics were now questioned by the EECMY. The synod-to-be was estimated to have about 70-80 congregations, that is, 7-8,000 members. There were six “sevens” in the KEC-2.

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90 EG-A: *Ezra Diary 1965*, pp.5, 10f.
91 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, pp.2ff.
92 GA-A: Djalatta 1966.01.21, p.4; see above, p.107.
93 Rev. Ojanperä noted 79 congregations in 1966, Ato Djalatta noted 96 in June 1966. The intention was to arrange fewer and larger congregations in the KEC-2. FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.27, p.27 (Finnish); GA-A: Djalatta to EECMY 13th Executive C. 1966.06.17.
PART THREE
INTO THE MAINSTREAM 1967-75

In Part Three I will analyse how the perspective from Mt. Ambaricho and Mt. Shonkolla widened, when from 1967 foreign visitors under the guidance of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) started to pay visits to the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2).

The ecclesiastical situation in the Kambata/Hadiya region changed radically with the arrival of the Finnish Missionary Society and the merger of the KEC-2 into the EECMY as its fifth synod in 1969. Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity, which was one of the crucial factors influencing the evolution of the KEC-2 from 1954 to 1969, had contributed to a new framework - the Kambata Synod (KS).

The first years of the young synod would, however, become more dramatic than anticipated. External factors influenced the interaction of the Kambata Synod with its partners. The famine in 1973-74, the Ethiopian Revolution in 1974 and the rural Land Reform in 1975 altered the context of the Kambata Hadiya region. In these dynamics the Kambata Synod’s relations to its external partners became even more valuable.
Chapter Ten

The Finnish Missionary Society - the KEC-2’s New Partner

Heart-searching questions on the continued financing of the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) and its integration into the KEC-2 had forced Ato Djalatta to begin to contemplate the possibility of the direct involvement of a new missionary agency in the joint EECMY - KEC-2 enterprise in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Continued developments would result in a new venture by the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS).

In Africa the FMS was hitherto mainly involved in Namibia and Tanzania. The EECMY with its international connections took the initiative in the contacts with the FMS. In this new process the KEC-2 was simply at the receiving end.

It is this development which will be the main preoccupation of this chapter. In addition to the EECMY minutes, I mainly base my account on primary sources in Finnish from the archives of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM).

A. Ethiopian Hosts

Continued Support from the EECMY

At the EECMY General Assembly in January 1967, although not yet called a synod, the KEC-2 had an obvious place in the EECMY and was presented after the four ordinary synods. As mentioned above, altogether three reports were delivered from the Kambata/Hadiya region, two by the Oromo representatives of the KHMP and one by the KEC-2 President, Ato Marqos Gobebo. Progress of an administrative character and of the EECMY Literacy Campaign were especially mentioned. The number of “employed” literacy teachers was among the highest in the Synods of the EECMY.

The important decision of the Assembly with regard to the KEC-2 was to continue its support and to arrange a plan of assistance. It was stated that the support given hitherto had been “inadequate” and that the Church should find ways to

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1 As hinted at in the General Introduction my mother, Margit L. Grenstedt, born Silfver, has translated FELM (FMS) material from Finnish into Swedish. I would like to thank her for this important contribution to my study and for her continuous support! The translations from Swedish to English are mine. References to pages in the Finnish reports refer to the Finnish original. I indicate a source in Finnish by writing “(Finnish)”.
“augment” it. Nothing was indicated that a foreign mission would be asked to give support. This was an idea that the EECMY Church Officers nurtured at this stage, however.

The idea of engaging a foreign mission in support of the evolving synod would dominate the EECMY efforts with regard to the KEC-2 in 1967. The interaction between the EECMY, the LWF and the FMS would prove decisive to further developments. I will therefore concentrate on this process as I continue.

**LWF in Search of a New Sponsor for the EECMY “Home Mission”**

The first five years of the KHMP operation were, as already shown, in principle an EECMY operation. It was, however, heavily sponsored directly by the CWM of the LWF. The LWF therefore began to explore the possibility of involving new donors and missionary agencies in the current Lutheran operations in the Kambata/Hadiya region. In this respect they felt that by silent agreement they were acting on behalf of the EECMY. This search encouraged the LWF to reinforce the emerging interest of the FMS for missionary outreach in Ethiopia.

In the early correspondence between the LWF and the FMS, Ethiopia soon proved to mean the Kambata/Hadiya region or as it was called at that time “the EECMY mission area”. The EECMY was said to have realised that it could not take care of the “area” on its own and expected assistance from a new mission agency. Dr Hellberg and Dr Arne Søvik of the LWF were of the opinion that the work would suit the FMS well. The LWF/CWM annual meeting in Vienna in April 1967 would be a convenient forum for a discussion with the EECMY along those lines.

It must be said that the early LWF presentation of the region to the Finns was made quite elaborately. Except for some errors on distances and years, Dr Hellberg was well informed on the history and situation of the KEC-2. Nothing was mentioned of comity principles, although he shared information on the SIM. The thorough presentation of the Kambata/Hadiya region and the emphasis of the need for a new co-operating mission to the EECMY imply the interest of the LWF in engaging the FMS in the region. This interest was shared by the EECMY, although at this stage it considered other possible areas in Ethiopia for FMS to work in, too.

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6 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.02.08, pp.1-9 (Finnish). The report gives a summary of Rev. O. Ojanperä’s visit to Geneva in Jan.1967 and the options presented to the FMS by the LWF. Rev. Ojanperä was the FMS Africa secretary.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid. The FMS was working in Africa in Namibia since 1870 and in Tanzania since 1948. FMS Årsbok 1991, pp.59, 69 (Swedish).
9 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.02.08 (Finnish). Dr Hellberg was the Africa Secretary and Dr Søvik the Director of the LWF Department of World Mission (DWM).
10 Ibid. The LWF obviously did not find any problems concerning comity when it introduced the FMS to the Kambata/Hadiya region.
Parallel Finnish and Ethiopian Explorations

In the late 1960’s the FMS, stimulated *inter alia* by widening contacts within the LWF/CWM, was eagerly exploring the possibilities of finding a new mission area. Investigations were made by a special committee, which in the early 1967 recommended the FMS Board to ask the FMS General Assembly to start work in Ethiopia. This Assembly was to be held in June 1967.\(^\text{11}\)

According to the committee, the FMS’s interest in Ethiopia should be directed to three areas. Firstly the FMS should employ Anni Kauppinen, a nurse working at a school for the deaf in Eritrea. According to the second recommendation the FMS should follow the LWF proposal and involve itself in the Kambata/Hadiya region. A third idea was to further explore SEM suggestions of new work in Wollega.

Parallel to the investigations of the FMS committee, the EECMY was preparing a new five-year program for the KHMP to run from 1968 to 1972. The financial support would be requested from the LWF, once again. This was supposed to function as earlier, with an annually decreased scale of financial support. The EECMY synods should provide help “like before”, it was said.\(^\text{12}\) Some important new ideas were presented in the EECMY draft of the program:

1. The KEC-2 should be prepared for admittance as a synod in the EECMY at the General Assembly in 1969.
2. A supporting church or mission should be invited to aid the EECMY in its work in Kambata as from 1969. The invitations should first be given to the Lutheran Missions already co-operating with the EECMY. If there was no positive answer from these agencies:
   
   . . . the LWF should be asked to assist in finding a Church or Mission willing to assume the responsibility to supply the necessary personnel and funds for the work in Kambatta as long as it is needed. It is understood that the Church or Mission would work through and under the EECMY.\(^\text{13}\)

As noted above, the process of integrating the missions into the EECMY and the comity agreements with the SIM made the formulation to a work “under” the EECMY suitable. The EECMY probably felt it convenient to first ask a mission already working in Ethiopia for assistance. As just mentioned the contact with the LWF on finding a mission had however already started. Most probably there were informal contacts between Dr Hellberg and his predecessor as the Africa Secretary of the Department of World Mission, the Rev. Manfred Lundgren. As we recall Lundgren had returned to Ethiopia as the “Adviser” to the EECMY in 1966.\(^\text{14}\)

To sum up: The LWF network opened up new possibilities for the EECMY. On the basis of previous experiences it was quite a natural thing for the EECMY to ask the LWF to help in finding a new partner. From February 1967 it was evident

\(^{11}\) FELM-A: *Report to the Board* 1967.02.15 (Finnish).
\(^{13}\) *Ibid.*
\(^{14}\) See above, pp.190f.
that the EECMY considered it too heavy a burden to support the KEC-2 on its own.15

The Roads Lead to Vienna

An intense activity of deliberations started among the EECMY and the FMS officials as they made use of the network of the LWF. In March 1967 the FMS informed the LWF that the FMS Board had now “. . . even in principle agreed to start new work somewhere in Ethiopia.”16

As an answer, Dr Hellberg informed Rev. Olavi Ojanperä that the EECMY budget request of a LWF/CWM subsidy for 1968 showed that the EECMY “. . . intend to invite a mission to assist in this work.”, i.e., in the Kambata/Hadiya region. He advised the FMS to arrange a meeting with the EECMY at the CWM in Vienna in April. Dr Hellberg even offered to assist in this meeting. A copy of his letter was sent to the EECMY Executive Secretary, Qes Gudina Tumsa.17

Rev. Ojanperä in a letter of March 23 to Qes Gudina confirms the FMS interest in future work in Ethiopia. He phrased his question in this way: “Now I would be very grateful if you could inform me if the EEC-MY has any need of new missionaries for the Kambatta area or some other part of Ethiopia . . . .”18 Rev. Ojanperä went on to propose a meeting with the EECMY representatives and Dr Hellberg at the LWF/CWM in Vienna.19

The EECMY was not late to answer the FMS’s request. On April 18 the EECMY Church Officers unanimously resolved to invite the FMS to come to Ethiopia. Ato Emmanuel Abraham opened up two possibilities, which as we have seen actually already were familiar to FMS - the Western Wollega Synod (WWS) or the Kambata area. He related:

In the new 5-year plan for this area (1968-72), it has been stated that the only solution to this Home Mission Programme is to get a supporting Mission or Church to assist in this work.20

In agreement with the plans of the LWF, the mission should begin its work 1969. The matter would be considered at the EECMY Executive Committee in June 9-12. Ato Emmanuel invited the FMS to send a delegation to Ethiopia to make a survey already in May 1967.21 Two days after Ato Emmanuel’s letter was written, the CWM annual meeting in Vienna started from April 23 to 29. The FMS was represented by its Secretary for Africa, Rev. Ojanperä and the Assistant Director, Rev. Viljo Remes. The EECMY was represented by its Executive Secretary, Qes Gudina Tumsa.22

16 FELM-A: Ojanperä to Hellberg 1967.03.09.
17 FELM-A: Hellberg to Ojanperä 1967.03.16.
18 FELM-A: Ojanperä to Gudina Tumsa 1967.03.22.
19 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
Thus within a space of four months the international network of the LWF had brought the FMS, the EECMY and the LWF representatives together to discuss a possible FMS contribution to the EECMY. However, it was not yet clear in which part of Ethiopia the FMS would start its new operations. Qes Gudina could present both western Wollega and the Kambata/Hadiya region equally well.

The EECMY budget proposal concerning the KHMP for 1968 was not particularly successful in Vienna. The heading of the proposal is “Kambatta Second Five-Year Evangelism Program”. In contrast to the EECMY, however, the LWF considered 1968 as its last year of support:

> Resolved that provided local sources are available on the scale indicated, provisions be made in the 1968 budget for a suitable subsidy for the Kambatta program, with the understanding that no commitment is implied for following years.

The EECMY application for an administrative centre and a Bible-school in Kambata were to be deferred until the next year “if presented”. The budget proposal to the KHMP for 1968 was reduced from US$ 14,900 to US$ 8,400. 1967 was actually the first year an EECMY proposal for the KHMP was reduced by the LWF.

Thus, there are clear indications that the LWF was not particularly interested in giving the KHMP a new five year lease of life in 1967. The LWF hoped that the new mission agency invited by the EECMY would instead take over the responsibility for the KHMP budget. In this perspective, it is reasonable to suggest that the LWF had a clear interest in the FMS choosing the Kambata/Hadiya region.

**The Road of the FMS Continues to Ethiopia**

On June 5, 1967 the FMS General Assembly decided to let the FMS Board make arrangements for the start of a new involvement in Ethiopia, but it was not yet fully committed to the Kambata/Hadiya region.

When the EECMY prepared the FMS survey in Ethiopia, it planned to present the two options we have already been acquainted with, the Kambata/Hadiya region and the Western Wollega Synod. As has been noted above, however, the LWF preferred the FMS to choose the first. This is further illustrated by a personal visit paid by Dr Hellberg to the region in the rainy season of 1967. On August 15, 1967 he was able to report on his visit in the region to the EECMY Church Officers. In the rainy season he had actually travelled in the hilly country from Durame to Hosanna on slippery “roads” mainly on mule, a distance of c.60 km! His guides were Qes Gudina Tumsa and Ato Djalatta Djaffero.

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23 See above, pp.160f.
26 FELM-A: The FMS General Assembly minutes 1967.06.05, §13 (Finnish).
28 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1967.08.18; SG-A: C-J. Hellberg o.i.1993.08.20.

Hellberg humorously speaks of the change in means of transportation, which he often experienced when visiting the countryside: from plane to car and to mule. The group lost its
Dr Hellberg’s impression was “... that Hosaena would be a suitable location for a future Synod Office as well as for the Bible-school . . .”. There were many reasons for this, he said, communication and light were the two mentioned. Astonishingly, according to the EECMY minutes nothing was said of the KHMP centre in Mishgida/Durame or the consequences for the work when the centre was changed from the Kambata area to Hadiya. Dr Hellberg just limited himself to suggesting:

... that in case the Finnish Missionary Society would undertake the work in Kambata, CWM would be in a position to give favourable consideration to the request submitted to CWM/LWF in the five year plan.

This was a clear message from the LWF to the EECMY. According to the EECMY, the LWF had agreed to support the KHMP at the LWF/CWM meeting in April 1967 if a supporting mission was found. In August the FMS was explicitly recommended as such a mission.

As already mentioned a three week trip, October 16 - November 7, to Ethiopia had been prepared by the EECMY for the FMS delegates Rev. Ojanperä and Rev. Remes. October 17-23 was set aside for a survey of the Kambata/Hadiya region, October 24-31 for the WWS. One week would be spent in Addis Abeba including a meeting with the EECMY Church Officers on the day before their departure.

EECMY Leaders Introduce the Kambata/Hadiya Region to the FMS

On October 17, 1967 the FMS delegation went by plane from Addis Abeba to Hosanna. The EECMY guides were Qes Gudina and Ato Djalatta. It was stated that one should try to make Hosanna the new centre of the church and the group visited a land-strip “... reserved for the administration of the church”. Dodoba, which also was visited on the trip, was not considered interesting for a Bible-school any longer, however.

What were the reasons for this new interest in Hosanna? There were probably several motives. As has been indicated, Hosanna is a central place for the Hadiya ethnic groups and Durame a central place for the Kambata ethnic groups. By moving the KEC-2 centre from Mishgida/Durame to Hosanna it was moved from a Kambata centre to a Hadiya centre.

When Dr Hellberg in conversation with Rev. Ojanperä calls Hosanna “... a neutral place”, this must probably be understood as “neutral” in respect to the trail in the darkness and rain. Hellberg fainted from exhaustion and fell off his mule just before reaching Hosanna.

29 GA-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1967.08.18.
30 Ibid.
33 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.19-31, 49-54 (Finnish). The following section refers to this source unless indicated by footnotes.
34 Ibid.
KEC-2 “sevens”. Hosanna was not in the centre of the conflicts of the KEC-2. In fact the town of Hosanna seems to have been more or less an empty spot for the KEC-2 in 1967. In 1962 comity questions were more sensitive to the EECMY than later on. In that year it would probably have been complicated to place the KEC-2 centre in Hosanna, close to where the KEC/SIM centre was situated. In 1967 the internal tension between the KEC-2 “sevens” was a more problematic issue for the EECMY than questions of comity, however.

It is likely that the EECMY wanted a new start for the KHMP and the FMS missionaries to begin in more “neutral” ground outside the spheres of influence of the stronger “sevens” of Abonsa and Dodoba and their mutual and internal conflicts. These ideas, coupled with the advantages of having a new synod centre situated close to the Awraja centre, became decisive for the choice of Hosanna.

The group continued to the south of the region by plane, via Soddu, the capital of Wollamo. At the Mishgida centre they visited the Bible-school with its 13 students. It made a poor impression on the Finns. The Mishgida School was more impressive with its 450 students. After the stay in the Mishgida centre, four small congregations were visited in the Abonsa “Seven”. These were Ambo, Abonsa, Djore and Adilo. Then the group returned to Addis Abeba via Shashamene and the NLM agricultural school in Wondo.

**Finnish Impressions**

From the Ojanperä-Remes report one understands that the overall picture of the KEC-2 and the KHMP gained by the two Finns was fairly accurate. The KHMP is described more or less correctly by Rev. Ojanperä, though the contribution given by the KEC-2 to the KHMP running budget is said to have been more than 50%. This should be compared with the information from Dr Hellberg, that the KHMP was on the way to becoming completely dependent on the LWF office in Geneva. The EECMY statistics given on the KEC-2 and the new administrative set-up of the KEC-2, in accordance with Ato Djalatta’s plan, were understood by the Finns to be more or less an armchair product.

The spiritual leadership of the KEC-2 was characterised as very poor. “In the church there was not one pastor with any theological education.” The ordained pastors were characterised as “emergency pastors”, who were able to administer the sacraments. The 80 evangelists, who had studied at the Bible-school, “can hardly read”, it was recorded in the Finnish report.

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35 Ibid.
38 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.02.08, p.8 (Finnish). According to the report Dr Hellberg actually gave this figure in Jan.1967.
40 Ibid.; See above, pp.178f.
It seems as if the Finnish delegates had received little information on, or paid little interest to, the indigenous efforts of the KEC/SIM and their congregation-centred approach, built on elders. Comments like the following illustrate this impression:

The Mass-movement went on for some years. A typical mark of this period was the lack of educated evangelists and pastors.\(^{42}\)

Another is the statement that the SIM was “. . . very unwilling to hand over the work to nationals.” The SIM’s role in the region is not particularly stressed in the FMS report, however. The SIM’s efforts, the split and its reasons are just described in passing. Interestingly enough the FMS delegates met the SIM Field Director, Mr Hodges, in Addis Abeba. As will be recalled he had earlier been a missionary in Hosanna from 1954 to 1964. He described the KEC-2 as of “little importance”, whereas the KEC had 280 congregations in the region.\(^{43}\)

The Finnish visitors were impressed by the part played by the EECMY in showing them the region. Rev. Ojanperä compares the way the KHMP was presented to them by Ethiopians and the way the NLM-school in Wondo was presented by NLM missionaries. Thoughts of the “Church-Mission” relation, which was a matter discussed in connection with the integration of foreign missions into the EECMY of that time, played a part in the FMS assessment.\(^{44}\)

The FMS delegates were told that there was a general need for an adviser, who could teach the KEC-2 in educational and organisational matters. The general aim for the adviser should be to create a synod, which could depend on its own strength and be self-supporting within the EECMY fellowship. Specific needs for the future were presented in spiritual, educational and medical areas. The EECMY was also said to be willing to contribute help to these areas.\(^{45}\)

### The FMS Delegates Meet the EECMY Church Officers

When the FMS representatives met the EECMY Church Officers in Addis Abeba to discuss the FMS engagement in Ethiopia the following persons received them: Qes Gudina, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, Rev. Lundgren and Mr Magnar Magerøy (NLM). The Finnish delegates raised the question of comity as a possible obstacle to working in the Kambata/Hadiya region.\(^{46}\) They had been told by Mr Hodges of the SIM that concerning comity regulations the SIM:

. . . did not want to forbid anyone to come, but would on their part go on working on their own. He argued that the Comity committee had allotted Kambata to the SIM. Naturally there have been confrontations with other missions.\(^{47}\)

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\(^{42}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.25 (Finnish).

\(^{43}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.25f., 49f. (Finnish); see above, pp.110, 115, 127.

\(^{44}\) Lectures on the Integration of the Missions into the EECMY were held in the EECMY in 1966-67; see above, p.191.

\(^{45}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.29-31 (Finnish).

\(^{46}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.52-54 refers to this section (Finnish).

\(^{47}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.50 (Finnish). See above, pp.87f.
The EECMY’s answer to the FMS delegates reflects Ethiopian independent mentality, which opposed the missionaries’ comity constructions. The Finns were accordingly advised “. . . not to bother too much about the SIM-work there, as no mission has any special rights to the said area.”\(^{48}\) The goal for the work in Kambata was to build a national church. A new missionary society was not needed, but workers sent by the FMS, willing to work “under” the EECMY.\(^{49}\)

The immediate need for personnel was further specified: an adviser, with experience from another part of Africa, a teacher for the Bible-school and a builder for a shorter period. It was emphasised that there was need for investments both in personnel and economy in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Rev. Ojanperä realised that the EECMY was keen to get the FMS engaged in the region.\(^{50}\)

There was a certain ambiguity as to what was expected from the FMS, however. When confronting the issue of comity raised by the SIM and while talking on integration, it was stressed that the mission was “under” the EECMY and that the missionaries were just co-workers in the church. When it came to concrete expectations the FMS was expected to make a huge input of money and personnel.

Thus, Qes Gudina stressed that if the EECMY did not invest in personnel and money as in other synods, one could not expect any better results. Ato Djalatta, who was not present at the Church Officers’ meeting, had for his part said that the new five-year plan would be dependent on what the LWF and the FMS wanted to do. He hoped that the builder, the adviser and the teacher would soon arrive.\(^{51}\)

It seems that the two men with the closest knowledge of the KEC-2, i.e., Ato Djalatta and Qes Gudina, had quite a pragmatic view of the FMS enterprise in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Others were more concerned with ideology. The words above of not sending a mission to the region and building a national church are vague when considering the specific needs, which had been presented earlier to the FMS delegates. They can be specified under the following three headings:

1. **Spiritual needs**: About 80-100 new evangelists were needed for the KEC-2. The place of teaching should be in the Kambata/Hadiya region and it was going to be given on two levels. One for students who had finished the third class and the other for students who had finished the sixth class.

2. **Educational needs**: Hostels were needed in Mishgida and in Hosanna. The other five “sevens” ought to have a six-grade school of their own. Scholarships were needed. A vocational school combined with an agricultural project would be welcome.

3. **Medical needs**: A small hospital with 15 places was needed and at least one clinic in each “seven”.\(^{52}\)

Nothing had been said about who would meet these needs except that the EECMY responsibility had been stressed. It is reasonable to conclude that it was implied

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\(^{48}\) Ibid.

\(^{49}\) Ibid.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.

\(^{51}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.53f. (Finnish).

\(^{52}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.29-31 (Finnish).
that the FMS was to supply the budget for the new projects, hopefully together with the LWF. The EECMY leaders knew that the LWF was interested in reducing its involvement in the KHMP-project and this must have been realised by the FMS delegates at the 1967 CWM, too.\textsuperscript{53} According to the FMS minutes, though, the EECMY had agreed with Dr Hellberg that the LWF would provide the budget at the initial stage if the Finns sent personnel.\textsuperscript{54}

**What about the KEC-2?**

According to available sources, the KEC-2 kept a very low profile during the FMS explorations of the Kambata/Hadiya region. The presentation of the region was made by two Oromos - Qes Gudina and Ato Djalatta. Ato Geletta Wolteji’s name is also mentioned in the FMS report.\textsuperscript{55}

In fact, not one person from the KEC-2 or one local leader of the region is mentioned by name in the Finnish report. In a similar way no-one from the KEC-2 was present when the FMS discussed the Kambata/Hadiya region with the EECMY Church Officers. The leader of the KEC-2 Bible-school, Ato Leggese Segaro, obviously was English-speaking as he was a graduate from the Mekane Yesus Seminary. The KEC-2 President, Ato Erjabo Handiso, was most certainly around. Neither of them is mentioned by name in the Finnish report.

The short visit by the team to Dodoba conveys the impression that this place, which for so long had been planned to be the site for a Bible-school, was not of special interest any longer. After all, this was the place where the majority of the current KEC-2 pastors had been ordained by Qes Ezra in 1965. Now, however, it seems to have been regarded as situated in the middle-of-nowhere.\textsuperscript{56}

Was the move of the KEC-2 centre from Durame to Hosanna ever properly discussed with the KEC-2? Or was it just decided at a “higher level”? I suggest that the latter is the case. Thinking of the prevailing conflicts in the KEC-2 it may have been a wise decision of the EECMY to let the KEC-2 representatives keep a low profile in their presentation of the Kambata/Hadiya region. Anyhow, one must admit that it was not an integrated presentation from a KEC-2 point of view. It was planned and arranged by EECMY officials in Addis Abeba.

No strong objection from the KEC-2 side on this state of affairs can be traced though. It was now on its way to get a supporting foreign mission. This was the vital issue for the KEC-2 in 1967.

\textsuperscript{53} See above, pp.198f.
\textsuperscript{54} FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.53 (Finnish). It is maintained that the EECMY and Dr Hellberg had agreed that at the initial stage the LWF would provide the budget if the FMS provided personnel. This interpretation was questioned by Hellberg. FELM-A: Hellberg to Ojanperä 1969.06.11.
\textsuperscript{55} FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21 (Finnish). This source refers to this section.
\textsuperscript{56} See above, pp.185, 199f.
B. A New Missionary Involvement

The FMS Delegation Faces the Challenge

The FMS delegates were challenged by what they had been introduced to in the Kambata/Hadiya region. They were not to register as a mission but to start its work as a part of the EECMY. This was very much in line with theological discussions on the integration of missions into the EECMY in Ethiopia in 1967.\(^{57}\)

The American Lutheran Mission (ALM) had signed a document of such an integration with the EECMY and the Wollo-Tigré Synod on May 29, 1966. This was well known to the other synods in 1967. Meetings and deliberations concerning the integration of the missions into the EECMY were taking place in 1967-68. The Synod Presidents and the Lutheran Mission Directors listened to lectures on this subject by Ethiopian speakers like - Ato Emmanuel Abraham, Qes Ezra, Qes Gudina, Ato Djalatta and others.\(^{58}\) The FMS had the chance to become an early follower of the ALM in this respect. This was apparently important to the FMS.\(^{59}\)

Furthermore, the financial engagement of the LWF in the region was regarded as an asset by the FMS.\(^{60}\)

The Decision of the FMS

In 1968 the ground work was made for the integrated FMS approach in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Parallel arrangements were going on in Ethiopia and in Finland. On April 22, 1968 the FMS Board decided to start work in the Kambata/Hadiya region.\(^{61}\) The decision was welcomed by the EECMY leadership at the EECMY Executive Committee meeting in June 1968. The EECMY looked forward to welcoming two new missionaries in January 1969.\(^{62}\)

At the same meeting of the EECMY Executive Committee, the KEC-2 presented a draft constitution for membership as a synod in the EECMY. This draft was sent to the EECMY Synods’ Presidents for comments.\(^{63}\) Apparently it was still felt necessary to base important decisions on the KEC-2 within the four synods. As this new synod would become an important part of the EECMY body with its reported high membership, the KEC-2 merger with the EECMY had to be well established among the other synods.

\(^{57}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.54 (Finnish).
\(^{58}\) Sæverås 1974, pp.142-52. Missionaries and other foreigners also lectured.
\(^{60}\) FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, p.54 (Finnish). The FMS was interested in starting work in the region on the condition that the LWF supplied all capital investment except for the costs of the missionaries’ houses. Otherwise the FMS would turn to the WWS, it is said.
\(^{61}\) FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, p.18 (Swedish).
\(^{63}\) GA-A: EECMY 17th Executive Committee minutes, June 1968, §17-30, p.7.
Qes Gudina Tumsa reports to the Commission on World Mission (LWF) at Hillerød in Denmark in August 1968:

... The Kambata home mission program was one of the areas which has been absorbing much of the attention of the church. The Finnish Missionary Society was invited to come out to assist in this challenging undertaking by the church, and we now rejoice over the fact that our invitation has been accepted by the FMS to start work in January 1969.

A plan to form a team to organize the Kambata congregations in a synod structure is being carried out and it is hoped that the Sixth General Assembly of the church in January 1969 will accept the Kambata Synod as a full member of the church, a fact which will increase the number of synods of the church from four to five and a growth in membership from seventy-seven thousand to over hundred thousand.\(^{64}\)

The feeling of relief and joy can be read between the lines in Qes Gudina’s report. The process of integrating the KEC-2 as a synod into the EECMY had been initiated by Qes Gudina in spring 1963. Now the implementation was not far away.\(^{65}\)

On October 22, 1968 an agreement between the EECMY and the FMS was signed in Addis Abeba by the EECMY President Ato Emmanuel Abraham and the FMS Director Rev. Alpo Hukka. The FMS’s agreement with the EECMY anticipated the document on integration between the EECMY and its co-operating missions, which was finally signed on April 7, 1969. The agreement stated that:

The Mission shall work with and within the Church in accordance with her Constitution and shall in all its work, until otherwise decided, be directly responsible to the Church Officers.\(^{66}\)

It should be noted that the agreement concerned the FMS and the EECMY. Apparently the EECMY Church Officers already considered the KEC-2 an integrated part of the EECMY. However, the FMS relations to the KEC-2 were yet an unwritten chapter. After all it was not in Addis Abeba but in the KEC-2, a church in transition, that the local integration was expected to be realised.

The FMS appointed five missionaries for work in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The leader was Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi. He had experience from six years of integrated mission work in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT).\(^{67}\)

The decision to choose a FMS-missionary from Tanzania and not from Namibia was probably due to the experiences of the Tanzanian missionaries of working in a church with a similar agreement on integration as the EECMY was expected to achieve.\(^{68}\) This experience was considered to be of great value when trying to work “under” the EECMY as an “integrated mission”.

\(^{64}\) LWF-A: LWF/CWM Church Reports 1968, Gudina Tumsa, p.3.

\(^{65}\) See above, p.160.


\(^{67}\) FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, pp.28f., Appendix 1, p.1 (Swedish).

\(^{68}\) FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, pp.24, 29 (Swedish). M. Hirvilammi sees a wisdom in calling FMS missionaries from Tanzania (ELCT), not from Namibia, “... where the model was more traditional.” The integration of missions in ELCT was made in 1963. Bachmann 1989, p.81.
A Picture of the KEC-2 in 1967

Not much protest was noticed from the KEC-2 against the EECMY/FMS plans to make Hosanna the new centre of church work in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Probably the “sevens” were too divided on the issue of the location of a synod centre. Furthermore, they were too dependent on the EECMY’s good-will if they were to become a synod in 1969. As will be recalled, when the KEC-2 approached the CEEC/AAMY for help in 1958 one of its biggest wishes had been to get a supporting mission.69 When this wish was now about to be fulfilled, the question of location for the KEC-2 centre was of less importance.

**Polity:** The KEC-2 arranged its third “Synod Assembly” in the beginning of March 1967 and elected new Church Officers.70 The new KEC-2 President was Ato Erjabo Handiso, the KEC-2 Treasurer the EECMY Adviser, Ato Geletta Wolteji, and Executive Secretary, Ato Wondafresh Selato. The choice of the EECMY Adviser as the Treasurer of the KEC-2 was a sign of weakness, probably due to conflicts. Was there not anyone else to suggest for treasurer than Ato Geletta? It was not in line with the idea of delegating authority to the KEC-2.71 From now on the influence of the Dodoba “Seven” decreased in the KEC-2. Conflicts seem to have ravaged its leadership. Both Qes Babore Dulamon and Ato Marqos Gobebo disappeared from the sphere of influence.72 Instead Hosanna and the northern part of the Kambata/Hadiya region came more into focus. The number of “sevens” had now been augmented with the Boshoana “Seven”, which earlier was part of the Soro “Seven”. The number of “sevens” thus increased to seven.73

**Worship:** The same as in 1965.

**Doctrine:** Subjective aspects of faith still dominated. Qes Gudina characterised the problem of the KEC-2 as a lack of teachers. The Bible-school had to struggle with too small a house for its 13 students and the projected Bible-school in Amecho (Dodoba) now seemed to be in danger. The need for new evangelists was estimated at 80-100.74

**Ethos:** Drinking and polygamy were still not uncommon features.

**Relations to the EECMY:** At national level the KEC-2 gained support from the EECMY network and came in contact with the FMS. Issues on church-mission relations influenced the FMS - EECMY - KEC-2 fellowship. Not much room was initially provided for the KEC-2 voice to make itself heard, however.

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69 See above, pp.108, 124f.
70 It was the KEC-2 third “Synod Assembly” if we count 1963 and 1965 as the two first. See above, pp.163f., 177f.
72 A conflict, where polygamy was one of the issues occurred in the Dodoba “Seven” at this time. GA-A: Djalatta to the EECMY 5th Gen. Assembly, Jan.1967 (Amharic). Ato Marqos became a member of the Adventist Church. SG-A: Getachew Gensato o.i.1996.10.15.
74 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11.21, pp.20, 28f. (Finnish); see above, pp.28, 154, 162, 172, 192, 199.
Map 9  The KEC-2 Seven “Sevens” in 1967

Ecumenism: The problems in the KEC-2 were as vast as before. The ecumenical climate in the region was strenuous. A group from the Abonsa Congregation of the KEC-2 was said just to have joined the SDA. The contact with the SIM seemed frosty. Comity issues were no longer relevant to the EECMY framework.75

Size: The membership in the KEC-2 was in 1967 estimated at about 18,000 in 100 congregations. This was probably an exaggeration. There were seven “sevens” in the KEC-2. The EECMY Literacy Campaign was successfully reaching approximately 100 places with about 4,000 students.76

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Chapter Eleven

The Final Integration of the KEC-2 into the EECMY

The Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) was now on the verge of reaching its goal to become a synod in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). The local integrating process started by Qes Gudina in 1963 and developed by Qes Ezra and others in 1965 was now close to its termination. In fact the local merger of the KEC-2 into the EECMY as its Kambata Synod (KS) was the end of an even longer process. It reached back to 1954, when KEC-2 was breaking away from the KEC and its supporting mission, the Sudan Interior Mission.

The years 1969-70 indicate a new chapter in the local Evangelical church history in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The agreement on co-operation had already been signed in Addis Ababa between representatives of the EECMY and the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS). This meant that a new external partner would reinforce the merger of the KEC-2 and the EECMY.

The challenge to realise the new ambitions locally, which demanded more than central administrative efforts in Addis, was now the task of the new synod and its new integrated partner - the FMS. I will draw on primary material from the archives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the EECMY and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), as well as from FELM literature.

A. The KEC-2 Becomes the Kambata Synod in 1969

At the EECMY General Assembly in Aira January 16-20, 1969, as in 1967, three reports were again presented from the region. First the Director of the KHMP, Ato Djalatta, presented his report, then the EECMY local Adviser Ato Geletta and lastly the KEC-2 President, Ato Erjabo Handiso.1 This shows the strong influence the EECMY/KHMP representatives still had at this time.

The KEC-2 then formally applied for membership in the EECMY as a synod. This was not, however, accepted right away. Instead the EECMY Executive Committee was authorised “. . . to accept the Kambatta Church as full member in case she is deemed qualified for full membership”, as the minutes were phrased.2

Later on at the EECMY Executive Committee June 13-14, 1969 two reports, one from the KHMP and one from the KEC-2, were presented. Then it was stated that “. . . the Committee having looked into the Kambata Evangelical Church Constitution, accepted the Church as a member on a Synod level.”3 By this decision,

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2 GA-A: EECMY General Assembly minutes 1969, §70.
the KEC-2 had thus become the EECMY’s fifth synod. Accordingly the new name - “the Kambata Synod” was used in the EECMY Executive Committee’s minutes parallel with the name - “the Kambata Evangelical Church”.4

In August 1969 the Kambata Synod, which now had eight “sevens”, elected new Church Officers for a two-year period. Ato Erjabo Handiso was elected President of the new synod, Ato Wondafresh Selato Secretary, Rev. Ilpo Perttilä Treasurer and Rev. Hirvilammi Adviser.5 The Adviser was considered to be the official EECMY representative in the synod and not a synod employee. By virtue of his position he held a seat on the EECMY Executive Committee and on other administrative forums of the EECMY.6 The position of the Finnish Adviser corresponded to the former positions of Ato Zacheus Edamo and Ato Geletta Wolteji.

The KEC-2 Bible-school moved from Durame to Hosanna in 1969. At least the headmaster of the Bible-school, Ato Leggese Segaro, moved to Hosanna at that time. There he lived in a rented house together with the Finnish builder, Mr Hannu Marttila. In this house he tried to run the Bible-school in some form.7

In fact, the FMS work in Hosanna in 1969 was limited to the building of some houses on the land-strip bought by the EECMY outside Hosanna. Furthermore, a plan and a budget for 1970 were prepared.8 The income of the KS’s running budget for 1970 was supposed to come mainly from the LWF - E$ 23,075 and from the FMS E$ 20,000. The contribution from the KEC-2 was estimated at E$ 2,000.9 The list of expenditure of the KS had five items:

1. Administration.
3. Training (A. Mekane Yesus Bible-school Hosanna, and B. Scholarships).
4. Literacy work.
5. Membership Expenses.

1970 was still considered a year of preparation by the Finns.10 Time was used for investigating and organising the new synod. On January 29, 1970 the KHMP institutions and workers were transferred to and integrated in the Kambata Synod.11 From this date there was just one EECMY body operating in the Kambata/Hadiya region, that is, the Kambata Synod.12

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6 FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, pp.46, 52 (Swedish).
7 SG-A: K. Mauranen o.i.1993.10.15.
9 Ibid.
11 FMS Årsbok 1971, pp.33f. (Swedish).
In April 1970 the administrative centre of the KS officially was moved from Mishgida/Durame to Hosanna. The houses of the missionaries were used as temporary offices for the new synod. The Bible-school in Hosanna gave a ten-month course with 20 students. Sunday schools and “women work” were introduced. The Finnish missionaries tried to follow a conscious line as integrated members of the church. It seems that they had an ambition not to become too dominant in the synod. A lot of time was used for discussions in local Ethiopian manner.

Consultations with FMS representatives and with EECMY officials were conducted. The Muslim area north of Hosanna in Konteb and the area west of Hosanna in Gimbicho were mentioned as places of special interest of outreach to the synod. Two important documents; a synod constitution and a five-year plan, were now prepared in order to be endorsed by the first Synod Assembly of the Kambata Synod. It was going to be held in February 1971.

B. The Kambata Synod’s Plans for the Future

A Five-Year Plan
The five-year plan gives a good grasp of the early policy of the KS. It was considered to be a:

. . . guideline to how the Synod will function in general and what will be the main lines of the work of the Synod during the period of coming five years.

The five-year plan consists of six parts:

2. Congregational and Evangelistic Work.
3. Social Services and Community Development.
5. Finances.
6. Capital Investments.

The first part of the five-year plan emphasises the Church’s role as a servant. It should bring the Good News to all who do not know Christ and help her members to grow in their faith. Interestingly enough, an air of respect and efforts to promote good fellowship with “other Christian churches in the area” are stressed as ecumenical ambitions from the very start.

13 FMS Årsbok 1971, p.35 (Swedish).
Congregational and Evangelistic Work

The second part of the five-year plan spells out the concern of the KS to arrange an intensive evangelistic and teaching program in all the congregations of the synod. The framework of EECMY worship and doctrine would now be taught concerning the two sacraments, confirmation, marriage, funerals and liturgy. Thus the moulding of the former KEC-2 into a more Lutheran shape in harmony with the EECMY model became an explicit ambition of the new synod.19

It was furthermore planned to let 100 students from the synod’s all nine “divisions”, as the “sevens” were called by the plan, pass the training program of the Bible-school during the first five-year period. The Bible-school would be extended to two years and to a certain extent be open for girls, too. Sunday schools, youth work and “women work” were planned to start in all the “divisions”.

Although new congregations were expected to be founded, the actual number of congregations was not intended to increase. Instead, smaller congregations should be fused into larger units. The process of uniting small congregations, initiated by Qes Gudina in 1963, was thus reinforced at the very beginning of the KS.20

Refresher courses would be offered to evangelists and various leaders. The training of 30 “village pastors” and deacons, who would be given authority to administer the sacraments in congregations, was planned. Some of this training would be accomplished by an extension program from the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis Abeba.21

The legacy from Qes Ezra concerning the need of pastors was thus revived. The term “village pastors” was a means to define the role of a type of “lay-pastor”, limited for a certain village or congregation. This approach was similar to Qes Ezra’s ambitions in 1965.22 Furthermore, 14 students would be sent for theological training to the Mekane Yesus Seminary, the Aira Bible-school in Wollega (GHM) and the NLM Bible-school in Tabor (Awasa) in Sidamo. Scholarships would be given at various levels.

Indeed, the first five-year plan of the KS presented an impressive program. Its focus on education obviously was aimed at changing the former independent church into the Lutheran mainstream. It opened new ways for women and children to be attended to. The use of the culturally colourless concept “division”, however, raises questions as to how well the Finns were informed of the KEC-2 legacy.

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20 See above, pp. 161, 163, 172.
22 See above, pp. 184ff.
Social Services and Community Development

The third part illustrates the comprehensive social approach of the five-year plan. 67 new basic schools and 15 elementary schools would be introduced and run by congregations. Junior secondary schools, like the Mishgida School, would be introduced. A female teacher would be employed at the Mishgida School and grades nine and ten added. A hostel would be built in Hosanna and scholarships for teacher training would be given.

In the synod compound at Hosanna a handicraft school, an agricultural school and a home economics school would be built. Clinics would be opened in each division, health instruction given and some kind of hospital would be established. The situation of deaf, blind and handicapped would be investigated.

The fourth part of the five-year plan illustrates how books would be distributed as well as newspapers. A library would be erected as an extension to the youth hostel at the synod compound in Hosanna. People would be encouraged to listen to the Yemissrach Dimts’s radio programs sent by the RVOG.23

The fifth and sixth parts concerning financial issues estimate the running budget will rise from E$ 133,200 to E$ 167,100 in five years. Income from local sources from E$ 87,600 to E$ 102,200. Subsidies from outside from E$ 45,600 to E$ 64,900. A large part of the local contribution was estimated in labour and food stuff. Furthermore, capital investments for the five years were calculated at E$ 274,400 with a detailed budget for the Bible-school, the home economics school and the administrative centre of the synod. Already E$ 37,206:95 had been received from the LWF for an administrative centre.

The LWF had contributed E$ 23,075 to the 1970 KHMP and the FMS E$ 20,000 to cover the deficit in the running budget. The LWF was expected to grant E$ 16,250 for 1971 and E$ 10,250 for 1972. Then its obligation to the KHMP would be finished.24

The FMS grant was calculated at E$ 20,000 for the coming years, but the budget deficit was calculated to increase. In one of the notes on the five-year plan of the KS, it is stated a bit Solomonically: “The Synod hopes that the FMS may increase her financial assistance to the Synod.”25 These words obviously express what was in the minds of Rev. Hirvilammi and Ato Leggese Segaro, who had constructed the five-year plan.26 As will be seen, several of its ambitions would step by step be fulfilled. But it would take much longer time than estimated in 1970.27

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23 “Yemissrach Dimts”, which means “the voice of Good News”, in 1970 was the joint mass-media program of the EECMY, the Evangelical Church Bethel (Presbyterian) and the Lutheran Church in Ethiopia (SMBV). It then had four sections. One was producing radio programs broadcast by the RVOG. EECMY-A: Inception, n.d. (1982), pp.151ff.
25 Ibid.
C. Ambiguities and Realities of the New Relations

A Necessary Discussion on Finances

The LWF, the FMS and the EECMY had different views on the agreement of financial support to the KS and how the financial support to the KHMP should be arranged. As already mentioned, the LWF had indicated in 1967 that it was not interested in any further commitment to the KHMP and that its engagement was not to be permanent.28 The CWM anyhow included US $8,400 for the KHMP in the budget for 1969.29 Furthermore, an application of US $15,000 for an “Administrative Center, Kambatta Church” had been approved as a “B” item.30

This ambiguity between policy and practice shows the LWF’s dilemma. On the one hand it felt that it ought to leave the KHMP altogether. On the other hand, as the agreement between the EECMY and the FMS was not signed until October 1968, the LWF still felt obliged to give an essential though reduced support.

The FMS’s impression of its role in the KS at the initial stage was that it should provide personnel, while the LWF provided the finances.31 In a letter to Rev. Ojanperä Dr Hellberg explains that this was not in line with his recollection:

I stated that the LWF/CWM was interested in assisting the ECMY to find a missionary society, which could enter into an agreement with ECMY regarding continued support. In that context I stated that the LWF/CWM had a definite obligation to continue to support this work until the new mission coming in could in cooperation with ECMY find other ways of raising the necessary funds.32

Thus, if not understood before, the FMS now realised that it was the one to take over the LWF’s financial responsibility for the KS.

In 1967 the EECMY impression was that the LWF was willing to support the KHMP’s second five-year plan if a mission was found.33 In November 1968 Ato Emmanuel Abraham, when writing to the FMS, maintained that:

The Second Five Year assistance programme was worked out on the assumption that your Society would contribute to the Kambata Programme about US$ 12,450 (E$ 25,612) for the 1969 budget.34

When Ato Emmanuel understood that his proposal was out of the question, he asked the FMS to cover US $4,400. This was KHMP money earmarked for the Bi-

28 See above, p.198.
30 Ibid. The EECMY applied for US $24,350 for an administrative centre in Kambata but received US $15,000.
31 See above, p.204. The same point was repeated in FELM-A: Attachment to Five Year Plan, Oct.1970, no.2. At this time the FMS started to contribute to the running budget of the KS.
32 FELM-A: Hellberg to Ojanperä 1969.06.11. Since the second registration of the EECMY in 1969, “ECMY” is sometimes used instead of “EECMY”. The change stands for Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia. Since 1976 and 1979 “EECMY” is again used as the proper name by the Church itself. Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.256ff.
33 See above, p.199.
34 FELM-A: Emmanuel Abraham to Hukka 1968.11.19.
ble-school but used to purchase the synod site in Hosanna. He further asked the FMS to cover the LWF’s reductions in the EECMY’s budget proposals for 1969: for the KHMP running budget US$ 3,365 and the administrative centre US$ 6,350.35

This means that in the rather confused situation regarding who was responsible for the continued financing of the KHMP, Ato Emmanuel pragmatically in one letter asked the FMS to provide - US$ 14,115. This was, in fact, more than what the FMS had already declared as the maximum that it was able to cover in 1969.36

As will be recalled there was early on an ambiguity as to what was expected of the FMS financially. On the one hand the EECMY Church Officers had stated that the FMS was “under” the church and that the EECMY did not need a “. . . new missionary society but (co-operating) workers sent out”.37 On the other hand, a pragmatic line had maintained that a vast input of FMS resources was needed in the KS. When faced with reality, the pragmatic view proved true. The EECMY wanted a vast input of money from the FMS into the KS.38

The special situation in the KS with a mission taking over after the KHMP and the LWF probably had an influence on the attitude of the KS congregations to the FMS. The first missionaries complained of the low contribution from the congregations to the KS. The first Treasurer of the KS, Rev. Perttilä, maintained that some congregations looked upon the synod simply as an organisation of aid, which was to supply the congregations with foreign money.39

Reasons for the low local contribution seem to have been explained as primarily a sign of spiritual weakness. Explanations based on the congregation-centred heritage of the Christians of the KS and on the previous bad experiences of the centralised financial system of the KEC, seem to have been less frequent, however.40

In 1969 the outcome of the clash of different views on who should support the KHMP and the KS ended in a compromise. The LWF accepted the EECMY petitions for a running budget without reducing the sums in 1970-72 as is shown by the following table (sums in E$):41

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Asked</th>
<th>Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>37,250</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>29,412.5</td>
<td>21,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>23,075</td>
<td>23,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>16,250</td>
<td>16,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>10,250</td>
<td>10,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37 FELM-A: Ojanperä 1967.09.30-11, pp.53f. (Finnish). The additions in brackets are mine. See above, pp.201ff.
38 Ibid.
40 Ibid.; see above, pp.97, 169.
A Picture of the Kambata Synod in 1970

The centre of the new KS was Hosanna where FMS, a mission with comparatively large resources, had settled. In 1970 it was not an impressive centre though, a couple of missionary houses and some other houses under construction.\footnote{FMS Årsbok 1971, pp.34f. (Swedish).}

The new leaders of the KS prepared the synod for its first Synod Assembly to be held in February 1971. They had arranged an ambitious five-year plan, with the purpose of reaching all the “sevens” in a systematic way.

**Polity**: The monthly meetings of the “Committee of Administration”, with two members from every “seven”, still met according to a mobile system in 1970. However, the October meeting in the Ilgira “Seven” became the last, as the KS from 1971 intended to adopt the static EECMY model of an executive committee, placed in Hosanna.\footnote{EECMY-A: Kambata Synod “Executive Committee” minutes, Teqemt 13, 1963 E.C. (Oct.1970), §10. See below, p.218.} This committee would meet four times a year. The remaining administration of the synod would be taken care of by the KS Church Officers.

The leading Church Officers in the KS in 1970 were Ato Erjabo Handiso President, Ato Wondafresh Selato Secretary, Rev. Hirvilammi Adviser, and Rev. Perttilä Treasurer and leader of the Bible-school. Another important person was Ato Leggeese Segaro, assistant to the Adviser. The indigenous concept “seven” was threatened by the culturally colourless “division” (kefel). There were nine “sevens” in the KS. The new Buriye “Seven” and Donga “Seven” did not have any pastors. The Lemu “Seven” had one pastor, Dodoba and Abomsa had several each.\footnote{EECMY-A: EECMY 7th General Assembly, Jan.1971, Kambata Synod Report; GA-A: EECMY 19th Executive Committee, Jan.1970, Kambata Synod Report (Amharic); see FELM-A: Kambata Synod of EC-MY. Plan for the year 1970, n.d., u.s.}

There were totally 17 pastors in the KS, i.e., one less than in 1965. 13 new candidates were prepared to attend a pastors’ course.\footnote{FMS Årsbok 1971, p.34 (Swedish).} Many of the problems in the KS were old ones like the need to unite smaller congregations. Many of the churches were still on private ground, depending on the house-father’s good-will.

**Worship**: The services were at most places still led by laymen, who also administered the sacraments if a pastor was not at hand. The liturgy was “free” and consisted of songs in the local language, prayers and a speech on a text chosen by the preacher. Holy Communion services followed a simple ritual: songs, prayer, the words of institution and the sharing of the bread and wine.\footnote{FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, p.40 (Swedish).}

**Doctrine**: According to Rev. Hirvilammi the spiritual framework of the KS was not very Lutheran. Baptisms were often held in a river and the teaching on baptism was still “diffuse”. At the age of eight to ten all members were admitted to receive the gifts of Holy Communion.\footnote{FELM-A: Hirvilammi 1989, pp.40f. (Swedish).} The Bible-school was planned to follow a two-year schedule from 1971. Theological education by extension (TEE) would be introduced from 1971.
Ethos: Moral problems like drinking and a general lack of education affected the new synod’s ethos. The financial contribution in cash from the Kambata Christians was low and was apparently not part of the KS ethos.48

Relations to the EECMY: At national level the KS, in contrast to earlier years, brought its own reports to the EECMY administrative bodies without any supervision from KHMP representatives. The Adviser, Rev. Hirvilammi, was looked upon as the EECMY local representative and had a seat in the EECMY administrative bodies. The agreement between the EECMY and the FMS considered the FMS as an integrated part of the EECMY. The real challenge for the FMS was to integrate itself in the KS’s local environment in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

Ecumenism: Relations to other denominations were more positive than earlier.

Size: There were c.116 congregations in the KS, mainly based on a system of family members. The membership was estimated at between 15,000 to 20,000. There were nine “sevens” in the KS. The Literacy Campaign was reaching about 7,000 students via 137 schools. 15 schools in the Muslim area were involved in the synod’s work.49

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48 See above, pp.166ff., 214; FMS Årsbok 1971, p.35 (Swedish).
49 FMS Årsbok 1971, pp.34f. (Swedish).
The years covered in this chapter 1971-75 were dramatic years in Ethiopia. From 1973 a disastrous famine ravaged parts of the country, including the Kambata/Hadiya region. The unrest in the country paved the way for a new regime. From September 12, 1974 the Derg - a military group of junior officers led the country. In 1975 a rural land reform changed the living conditions for millions of people.

In this crucible the young Kambata Synod (KS) tried to implement its holistic five-year plan in line with its new constitution. The drought dramatically reinforced the Synod-centre’s interaction with its peripheries. From May 1974 a relief and rehabilitation program, led by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) and sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), was instrumental to this evolution. This new comprehensive program strengthened the Synod’s holistic approach and generated a fruitful co-operation with local authorities and newly founded peasant associations.

I will first discuss how the Kambata Synod gradually was moulded into the EECMY ecclesiastical mainstream from 1971. I will emphasise that this process was much slower in the peripheries of the Synod than at the centre in Hosanna. I will then follow how members of the Kambata Synod interacted with the local revolutionary context. I will draw on primary material from the archives of the EECMY, the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM) and the Church of Sweden Mission (CSM), and from my own oral sources.

A. The Kambata Synod in the EECMY Mainstream

A Reinforced EECMY Polity

The Kambata Synod’s first Synod Assembly was held in Digba, close to Hosanna, on February 12-14, 1971. 120 delegates from the nine “sevens” took part in this major event of the EECMY’s fifth synod.¹

Two main representatives at the Synod Assembly may illustrate the dual heritage of the KEC-2 and the FMS, which was now merging. The KS President, with his long background in the KEC and the KEC-2, Ato Erjabo Handiso, greeted the delegates. The EECMY Adviser to the KS, with a background in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and experiences from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi, conducted the first Bible study. Their common challenge was now double: to promote the indigenous profile of the

¹ FELM-A: Kambata Synod 1st Convention 1971.02.12-14 The following refers to this source unless indicated.
Kambata Synod as a part of the EECMY and to integrate the FMS’s contribution into the local environment.

The two most important decisions of the KS first Synod Assembly were to accept the new constitution and the five-year plan.

The new constitution streamlined the administrative outlook of the KS into an EECMY shape. In practice this meant that the Synod Assembly was going to meet annually. The mobile monthly meetings of the “Committee of Administration” were now changed into quarterly “Executive Committee” meetings. Instead of alternating from one “seven” to another, they were limited to Hosanna. The number of representatives from each “seven” was furthermore decreased from two persons to one.

The Executive Committee thus consisted of 15 people. The “President” from each of the eight “sevens” (the Lemu/Hosanna President was already among the Church Officers) and the seven Church Officers. The consequence of the new structure was that the role of the Church Officers increased at the expense of the Executive (Administrative) Committee. By these changes the KS became a more centralised and static body than the KEC-2 ever was, and Hosanna a much stronger centre than Mishgida had been.

The election of new Church Officers therefore became an important point on the agenda. The following were elected:

- **President**: Ato Erjabo Handiso Dodoba “Seven”
- **Vice-President**: Ato Qelbero Wayero Lemu “Seven”
- **Treasurer**: Rev. Ilpo Perttilä FMS
- **Member**: Ato Liranso Bukute Dodoba “Seven”
- **Member**: Ato Retabo Amele Lemu “Seven”
- **Executive Sec.**: Ato Leggese Segaro (Mishgida)
- **EECMY Adviser**: Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi FMS

As Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi already functioned as the EECMY adviser, he also had a seat and voice as the seventh person among the KS Church Officers.

These seven men became main representatives in the KS. The three most important positions, that is: President, Vice-President and Executive Secretary were held by former teachers at the KEC/SIM Bible-schools in Bobicho (Hosanna) and Taza (Durame). All three of them had migrated from the KEC into the KEC-2. More surprising is that one of the early elders of the KEC, Ato Retabo Amele, now was one of the KS Church Officers. Two of them, Ato Qelbero and Ato Leggese,

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3 I add Leggese Segaro to the Church Officers. He was elected Executive Secretary in March, 1971. FELM-A: The Kambata Synod 1st Executive Committee minutes 1971.03.12-14, §7.
4 SG-A: Asfaw Qelbero o.i.1998.04.24; see above, pp.154f. On Ato Retabo, see above pp.63, 96, 100, 102.
would soon be ordained pastors. This means that four of the seven Church Officers in the KS of 1971 were ordained pastors, two Ethiopian and two Finnish.

In contrast to the KEC-2 of 1963, the northern part of the Synod (Hadiya) now had a stronger representation among the Church Officers than before. Again we should remind ourselves that middle-grounds like the Dodoba “Seven” were more ethnically mixed than others.

The guiding function of the five-year plan was immediately felt in the Synod Assembly. Thus, “on the basis of the 5-year plan”, it was decided to recruit more missionaries in the coming three years: one teacher, two pastors and a nurse. In line with the five-year plan, the Synod’s Bible-school was upgraded to a two-year course already from September 1971. It was also decided to start a Home Economics School for girls in 1972.

In line with the EECMY vocabulary the indigenous designation “sevens” was officially changed into sebakas in 1972. In English this term corresponds to a rural deanery or a larger parish with several congregations. By this change of name the Kambata Synod lost some of its indigenous flavour.

A Reinforced Ecumenism

In accordance with the five-year plan an important policy statement on local ecumenical issues was made by Rev. Hirvilammi at the Synod Assembly. As phrased in the five-years plan’s introduction the Synod must:

respect the work of other churches also and shall seek ways for good fellowship with other Christian churches in the area so that the Christian witness to the world may be strengthened.

When discussing on how to accept new members into the Synod the Assembly similarly stated:

. . . that the Synod is called to proclaim the gospel to those who have not heard it yet and because the accepting of new members will be done as described in the Constitution and the By-Laws.

It continued:

. . . As the Kambata Synod recognises the work of other Christian churches in the area the members or congregations or groups of people from other churches may be accepted in the following ways only . . .

Three practical regulations were made concerning this issue:

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5 The ordination of Ato Qelbero and Ato Leggese took place at the inauguration of the Synod’s Administrative and Training centre, Mar.28, 1971. EECMY-A: EECMY 22nd Executive Committee, June 18-19, 1971, Kambata Synod Report, §3.
8 EECMY: Kambata Synod 2nd Convention 1972.02.24-27, §33 c.
12 Ibid.
1. An application for membership in the KS could not be accepted on a personal basis any longer. The applicant’s congregation, that is, his pastor, the president or the elders must first be contacted.

2. If a congregation or a group of people were applying for membership in the KS a written application must be delivered.

3. In the latter case the KS, before accepting the newcomers, must have made a contact with the concerned church. A single congregation or a “seven” in the KS was not allowed to accept a migrating group or congregation on its own any longer.13

When the KEC-2 functioned as an independent church, it had quite a congregation-centred and individualistic outlook. This provided a large amount of freedom for its various “sevens” and family-based congregations. Main issues were solved by long discussions at monthly and quarterly meetings among a larger group of elders. The bulk of the KEC-2 members had themselves migrated from the KEC or were related to migrants. The changing of church membership was not an uncommon issue among them and was accepted without much consideration.14

The new KS, however, was quite another constellation. It was regulated by a constitution, which made it a much more homogenous church. The former individualistic ways of the KEC-2 and its different “sevens” were not supported. “Internal migration” was one of the problems of the churches in the Kambata/Hadiya region. It had become a plague and a hindrance for mutual trust among Christians.15 By the new constitution and Rev. Hirvilammi’s interpretation of it, the dimension of ecumenism and an emphasis on the church as a wider fellowship than one’s own were spelled out. They were new important ingredients of the local Evangelical framework of the KS.

From its first Synod Assembly the KS can be characterised as having a growing understanding of an EECMY ecclesiastical frame of reference. At least two new facets were emphasised. It opted for a:

1. Less congregation-centred and individualistic church with less discussions and a more regulated polity.

2. More ecumenical church with greater respect for other churches.

The new ecumenical attitude of the KS was reflected in practice some months later at the inauguration of the administrative buildings in Hosanna. The Synod had invited “... guests from the S.I.M. and the priests of Orthodox church ...”16 to the inauguration. As part of the EECMY, the KS was now increasingly regarded as one mainstream church among others in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

13 Ibid.
14 See above, pp.107, 126, 192, 207.
15 The KS first President, Ato Erjabo Handiso, knew “internal migration” from “inside”. He was first baptised as a Catholic by Abba Gabriel Kasotto, then he became a Baptist (KEC/SIM and was in contact with the BCMS’s Bible-school in Addis Abeba, too) and at last he became a Lutheran (EECMY). As we have seen he was not alone in his experiences. SG-A: Erjabo Handiso o.i.1998.01.30; SG-A: A. Alberto o.i. 1998.03.20. See below, p.242.
This was particularly true at central level in the KS. In Hosanna young people from the Kambata Synod, the Kale Hiywot Church (KHC), Haimanote Abew (an EOC student group) and to some extent also from the Mullu Wongel Church (an indigenous Pentecostal church) met to sing and witness and even arranged some conferences together. These ecumenical gatherings went on from c.1971 and several years onwards.¹⁷

A Reinforced Pastoral Profile

The importance of ordination and an Evangelical Lutheran understanding of the ordained ministry had been introduced to the KEC-2 by Qes Ezra Gebremedhin in 1965. The necessity of the ordained ministry was again highlighted at the ordination of the KS Vice-President, Ato Qelbero Wayero, and the KS Executive Secretary, Ato Leggese Segaro. This event took place on March 28, 1971 at the inauguration referred to above, with the EECMY Church Officers attending. Their presence gave an official EECMY sanction to this ordination and the ordained ministry at large in the KS.¹⁸

The Finnish missionaries tried to connect teaching on the ordained ministry and the importance of a “right” administration of the sacraments in the Synod to the pastors ordained by Qes Ezra. Special gatherings for the pastors in the KS were arranged with the purpose of discussing such issues. The KS members’ resistance to a change of ritual practices was however strong. They were used to a freer model in accordance with their own traditions.

This point is illustrated by a discussion at a pastors’ meeting in May 1972.¹⁹ The issue at the meeting was where to baptise: in a river or inside a church? After long discussions on this issue the pastors eventually recommended baptising inside a church as the way forward. If such a discussion was needed among the pastors of the KS in 1972, one can imagine the attitude among elders in the periphery of the Synod. They were still used to going to a river and baptising their children as soon as they were able to walk. Such traditions were not easily changed. They seem to have been part of the “social cement” of rituals, which had kept the KEC-2 together.²⁰ The very need of this discussion shows that Baptist influences were lingering on among the pastors of the KS still in 1972.

The frame of reference of the EECMY and the FMS maintained that confirmation was necessary before receiving Holy Communion. The administrator of the

¹⁷ SG-A: Mekonnen Ejamo o.i.1998.01.29; Adanech Onke o.i.1998.01.29; see EECMY-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1972.06.06, CO-72-69. The Mullu Wongel Church was founded in January 1967. Nyberg Oskarsson 1997, p.266. (Swedish); see FFT-A: Engelsviken 1975.


sacraments should furthermore be an ordained pastor. As it took time to educate confirmation teachers and the number of pastors still was too low, a compromise was reached. After a short course, “commissioned elders” were authorised to administer the sacraments in their own local church. Even if this was regarded as a temporary solution, the system would continue for years. In practice many members would remain unconfirmed and receive Holy Communion in the same way as they had been used to in the KEC-2 and the KEC.\textsuperscript{21}

The pastors’ meetings also discussed the use of set texts on Sundays according to the calendar distributed from the EECMY literature section, Yemissrach Dimts. This calendar in principle followed the AAMY (EECMY) lectionary called \textit{Mera-hut}, which has been introduced above.\textsuperscript{22}

To be able to tackle problems among the KS early pastors, the Finnish missionaries had worked out a list of proper behaviour for pastors. It was now discussed among the pastors. According to the minutes it comprised rules on punishments for pastoral misbehaviour like: false teaching, lying, drinking and committing adultery. The list indicates some of the problems the young KS could expect to face among its pastors.\textsuperscript{23} The pastors of the KS were obviously important to the Synod and to the FMS missionaries, yet no new ordinations would be made before 1976.\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{Increased Doctrinal Efforts}

A new way for the KS to educate its leaders was the EECMY version of Theological Education by Extension (TEE). It was introduced in the Synod already in 1971 and aimed at educating leaders in their home environment in accordance with a certain correspondence method. A more customary way of education was the Bible-school in Hosanna, which became a vehicle for a systematic Evangelical Lutheran teaching. An important step for a more indigenous approach was taken when an Ethiopian, Qes Asfaw Qelbero, with his origins in the Durame area, became its new headmaster in 1974.\textsuperscript{25}

The discussions on the need of an ordained ministry for the “right” administration of the sacraments were familiar to Qes Asfaw. He had been serving in the NLM-related South Ethiopia Synod (SES) for many years as a teacher and a pas-

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\textsuperscript{21} Palmu, 1982, pp.41, 61, 97 (Finnish). My personal experiences are similar. I was myself conducting what was said to be the first(!) confirmation class in the Ambo Congregation as late as 1986. Besides the choir of the church and many younger people, I had the privilege to lead the confirmation act of quite a lot of elderly members, like the congregation elders and even the District leader. I felt that many of these men and women were much more experienced in the Christian faith than myself. On the Ambo Congregation, see above, p.184.
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\textsuperscript{22} See above, p.133.
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\textsuperscript{23} EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 2\textsuperscript{nd} Pastors’ Committee, Ginbot 24-27, 1964 E.C., §8, 13, 14 (June 1972, Amharic).
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\textsuperscript{24} FMS Årsbok 1977, p.33 (Swedish).
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\textsuperscript{25} EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 14\textsuperscript{th} Executive Committee, June 20-23, 1974, §14-26-74.
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tor. He was thus well acquainted with the NLM pragmatic approach to the ministry. Having a background in the KEC he knew the KEC standpoint well, too.

In order to reach the periphery of the KS and not only its centre, a visiting program was arranged from November 1971. After some time students from the Bible-school in Hosanna joined in similar projects. The Finnish missionaries furthermore reinforced conventional Lutheran youth work and introduced Sunday school work. Youth work increased from c.57 groups in 1970 to c.160 groups in 1975. The number of Sunday schools increased from nil in 1970 to c.54 in 1975.

In a Lutheran environment “women work” is perhaps not as conventional as Sunday schools. In the EECMY at large and also in the KS, however, “women work” proved to be an essential part of the profile. At local level new ideas of grass-root democracy were introduced for the often neglected women. At the Synod centre in Hosanna gender attitudes were influenced by, for example, letting Ethiopian women, like the KS typist W/t Adanech Onke and others, lead devotions at the male-dominated Bible-school. From 1973 four women were studying at the Bible-school in Hosanna. In May 1974 the situation of women in the KS was discussed in depth at the Synod Assembly. It was decided, in principle, that at least one of the church elders in a local congregation should be a woman.

Finnish female missionaries, like Ms Kirsti Mauranen, were an example to other women by giving Bible Studies at the KS Executive Committee in June 1974 and on other major occasions. In 1975 local women groups had been introduced in c.92 congregations.

Financial Dependence

Since the last century part of fundamental mission theology, with exponents like Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson, has been to encourage the development of self-supporting autonomous churches. As has been seen above, this was particularly relevant in the Kambata/Hadiya region. SIM missionaries tried to develop such a church from the very start of the SIM mission work there in the late 1920’s.

In line with its indigenous principles a “parallel structure” was developed by the SIM in Ethiopia. By this is meant that a mission on the one hand and a related mainstream church on the other remain two separate self-governing entities but

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32 See above, p.58. For a discussion on church-mission relations and definitions of autonomous churches, see Neill 1957; Sæverås 1974; 1988-89; Peters 1972; Fuller 1980.
33 See above, pp.58, 87, 106.
work together for a common goal. In practice the mission was responsible for institutions and other more expensive enterprises, whereas the local church employed and supported its own workers by means of its own.\textsuperscript{34}

The principle of self-support was, of course, also well-known in the EECMY and among the FMS missionaries. But instead of opting for a parallel structure of separate entities, the supporting missions were integrated into the EECMY. The ideal was to become one entity as far as possible.

As we have seen above, the differences in church-mission relations and especially on how to pay salaries, generated problems in the KEC in the early 1950’s.\textsuperscript{35} From 1962 and onwards the EECMY furthermore paid salaries from foreign funds to KEC-2 employees. This was foreign to the SIM/KEC polity. The EECMY model generated a financially more dependent church at the risk of attracting spiritually “weaker” Christians. The SIM model was more exclusive as it demanded financial contributions from its members.\textsuperscript{36}

A strength of the EECMY model, however, was that its institutions and larger projects became part of the ordinary Ethiopian church work. This could prove crucial if a supporting mission got into problems and for various reasons had to leave the country.\textsuperscript{37}

As will be recalled, the KS experienced great difficulties in motivating its congregations and “sevens” to support the church work financially from its very beginning in 1969. The low living standard in Ethiopia is of course a general explanation for the poor support. As we have seen earlier, the negative experiences of collecting money for a centralised budget was part of the KEC-2 legacy of the 1950’s.\textsuperscript{38}

In 1971 the KS treasurer Rev. Ilpo Perttilä tried to tackle the issue of the low, almost non-existent contribution from the congregations to the Synod budget. For the first quarter of 1971 only 76 Birr was contributed instead of the expected 7,000.\textsuperscript{39} If one reads through the KS minutes it is illuminating how different ways and means were tested to increase the KS contribution to its central budget. To make a long story short, it seems that this problem had come to stay.

\textsuperscript{34} See above, pp.58, 106; see Sæverås 1988-89, pp.73ff. The model is criticised as creating a dichotomy between church and mission. Peters 1972, pp.229ff. Sæverås is flexible to different models but prefers some kind of integration. Sæverås 1988-89, p.78.

\textsuperscript{35} See above, pp.87, 106, 149ff.

\textsuperscript{36} See above, pp.149ff., 154ff. The question of the EECMY as a self-supporting church was discussed at length at the EECMY General Assembly in Nejo in 1976, where a plan to create a self-supporting church in 20 years was opted for and endorsed by the EECMY. In 1996, however, the EECMY was still just contributing c. 30\% of its total central budget. EECMY-A: The EECMY Finance Department Annual Report, 1997; see Jonsson 1998.


\textsuperscript{38} See above, pp.97, 169, 214.

\textsuperscript{39} FELM-A: Kambata Synod Financial Report I Quarter 1971.04.08.
At the KS’s fourth Synod Assembly in 1974 it was even decided that the congregations, which had not provided their contributions to their sebakas, would be dismissed from the Synod. Likewise, pastors and synod presidents would not get their allowance paid if their sebaka did not contribute to the Synod’s budget.\textsuperscript{40} Such forceful measures were later on questioned in 1975 by members of the KS.\textsuperscript{41}

The question is if the missions’ financial model(s) towards the EECMY was realistic. Was it possible to ask the EECMY grass-roots for a limited support to their pastors and to the Church’s super-structure, while employing others with foreign money? Perhaps the SIM model of a parallel structure would have proven a better alternative? One thing is clear. The KS had become a financially much more dependent church in the 1970’s than the KEC-2 ever was.

It is, however, also pertinent to argue that the KS of the 1970’s by Western standards produced better results than before. Through its increasingly holistic approach, it supported the Kambata/Hadiya region in a more efficient manner than the KEC-2 ever had done.

### Reaching Out

The main thrust of the five-year plan was to consolidate the KS rather than to reach out for new converts. The Synod anyhow started to have an impact in Muslim areas, primarily in the northern and eastern parts of the Kambata/Hadiya region. Its work was also extended into two more awrajas in the direction of Wolkite, Butajira and Shashamene. The Synod’s impact was felt more strongly in the south-west, among traditionalists of the Tembaro Woreda, too. The Omo River hindered a more profound outreach to the west, however.\textsuperscript{42}

The literacy schools of the Synod were instrumental in opening up new contacts. A sketch of a KS outreach model in the early 1970’s can be described as follows. An evangelist visited the elders or the Sheik(s) of a village. The village people were often already acquainted with the EECMY through the radio programs of the RVOG, which had prepared the way for the evangelist. If the village then agreed to provide a school building, the Synod would provide a literacy teacher. In this way a fruitful contact was established.\textsuperscript{43} As the KS holistic approach showed its positive effects, the Christian message would become attractive to the villagers.

The literacy schools, administered by the Synod, provided an important support to ordinary people. The number amounted to \textit{c.}164 in 1971. In 1975 it had increased to \textit{c.}290, with approximately 41,000 students. In Muslim villages the number of literacy schools were \textit{c.}21 in 1971 and \textit{c.}45 in 1975. The number of schools

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\textsuperscript{40} EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 4\textsuperscript{th} Convention 1974.05.9-12, §4-41-74.

\textsuperscript{41} EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 17\textsuperscript{th} Executive Committee minutes, Feb. 22, 1975, §5-17-75.


\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Ibid.}
in Muslim villages in Haykoch and Butajira Awraja were c.19 and in Gurage and Chebo Awraja c.15 in 1975.\textsuperscript{44}

As will be recalled the KS was situated close to the well-known Muslim centres in Abred, to the north of the Synod, and Alaba/Kolito to the south-east. In 1974 these places respectively comprised more than 1,000 students in Koran schools each.\textsuperscript{45} This made the dynamics of the young KS outreach to Muslims to a real challenge. According to available statistics from 1971 five Muslims had been baptised by the Synod. Later on 10 Muslim families were reported converted to the Christian faith.\textsuperscript{46}

\textbf{B. The Kambata Synod in the Revolution}

\textit{A Local Approach to the Problem of Land Tenancy}

The EECMY Literacy Campaign (YDLC) broadened the views of thousands of ordinary people in the region.\textsuperscript{47} An increasing number of students were, furthermore, provided with subsequent education and scholarships by the EECMY/KHMP and other churches. When they returned to their homes during vacation in the rainy season, they felt obliged to support their home environment and started voluntary associations like “Kambata Tamro Mastemar” (“Let the Kambata educated teach others”). The aim of such local initiatives was to raise the educational standards among the inhabitants in the region.\textsuperscript{48}

Another factor, which helped people to reflect on their living conditions, were the enforced migrations owing to lack of land. As already mentioned, a high percentage of the workers in the cane-fields and sugar mills in Wonji and Metahara in the Awash valley came from the densely populated area of the Kambata/Hadiya region.\textsuperscript{49} They returned with new experiences and a new understanding of the need to improve the poor infrastructure in their region.

In 1965, when the issue of land tenancy was discussed in the Ethiopian Parliament, students of the Addis Abeba University were openly protesting against what was characterised as a feudal land-ownership system. They coined the slogan: “Land to the Tiller.”\textsuperscript{50} The Addis Abeba University (AAU) was closed down in periods from c.1971 to 1974 because of the protests of the students.\textsuperscript{51} These developments naturally also influenced the students from the Kambata/Hadiya region.

\textsuperscript{44} EECMY-A: EECMY 23\textsuperscript{rd} Executive Committee, Jan.18-21, 1972, \textit{Kambata Synod Report}; EECMY 9\textsuperscript{th} General Assembly, Apr.21-28, 1976, \textit{Kambata Synod Report}.
\textsuperscript{45} See above, p.53; EECMY-A: Hasselblatt 1971.
\textsuperscript{47} See above, pp.167, 180. It is estimated that half a million people had been made literate in Ethiopia by the YDLC from the start of the campaign to 1975. Sjöström, 1983, p.165.
\textsuperscript{48} SG-A: Tarekegn Aden o.i.1999.07.17; see above, p.180.
\textsuperscript{49} Donham 1986, p.47; Clapham 1988, p.55; see above, p.51.
\textsuperscript{50} Bahru Zewde 1991, p.223.
\textsuperscript{51} SG-A: Bekele Basore o.i.1997.12.10.
One practical way for students and others to show their antipathy to the landownership system at local level was to co-operate with the peasants of the area in broadening and building roads and bridges on the landowners’ land. These ventures were to a large extent made without the consent of the landowners. The improved roads and bridges made transport between market places easier for ordinary people, but provoked the landlords. Such actions became signs of protest against the land-ownership system and the poor infrastructure of the region. The strategy was implemented, for example, in Lemu, Shashogo, Donga, Tembaro and Waggabeta, but particularly in the Kambata area as narrowly defined.52

This state of affairs was probably influenced by initiatives taken by the modernising Awraja Governor in nearby Wollamo, Dejazmach Wolde Semaiat. He actually received money from the World Bank in connection with the Wollamo Agricultural Development Unit (WADU) in order to improve the local infrastructure, including the network of roads in Wollamo. His ideas seem to have challenged some of the landowners in Kambata, too. A few of them started to co-operate with him in their own awraja, while others reacted negatively.53

In 1972 the whole issue became hot and led to a resolute resistance from the landowners and balabbats in the Kambata/Hadiya region. In this year the Government sent troops to Hosanna, Angacha, Shinchicho and Durame to cool down enthusiastic students and peasants who were engaged in road-building. Leaders of these actions, like the more progressive landowner Ato Getachew Shanko, were imprisoned. They were accused of trying to make their Woreda part of the Sidamo Province.54 Building roads and bridges thus had special connotations in the Kambata/Hadiya region as means of demonstrating the need for land reform. The “bridge-building” can be taken both in a literal and a figurative sense of the word, as it strengthened local fellowship in a widening network against the conservative landlords.

To sum up: A local network of students, teachers and peasants, often partakers in the Literacy Campaigns, had been created in the Kambata/Hadiya region before the Ethiopian Revolution. Members of the KS and the Mishgida School were part of this network.55 Effects of this movement and its challenges to the KS leaders is illustrated by the report delivered by the Kambata Synod’s President, Ato Erjabo Handiso, at the EECMY General Assembly in January 1973:

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52 SG-A: Yacob Arso no o.i.1998.03.11.
53 SG-A: Yacob Arso no o.i.1998.03.11; Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1999.07.17; see Bahru Zewde 1991, p.195.
55 SG-A: Deneke Handaro o.i.1998.01.30.
The students of junior high schools and secondary schools have applied their fellowship in deeds. The main programs of the youth are teaching the illiterates and repairing roads and building the bridges. The repairing of the roads have irritated quite a number of people because the old roads which were made narrow due to the exploitation of the population were made wider against the will of individuals. Therefore the Synod has advised the youth who are the members of the congregations that they may not be aggressive and may not use any negative means which is not supported by the community.\(^{56}\)

### A Central Approach to the Problem of Land Tenancy

1972 was a year when the EECMY centre in Addis Abeba was reflecting on its holistic approach concerning mission and development. In May 1972 the famous letter: *On the Interrelation Between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development* was sent to the LWF in Geneva. It declares that:

\[\ldots\] an integral human development, where the spiritual and material needs are seen together, is the only right approach to the development question in our society.\(^{57}\)

Donor agencies in the West were criticised by the EECMY for having a too limited view on this issue and for trying to draw an artificial line between Mission and Development. If the old imbalance of the West had been to give priority to “Witness” and forget “Service”, the new imbalance according to the letter was to neglect “Witness” and instead give priority to “Service”. The letter spells out that the EECMY, and the “African” way, is to keep Witness and Service together.\(^{58}\)

The EECMY’s position can be interpreted in terms of Walls’s two missiological principles. The EECMY argued that the LWF was influenced by identifying with the context of Western culture and society, the “indigenising principle”. The “pilgrim principle”, to proclaim Christ as Lord, was however neglected and thus the LWF tended to export the culture of “Western Materialism”. It is pertinent to infer that the holistic theological approach of the EECMY centre had a bearing on the sensitive issue of land tenancy in the Ethiopian context, too.\(^{59}\)

As a consequence of the EECMY emphasis on serving the whole man, and the growing local impatience in the EECMY Synods, the issue of land tenancy was discussed more and more openly at the EECMY centre. An important step in this development was the Eighth General Assembly of the EECMY at Yirga Alem in January 1973.

The Secretary of the Youth Section at the EECMY Central Office, Ato Tarekgn Adebo, presented a challenging paper with the title: *The Significance and Problems of Rural Development in Ethiopia and the Role of the ECMY*. Ato Tarekgn, who is from Durame in the Kambata/Hadiya region and received a scholarship from the KHMP to the EECMY College in Debre Zeit in 1962-64, applied

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\(^{57}\) EECMY-A: *On the Interrelation Between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development* 1972.05.09. The letter was signed by the EECMY Church Officers.


\(^{59}\) Walls 1996, pp.7ff., 16ff.; see above, p.29.
Bible verses from the prophet Amos and Luke 4:18 to the context of rural Ethiopia. He boldly characterised the problem of tenancy as the most problematic issue for rural development and stated that:

It is obvious that the present tenancy system militates against any far-reaching rural development. It kills the incentive of the tenant farmer to improve his agricultural production. As there is no security of tenure, the peasant farmer is always restless and unhappy and not prepared to adopt any better technique.\(^{60}\)

A “reaction paper” was presented by another bright young man from the EECMY, Ato Fasil Nahum.\(^{61}\) As a result of the deliberations of the 1973 General Assembly, it was resolved that:

... the Church Officers inform the Parliament that the speeding up of the passage of the Land owner and Tenant Bill would be highly appreciated.\(^ {62}\)

The report by the KS President in January 1973 and the paper of Ato Tarekegn Adebo show that young people from the KS reflected on the landowner system in their region and in Ethiopia at large, and drew their own conclusions. They took an active part in the efforts to reach a more just distribution of the land and influenced the EECMY at large in this direction.

### The Drought of 1973-74

As previously mentioned the first years of the newly founded KS were meant to be years of consolidation. Contrary to this ambition unforeseen factors forced the KS into new ventures. From 1973 and onwards the centre of the KS in Hosanna increased its interaction with the *sebaka*s considerably. Even the roadless lowland in the peripheries was touched. The main reason for this escalation of contacts was the drought, which hit Ethiopia in 1973-74. The worst catastrophe was experienced in northern Ethiopia in Wollo and Tigray, but also southern areas, including some parts of the Kambata/Hadiya region were badly affected.\(^ {63}\)

At the EECMY’s 27\(^{th}\) Executive Committee in September 1973 the KS’s new President Qes Qelbero Wayero had the courage to report that the major problem of the Synod now was the drought. It was reported to have caused severe famine and sickness.\(^ {64}\) Again in January 1974, he reported to the EECMY General Assembly on this matter. 11,281 adults and children and 22,905 cattle had died according to his statistics. He even specified the number of victims from the eight *sebaka*s outside the Hosanna area.\(^ {65}\)

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\(^{63}\) CSM-A: Kambata Famine Relief Program, Interim Report 1974.06.27.


Qes Qelbero identified three main problems of the disaster in his report:

1. Lack of food.
2. Lack of health stations.
3. An extreme lack of water.

Although the exact statistics and details of his report must be questioned, the message of the report was clear. If an Ethiopian speaks of an “extreme lack of water”, the situation must be carefully investigated. Qes Qelbero had the courage to describe the drought in his synod openly. As drought was regarded as a shameful matter in Ethiopia and reporting on it could be regarded as a political statement, this was a sensible question for Ethiopians to address in public in 1973-74. This is illustrated by the following judgement of an external expert in June 1974, after a thorough survey of the Kambata/Hadiya region:

According to the information of the local population famine has existed for at least two years in certain areas, but the officials have neglected the applications for help, and people have even been forbidden to talk about famine because it was said to be a shame for the Awraja.66

The most severely affected areas in the Kambata/Hadiya region were situated in the south-west in the Tembaro Woreda, in the south in parts of the Angachcha Woreda, in the south-east in parts of the Kedida-Gamela Woreda and in the north-west in parts of the Konteb Woreda. Especially the lowland, dependent on its maize-crop, was badly affected. This year the ensete (false banana) growing at higher altitudes were in danger, too. Approximately 300-400,000 people were estimated to be in need of help.67

The KS reports, measures taken by members of the EECMY and its newly started Development Department led to the inception of a new kind of EECMY “Home Mission”: the “Kambata Famine Relief Program”.68 In connection with the drought that hit the KS, Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was furthermore shown by the EECMY synods in practice. This is mirrored in the following quotation from a report of the KS:

Both the Western and Central synods of ECMY made both their workers and cars available for the relief work in Kambata.69

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67 CSM-A: Kambata Famine Relief Program, Interim Report 1974.06.27, pp.2ff.
68 The EECMY Development Department was started in Oct.1970. It was led by the Swedish engineer, Mr John Eriksson. EECMY-A: EECMY 7th General Assembly 1971.01.13-19, Report of the Development Department.
The Kambata Famine Relief Program

The EECMY centre in Addis Abeba once more became heavily involved in the Kambata/Hadiya region. The financial burden of the new relief program was carried by the LWF’s Department of World Service (LWS). An extensive and engaged support was provided by the LWF’s Swedish National Committee, Lutherhjälpen.70

The latter started an airborne food-dropping program by renting three small aircraft from the Saab-Scania industrial enterprise in Malmö under the name Swedish Air Relief. With the well-known Ethiopian expert, Count Carl Gustaf von Rosen, as its chief-pilot, the project was still a risky undertaking.71

The bulk of its service was given in the North mainly in Wollo, but a considerable number of droppings were made in the roadless part of Tembaro in the Kambata/Hadiya region, too. During two months, June and September 1974, approximately 108 tons of grains were “dropped” in the surroundings of Gidansonga.72

The whole program was organised in close co-operation with the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) of the Ethiopian authorities.73

The Director of the Kambata Famine Relief Program in June 1974, Mr Karl-Erik Lundgren, already in this month stressed that not just an immediate relief program was needed. The region needed a rehabilitation program. In his analysis of important points for a more long-ranging rehabilitation program he suggested giving special attention to:

1. Land-ownership situation.
2. Overpopulation in certain areas.
3. Health situation.
5. The erosion problem.
6. Road-building and maintenance.

As has been hinted at above, the report of the Kambata Famine Relief Program was open in its critique of the land tenancy system and consequently also of the Ethiopian Government. The report stated that:

Due to the overpopulation and the unconditioned tenancy situation many families have during the last 2-3 years migrated into other places like Addis Abeba, Wondji, Metehara etc. and tried to make their living as daily-workers.74

The report is very well structured and contains reports from eight local surveys. Besides providing a basis of solid information for immediate support, it made the

70 CSM-A: Kambata Famine Relief Program, Interim Report 1974.06.27; LWS Ethiopia Programme an Evaluation 1979.02.27-03.08; CSM-A: Swedish Air Relief-Aid Operation in Ethiopia 1974, Final Report. This section refers to these sources unless indicated.
71 Lutherhjälpen is today internationally referred to as Church of Sweden Aid.
73 The RRC was founded in April 1974. CSM-A: Christian Relief and Development Association Report, May 1977, p.11.
74 CSM-A: Kambata Famine Relief Program, Interim Report 1974.06.27, p.1. See the Report’s criticism of the Landlord system: Attachment VI, pp.6f.; Attachment VII, p.2; Attachment VIII, p.4 and Attachment IX, p.2
poor infrastructure in the region transparent. The poor resources of health-care with just three clinics for approximately 800,000 people were highlighted. The network of roads in the region was described as extremely poor and its improvement as crucial for future developments.\textsuperscript{75}

As has been related above in detail the LWF had been familiar with the Kambata/Hadiya region since the KHMP start in 1962.\textsuperscript{76} Firsthand knowledge of the new situation in the region was now added to the solid basis of previous engagements and generated continued support. The seriousness of the situation can be illustrated by the fact that the EECMY Development Director, Mr John Eriksson, was released temporarily from his office work in Addis Abeba and concentrated his efforts on the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja.\textsuperscript{77}

From having been limited to work concentrated mainly to Hosanna, the Mishgida School (Durame), literacy schools in all the nine sebaks, TEE and some visiting programs, the synod now expanded its ambitions. From 1974 and onwards road-building, spring-protection, animal husbandry, soil conservation and clinics became essential parts of the KS’s regular work. The start of an “immediate relief program”, and the EECMY’s continuing co-operation with the LWF in a follow-up long-term rehabilitation program, gives the background to the inception of the KS Development Department and the KS’s increasingly holistic approach.\textsuperscript{78}

It was inevitable that the emphasis on a more holistic approach would have political dimensions. These mainly concerned the necessity of improving the living standards of ordinary people in the Kambata/Hadiya region, that is, of Ethiopian peasants. As has been noticed, part of the Kambata Famine Relief Program was to build roads and bridges in order to be able to transport food and other material to starving people. On the basis of what has been related previously concerning local Ethiopian initiatives in the region, I infer that the EECMY development work, especially the building of roads and bridges, had strong symbolic meaning to local people in 1974 and onwards.\textsuperscript{79}

The Revolution and its Land Reform
The resignation of the Aklilu Habtewold cabinet in February 1974, and the deposing and detention of the Emperor in September 1974 were major steps in the Ethiopian Revolution. From September 12, 1974 the country was led by the Provisonal Military Administrative Council (PMAC), commonly called the Derg. This group comprised approximately 106 officers of lower rank. From the end of June 1974 the Derg was increasingly directing developments in the country, in what later has been assessed as the “creeping coup”.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{76} See above, pp.149ff.
\textsuperscript{77} EECMY-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1974.05.04, § CO-74-78.
\textsuperscript{78} CSM-A: ECMY Development Office Report 1975.01.01-1976.06.30.
\textsuperscript{80} Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.37ff., 64ff.; Clapham 1988, pp.38ff.
Some of the main targets in the critique of the Imperial regime were its slow reactions to the drought, the alleged tendency to try to hide its consequences, the unwillingness to solve the problems generated by land tenancy, and a general inefficiency and inability to lead the country.\textsuperscript{81}

In its earlier stages the Ethiopian Revolution can be interpreted as primarily a nationalistic movement opting for general improvements. On July 10, 1974 a somewhat vague policy-statement was popularised by the Derg under the slogan \textit{Ethiopia Tiqdem} (Ethiopia first).\textsuperscript{82} On December 20, 1974 a more articulated political and financial program was announced under the motto “Ethiopian Socialism” (\textit{Hibretesebawinnet}). At this stage of the process, and at least for another nine months, it seems to have been an open question as to what type of socialism would dominate the Derg, however.\textsuperscript{83}

The minutes of the KS’s 16\textsuperscript{th} Executive Committee indicate how the development in the country influenced the KS members. As loyal citizens they made a break in their deliberations and like other Ethiopians joined in the celebration of the “National Development Campaign”, which was officially launched on December 21, 1974.\textsuperscript{84} This enthusiastic campaign, commonly called the Zemecha, aimed at propagating the revolution in the Ethiopian countryside by sending out thousands of students to teach and work at local level.\textsuperscript{85}

On March 4, 1975 the long-awaited rural Land Reform was officially announced by the Derg. All rural land was nationalised and handed over to peasant associations.\textsuperscript{86} In the Kambata/Hadiya region, for example in the Mishgida area, active Evangelical Christians from the Kale Hiywot Church and other churches became leaders in peasant associations. They were now responsible for distributing land according to the new regulations.\textsuperscript{87}

It would be a grave understatement to say that the Land Reform was received with joy by the members of the KS, who to a large extent were peasants. The words of the EECMY President reflects the feeling of the EECMY in general:

"It is evident that the members of our Church have been overjoyed by the “Public Ownership of Rural lands Proclamation” which has enabled tenant farmers to be owners of their own farm lands. It will be recalled that the General Assembly of the ECMY at its Yirgalem Meeting in 1973 passed an unprecedented resolution concerning land tenure, urging the Parliament of the day as well as the Government Departments concerned to give an urgent solution to the problem. The ECMY is happy and thankful that her wish is now fulfilled."

\textsuperscript{82} Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.66ff.
\textsuperscript{83} Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.86ff., 156ff.
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Ethiopian Herald} 1974.12.22; EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 16\textsuperscript{th} Executive Committee minutes, Dec.20-22, 1974, §16-20-74.
\textsuperscript{85} Clapham 1988, p.49; Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.102, 140, 171.
\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Ethiopian Herald} 1975.03.05; \textit{Negarit Gazeta} 1975.04.29; Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.97ff.
\textsuperscript{87} SG-A: Yacob Baffa o.i.1997.06.23. Ato Yacob is the father of the national Kale Hiywot Church’s General Secretary, Dr Tesfai Yacob, from Durame.
\textsuperscript{88} EECMY-A: EECMY 36\textsuperscript{th} Executive Committee, Oct.21, 1975, \textit{The President Report}, p.3.
A sort of revolutionary mood spread among the KS members, too. This is illustrated by a quotation from the Synod’s 18th Executive Committee held a week after the proclamation of the Land Reform, on March 10-12, 1975. The delegates agreed not to pay the former landlord for the land intended for a projected clinic in Tunto:

Because Kagnazmach Makonnen Tedla did not complete in time the argument concerning the land he sold to the Kambata Synod in Tembaro Woreda in Tunto area in July 1974, it was resolved that the unpaid sum of the price be not paid.89

How local authorities, now loyal to the Derg, looked upon the role of the KS in the new circumstances is highlighted by a visit of its representatives to the KS’s Fifth Synod Assembly in Hosanna on March 14, 1975. They were anxious to give the local interpretation of “Ethiopian Socialism” in the Kambata/Hadiya region:

The administrator of the Kambata Awraja, the Police Commander, the representative of the Provisional Military Government and the co-ordinator of the National Development Campaign in Hosanna visited the Convention and explained the aim of Ethiopian Socialism.90

Especially in the time of implementation of the Land Reform tension was in the air in the region. Resistance was made by former landlords and balabbats. They were trying to defend themselves and what they considered as their land. Shooting was going on for approximately a week around Hosanna.91 A similar witness comes from the Durame area. Landlords who did not give away their land freely, were imprisoned.92 In this context it was important for the authorities to secure support from the Evangelical churches, who were regarded to be in favour of the changes.

The Land Reform of the rural land was probably the most important achievement accomplished by the Derg. It influenced the living standard and security of millions of Ethiopian peasants positively. Owing to the Land Reform and its consequences, the support of the Derg was stronger in the southern and western parts of Ethiopia than in the North.93 These parts generally correspond to the so-called “open areas”, which I have discussed above in connection with the “Decree on Missions” from 1944.94 A result of the revolution in September 1974 was that the EOC had lost its status as the national church, supported by the state. In connection with the Land Reform the EOC lost its sizeable amount of land in the Kambata/Hadiya region, too.95

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89 EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 18th Executive Committee minutes, Mar.10-12, 1975, §26-18-75.
90 EECMY-A: Kambata Synod 5th Convention 1975.03.13-16, §5-19-75.
91 Missionaries were asked to stay inside their houses at the Synod compound. SG-A: I. Perttilä o.i.1997.10.24.
92 SG-A: Ayele Asale o.i.1998.01.24.
94 See above, pp.76ff.
95 See above, p.49.
The EECMY in a Time of Kairos

In 1975 ambivalent feelings of optimism and uncertainty were mixed in the EECMY. The release of the detained Government Minister and EECMY President, Ato Emmanuel Abraham, and promising social reforms gave the EECMY grounds for optimism. Uncertainty on how to interpret the Derg policy with its arbitrary executions, and the further developments in the country generated caution, however. The EECMY “Special” Executive Committee characterised the situation as a time of Kairos: a time for commitment and decision.

As has been extensively described by Eide, the EECMY centre, under the guidance of its Executive Secretary Gudina Tumsa, in 1975 made impressive efforts to interpret the new situation in Ethiopia and respond to the challenges. Seminars on socialism were arranged where, for example, the situation of churches in Ethiopia was analysed in the light of parallels from the Chinese Communist revolution.

The outstanding theological document from this year is Qes Gudina Tumsa’s radical Memorandum to his church. It can be interpreted as a continuation of the EECMY letter on Proclamation and Development from 1972. The Memorandum was thoroughly discussed at the EECMY’s “Special” Executive Committee in August 1975.

The Memorandum can be analysed by applying Walls’s missiological concepts: the “indigenising principle” and the “pilgrim principle”. Qes Gudina identified with the new situation in Ethiopia and its contextual challenges to the EECMY. In this sense he supported the Revolution and drew radical conclusions on, for example, the need for greater equality concerning the EECMY policy on salaries and the handing over of EECMY institutions for the common good of the state. This approach can be interpreted as an application of the “indigenising principle”. The Memorandum, thus helped the EECMY Executive Committee to reflect theologically on the challenges of the new situation in the country for the church and to come to relevant decisions.

At the same time Qes Gudina was able to keep the balance and maintain “the pilgrim principle”. He thus emphasised the uniqueness of the Gospel in the face of a plausible evolving “scientific socialism”, which demanded supreme authority. That is, he did not let the new context change what he understood as non-negotiable in the Gospel (pilgrim principle). In Qes Gudina’s words:

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96 As a minister in the Aklilu Habtewold cabinet Ato Emmanuel was detained 1974.04.30-1975.01.27. Emmanuel Abraham 1995, pp.231, 236.
98 For a detailed analysis of the EECMY interaction with the 1975 political context, see Eide 1996, pp.145ff.
99 CSM-A: Jonson, 1975.03.04. Dr Jonas Jonson, later Bishop, and Dr Gerd Decke were lecturers sent by the LWF.
101 Walls 1996, pp.7ff., 16ff.; see above, pp.29, 228.
102 For references to so-called “scientific socialism” in Ethiopia, see below, p.241.
It is the Good news for sinful men, the only power to save mankind from its sinfulness. It is too powerful to be compromised by any social system.\textsuperscript{103}

The delegates from the KS, who were attending the seminars on socialism and the deliberations on Qes Gudina’s \textit{Memorandum}, brought the theological reflections and the Executive Committee’s resolutions back to the Kambata/Hadiya region. The challenge at local level was now to identify with the “new” context and proclaim the Good News without compromising the Gospel.

A first step, in accordance with the EECMY resolutions emanating from the EECMY Executive Committee’s discussions, was to transfer all employees of the literacy schools in the KS to the local peasant associations in 1975.\textsuperscript{104}

\textbf{The Kambata Synod’s Attitude of Balancing}

The timely Famine Relief Program in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1974 evolved into a long-term Rehabilitation Program, which included a rural development program and a health program. A relative to Ato Zacheus Edamo, Ato Petros Wontamo from Mishgida, who had returned from being on a scholarship in the USA became the EECMY regional co-ordinator of the Relief and Rehabilitation Program. As we recall, Ato Petros was one of the first students in the KHMP scholarship program in 1962.\textsuperscript{105}

A promising cooperation was established with the new local authorities and peasant associations, who were enthusiastic owing to the Land Reform. Especially in the southern woredas of the Awraja, where the drought had been severe, an extensive co-operation between the local KS members and local representatives from the Extension Project Implementation Department (EPID) of the Ministry of Agriculture was proving fruitful. The co-operation was implemented in a flexible joint agricultural program called “Shone Minimum Package Project” (MPP). As it had the image of a government agency, it was regarded as neutral in matters of religion and ethnicity. In 1975-77 it covered an area of 150 peasant associations, with an average of 500 members in each.\textsuperscript{106}

Efforts to improve the infrastructure of the region, for example by road-building, were attempted by changing earlier feeding-centres into more creative “Food For Work” Programs. In accordance with the holistic approach of the first five-year plan of the KS from 1970, and with the explicit wish of the new Awraja leaders, the Synod increasingly tried to improve the health situation in the region.\textsuperscript{107} The medical efforts of the Synod’s Relief Program in the badly affected Tembaro Woreda from October 1974 evolved into a regular healthcare centre in a

\textsuperscript{104} EECMY-A: EECMY 9\textsuperscript{th} General Assembly, Apr.21-28, 1976, Kambata Synod Report, p.6.
\textsuperscript{105} CSM-A: \textit{Report from the Christian Relief Committee 1975.01.20; EECMY Development Office Report 1975.01.01-1976.06.30}; see above, p.155.
\textsuperscript{106} The Swedish agronomists Mr Ingemar and Mrs Ingrid Jarlebring were working in this project. CSM-A: Shone MPP, EPID ECMY, \textit{Summary Report 1975.05-1977.07}.
\textsuperscript{107} FELM-A: \textit{Five Year Plan}, Oct.1970; A plan on health care was introduced by the Synod in 1975. CSM-A: \textit{A 10-year plan on Minimum Health Services for Kambatta 1975.12.18}.
small town called Tunto. Other healthcare centres were planned to be erected in Durge, Homacho (Konteb) and Shashogo. The co-operation between the KS and the representatives of the Ministry of Health was on the increase.\(^{108}\)

At central level representatives of churches and other organisations from May 1973 met in the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) in Addis Abeba in order to co-ordinate their efforts. In the Kambata/Hadiya region the Catholic Church, the KHC (SIM) and the SDA were reinforcing their development activities together with the KS.\(^{109}\) The practical co-operation between various churches at central and local level, which aimed at preventing the effects of the drought, improving healthcare and developing the country, generated a more ecumenical attitude among them. Regional authorities were instrumental in reinforcing such a joint co-operation. This is illustrated by the following statement:

> To improve the medical service of the Awraja all the mission groups and churches that work in it are asked to cooperate. At the moment different mission groups and the Ministry of Public Health are studying our plan.\(^{110}\)

Thus there was positive initial co-operation between the KS and the new authorities in 1974-75, which generated good-will. There was a strong Christian community in the region and a number of leaders in the peasant associations were Evangelical Christians.

The other side of the coin was that the KS sometimes felt that it was being used for purposes other than its own. One pertinent example is how the KS’s new youth hostel was used for the participants in the Zemecha. It became a living-centre in Hosanna for the young people active in this campaign. At times the Christian presence at the hostel was ridiculed by young activists.\(^{111}\) The initially enthusiastic vocabulary of the Synod’s members changed in register as time went by. In October 1975 the Zemecha was said to be using the hostel as “a temporary residence” for the students of the National Development Campaign. Later on, the Zemecha’s use of the Youth Hostel was described as a veritable occupation.\(^{112}\)

Christians were at times compromising with their faith. Sometimes the situation forced them to keep a low profile as loyal servants of the new regime and its various representatives.\(^{113}\) Strikes for higher salaries and allowances, for example at


\(^{109}\) EECMY-A: EECMY 9\(^{th}\) General Assembly, Apr.21-28, 1976, Kambata Synod Report, p.13; CSM-A: CRDA minutes, 1974.03.04; 1975.05.07. The EOC was not yet a member of the CRDA, but co-operated locally, for example in Tigray in the “Ecumenical Church Committee”. The initial name of the CRDA was the “Christian Emergency Relief Fund”. CSM-A: Christian Relief and Development Association Report, May 1977, pp.7, 16.


\(^{111}\) SG-A: Ato Mekonnen Ejamo o.i.1998.01.29.


\(^{113}\) SG-A: Ato Ayele Asale o.i.1998.01.24.
the Hosanna Bible-school and at the Mishgida School (Durame), were new experiences, as were the evolving labour unions in the Synod.\textsuperscript{114}

The goodwill generated by the Development activities of the KS in the region influenced its leaders to develop an “attitude of balancing” with local authorities. It was a question of giving service and receiving service in return. This was made easier by the resources generated from the LWF long-term Rehabilitation Program.

**A Picture of the Kambata Synod in 1973-75**

In trying to understand dynamics in the process of change I have earlier referred to Festinger’s *Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*.\textsuperscript{115} As will be recalled, the importance of having a group to identify with and receive support from in a process of change is spelled out by this theory. It is pertinent to infer that the other synods of the EECMY played such a part of identification in changing the KS into the Evangelical mainstream. The KS identified with them and with prominent representatives of the EECMY centre in Addis Abeba. The following quotation referring to a visit paid in Hosanna by the EECMY Church Officers is representative:

> The people were impressed by the speeches given and the cooperativeness shown by the officers of the church.\textsuperscript{116}

In 1975 the KS was an established synod in the Mekane Yesus Church. It was now looked upon as an important partner by local and regional authorities in the Kambata/Hadiya region.

**Polity**: EECMY members and Finnish missionaries tried to direct the KS in line with the Evangelical Lutheran framework of the Synod’s new constitution. The increase of youth work, the start of Sunday schools and “women work” were parts of these efforts of the early 1970’s. Changes were less obvious in the KS peripheries than in Hosanna, however.

As in Ato Djalatta Djaffer’s “New Scheme” applied in the KEC-2 in the middle of the 1960’s,\textsuperscript{117} and as in the rest of the EECMY, writing minutes, elections by voting, a budget system and the employment of paid workers were reinforced. The Western way of administering support demanded these procedures. Finnish missionaries were influential experts of the system, whereas many of the Ethiopian delegates at the Synod Assembly meetings were still struggling to learn how to read and write.\textsuperscript{118} In 1975 the difference between the KS centre and its peripheries was considerable in this respect, too.

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\textsuperscript{114} SG-A: I. Perttilä o.i.1997.10.24.

\textsuperscript{115} See above, pp.27, 84, 95, 100; Festinger 1962, pp.177ff.


\textsuperscript{117} See above, p.178.

\textsuperscript{118} The necessity of being able to read and write in order to be a leader of a “seven” or congregation was discussed at the first Synod Assembly (Convention). It was decided that a leader should be literate. FELM-A: Kambata Synod 1\textsuperscript{st} Convention 1971.02.12-14, §36.
As already implied, in 1973 Ato Erjabo Handiso was succeeded by Qes Qelbero Wayero from Lemu, who became the KS’s new President. The same year Qes Leggese Segaro was succeeded as Executive Secretary by Ato Bekele Basore from Durame. The Finnish missionaries, especially the EECMY Adviser of the Synod, Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi, and the Treasurer, Rev. Ilpo Perttilä were influential. When the former returned to Finland in 1974, he meant that the Synod could stand on its own feet.\footnote{EECMY-A: EECMY 473\textsuperscript{rd} Church Officers’ minutes, Nov.20, 1974, §CO-74-184.}

As in the rest of the EECMY synods, men were the dominating members at both local and regional level. From 1973 women were, however, studying at the Bible-school in Hosanna and efforts were made to strengthen the role of women in the Synod. In 1975, 160 women groups with a democratic structure had been organised. The KS’s financial contribution to the central budget was small. Measures taken to rectify this imbalance were unsuccessful.

There were still nine “sevens” in the KS. As in the rest of the EECMY they were now referred to as “sebakas”, that is, larger parishes (rural deaneries) with several congregations.

**Worship:** In practice, evangelists and elders continued to play an essential part in the administration of the sacraments, now however, as “commissioned elders” centrally approved by the KS. Efforts were made to introduce the AAMY lectionary of Scripture readings at Sunday services. This was however not a fast process.

**Doctrine:** Through the teaching of the missionaries, the KS pastoral meetings, a growing TEE work, the two-year Bible-school and contacts with the EECMY centre, the Synod’s doctrinal profile was very slowly shaped into an EECMY pattern. Among pastors it was agreed upon to arrange baptisms in churches instead of rivers. Infant baptism in a strict sense now seems to have become more normal. This was a less clear issue in the KS peripheries, however.

Only two Ethiopian pastors had been ordained by the KS in 1969-75. Together with the 17 so-called “village pastors”, ordained by Qes Ezra Gebremedhin in the KEC-2 of 1965, they tried to implement their understanding of the EECMY ordained ministry. In itself it was a bit diffuse, owing to different concepts of missionaries in different synods. In 1975, 29 candidates were preparing for ordination.

An Ethiopian, Qes Asfaw Qelbero, was appointed headmaster of the Hosanna Bible-school in 1974. This was an important step for a more indigenous approach.

**Ethos:** Issues concerning polygamy and drinking were addressed at pastoral meetings. This implies that the KS was still quite an inclusive church. A few leaders in the KS were reflecting on issues concerning social-ethics, like equality and labour unions. Strikes were part of the new context in the Synod.

**Relations to the EECMY:** The contacts with the EECMY centre and its newly established Development Department were instrumental in introducing an increasingly holistic approach in the KS. As a response to the drought in the region a LWF-financed Relief and Rehabilitation Program was initiated.
Owing to these measures the Synod was able to cover the region in a more comprehensive way. Immediate relief was distributed to starving people. This was followed up by intense co-operation with local authorities and peasant associations in a comprehensive rural program. A healthcare centre was started in Tunto in the badly affected Tembaro Woreda. Such measures generated goodwill, which would prove crucial for the future.

The EECMY centre provided the KS with interpretative tools to understand the new situation in the country. An elite from the KS and the EECMY centre tried to interpret the meaning of the new slogan “Ethiopian Socialism” in line with their Christian faith. In this context the contact with Evangelicals, now leaders in the newly started peasant associations, was a challenge.

Literacy schools were important at local level. At the end of 1975 the c.290 schools with c.41,000 students were handed over to peasant associations.

**Ecumenism**: As far as the KS was concerned, local ecumenical fellowship in the region was strengthened. This was due to several factors. Stricter rules on how to receive migrating members into the Synod were applied. From 1973 joint relief actions and efforts to improve healthcare reinforced ecumenical interaction.

Fellowship between different denominations in the area around Hosanna was furthermore supported by open-minded youngsters. Young people from the Kale Hiywot Church, the EECMY, the EOC student movement Haimanote Abew and to some extent from the Mullu Wongel Church met regularly for singing and witnessing in the early 1970’s.120

In 1975 members from the KEC and also from the EOC were reported as migrating into the KS.121 This may be explained as due to the comparatively powerful Relief and Rehabilitation Program of the KS and its reputation as a financially rich church. The EOC was furthermore identified with the former regime and as a supporter of the land tenancy system. The general unrest in the country in itself probably generated migrations between different churches, too.122

**Mission**: A smaller part of the KS growth was due to its outreach work in connection with the Literacy Campaign. Some Muslims and members of neglected groups were becoming Evangelical Christians. An example of the latter was the Fuga, the caste of potters, tanners and blacksmiths of the region, who according to tradition were untouchables.123 In 1975 the Synod had established literacy work among Muslims in two other awrajas, that is, “Haykoch and Butajira Awraja” and in “Gurage and Chebo Awraja” with c.35 literacy schools.
Size: According to official Synod statistics there were totally 121 congregations in the KS in 1975. The membership amounted to 38,000. If the latter figure is correct (?) it was a doubling since 1970. There were nine “sebakas” (parishes) in the Kambata Synod.

New Challenges: An attitude of trying to strike a balance with local authorities was developed by the KS members. They tried to stay true to their faith and to cope with demands for co-operation made by the new regime. The initial nationalism of the Derg was at the end of 1975 increasingly influenced by so-called “scientific socialism”. The latter was the term for the Marxist-Leninist type of Communism used by radical supporters of this ideology.

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125 Abonsa Sebaka, Bosoana Sebaka, Buriye Sebaka, Dodoba Sebaka, Donga Sebaka, Ilgira Sebaka, Lemu Sebaka, Soro Sebaka and Tembaro Sebaka.

126 Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, pp.123, 164.
At this Baptism service in 1973 at Bobicho outside Hosanna, approximately 100 people of the Fuga caste were baptised (see above, p.240, n.123).

From left to right:

Ato Erjabo Handiso, Teacher at the Mishgida Bible-school from 1962, Treasurer in the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 from 1963, President of the KEC-2 from 1967 and the first President of the Kambata Synod from 1969 to 1973.127

Qes Getachew Gensato, the youngest Pastor ordained by Qes Ezra Gebremedhin on March 20, 1965 in the Tembaro “Seven”. After further education at the GHM Bible-school in Aira, he became a Teacher at the Bible-school in Hosanna.128

Qes Qelbero Wayero, Member of the Kambata Evangelical Church’s delegation at the 1952 Conference of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) in Addis Abeba. He was the second President of the Kambata Synod from 1973 to 1978.129

127 On Ato Erjabo Handiso, see above, pp.154, 164, 206, 209, 217f., 220, n.15, 227f., 239.
128 On Qes Getachew Gensato, see above, p.185, n.50 and 51.
129 On Qes Qelbero Wayero, see above, pp.95f., 102, 218, 221, 229f., 239, below, pp.245f.
PART FOUR
OUTLOOK AND CONCLUSION

From the perspective of Mt. Ambaricho and Mt. Shonkolla I will in Part Four concentrate on two highlights in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus’ fifth synod and draw my general conclusions for the whole study.

The change of the Synod’s name from the Kambata Synod (KS) to the more inclusive South Central Ethiopia Synod (SCES) has its origins in severe ethnic tensions. They were a threat to the unity of the Synod and, moreover, they were challenging the Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity in the EECMY.

Another even more difficult problem for the Church to tackle was the increasingly anti-religious sentiments in the Derg. Many of the so-called “revolutionaries” bore names such as the Kingdom of Mary’s Power (Mengistu Haile Mariam), the (Holy) Trinity’s Love (Fiqre Selassie) and St. Peter’s Servant (Petros Gebre). Even if the communist title Gwad (comrade) was put in front of such names the strange metamorphosis was not convincing.

There were many paradoxes concerning ethnicity and the lack of religious freedom in Ethiopia from 1977 to 1984. Developments did not always appear to be very logical. The following analysis is an effort to understand them.
Chapter Thirteen

An Epilogue with Two Highlights

I have followed the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) from its origins in 1954 via its transformation into the Kambata Synod of the EECMY in 1969 until the end of 1975. Two later intriguing developments can be interpreted in light of the historical account which I have given above.

The first concerns ethnic tensions, which in 1977 led to the split of the Kambata Synod into a Kambata and a Hadiya part.

The second relates to the extraordinary and contradictory religious freedom that the Kambata/Hadiya region experienced when the Derg policy developed in a clearly anti-religious direction from 1978 and onwards. Hundreds of churches were closed in Wollega and Wolayta and other parts of the country in 1983-84.1 At the same time it was still possible to sell Bibles openly at the market places in the Kambata/Hadiya region.2

I base my account on primary material from the archives of the EECMY and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM), my own oral sources, the daily newspaper the Ethiopian Herald and reports in the Year-Books of the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS/FELM).

A. On the Interrelation between the Gospel and Ethnicity 3

Ethnic Tensions and a New Name 1977-78

As described above the Kambata/Hadiya region comprises two ethnic groups: the Kambata and the Hadiya. The Kambata is mainly situated in the southern part of the region and the Hadiya mainly in the northern. Although tensions owing to ethnic dynamics probably always existed in some form or another in the KEC-2 and in the early Kambata Synod, the church never split before 1977.

After the Ethiopian Revolution in 1974 various ethnic groups enjoyed a new freedom. There were both positive and more problematic sides in this new situation. One positive side was the possibility of promoting different languages and cultures. To the EECMY it meant a freedom to produce radio programs to be sent by the Radio Voice of the Gospel in more languages than before:

3 The idea of this title is to deliberately allude to the important EECMY Letter to the LWF 1972.05.09. It speaks of “a new imbalance” and an “artificial division” between Proclamation and Development. I see the interaction of the Gospel and ethnicity as a parallel.
Realising that the time has come for the Church to pass on her Message of Proclamation and Development, not only in Amharic, Oromo and Tigrinya, but also in:

1. The Sidama Language,
2. The Hadiya and Kambata language and
3. The Wolayta language . . .

The language policy of the Derg furthermore made ecumenical projects like the translation of the New Testament into the Kambatissa and Hadiyissa languages possible. Supported by the Wycliffe Bible translators an ecumenical translation team was formed by local members from the Kambata Synod, the Kale Hiywot Church and the Adventists in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1978.

A more delicate side of the new freedom was that ethnic tensions in the Kambata Awraja and in the KS were brought to surface in the turmoil of the country in 1976-78. Ethnic dynamics could be exploited as means to reach political ends. An intense armed struggle started in September 1976 between different political factions in Ethiopia, who in their quest for power tried to liquidate one another. From Mengistu Haile Mariam’s coup d’état in February 1977 to March 1978 all significant opposition to the new “Chairman” was extinguished in fear and blood, by what was called “Red Terror”.

1977 was furthermore a year when Ethiopia was losing ground to the liberation movements in Eritrea and was attacked by Somalia. With military support from the Soviet Union, Cuba and Yemen, Ethiopia regained the Province Ogaden in March 1978. It is logical to assume that the political unrest in Ethiopia and the warfare were generating undercurrents expressed by the ethnic tensions experienced in the KS from 1976 to 1978. A target in the Synod’s dispute was that most of the resources of the LWF-sponsored agricultural program were concentrated to the southern woredas, that is, in the Kambata part of the Synod.

A tangible consequence of the ethnic tensions in the Kambata Awraja in this time was its change of name. The new name from March 1976 was “the Kambata/ Hadiya Awraja.” A similar step was taken at the Kambata Synod Assembly in April (May) 1977. The name, “the Kambata Synod” was changed to “the South Central Ethiopia Synod” (SCES). That this was a sensitive step taken at this time is illustrated by the following statement by the KS President Qes Qelbero Wayero:

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4 EECMY-A: EECMY 39th Executive Committee minutes 1976, §EC 39-31-76.
8 CSM-A: LWF/LWS/ CDS Project Request 1981.03.31, p.79.
9 Ethiopian Herald 1976.03.11.; see above, p.40, n.4.
10 The Amharic name was (and is) Maekelawi Debub Synodos. From c.1983 it was translated South Central Synod (SCS). EECMY: EECMY 52nd Executive Committee, Oct.1980 (Amharic); see EECMY 792nd Church Officers’ minutes 1983.02.16, §CO-83-33.
In view of the fact that the synod also serves in Haykoch and Butajira and Chebo and Gurage Awrajas besides Kambata and Hadiya Awraja, a suggestion was forwarded on the 23rd meeting of the Executive Committee to change the name of the Synod to “South Central Ethiopia Synod”. Accordingly, the Synod’s Annual Convention resolved by resolution (EC41-7-69) to change the Synod’s name to “ECMY South-Central Ethiopia Synod” as of April 1977.11

The change of name of the Synod was officially motivated by that the work of the KS now was reaching into other awrajas outside the Kambata/Hadiya region. It is, however, evident that this was just a euphemism for the real reason. In the long run it would have been impossible to neglect ethnic sentiments and go on calling the Synod “the Kambata Synod”, when the Awraja itself had changed its name into the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja. I suggest that the main reason for the Kambata Synod to change its name to the South Central Ethiopia Synod was generated by ethnic issues inside the region. From approximately 1983 the English translation of the Synod’s name from Amharic into English was simplified to “the South Central Synod” (SCS).12

The EECMY Reconciles the South Central Ethiopia Synod

The ethnic tensions experienced in the SCES between the Kambata and Hadiya ethnic groups led the four sebakas in the southern part of the Awraja, that is, the Kambata part, to ask the EECMY for permission to form a new synod in January 1977.13 The former Kambata Synod would then comprise the sebakas mainly situated in the northern, Hadiya part.

At the Synod Assembly held in April (May) 1977 in Hosanna, the Abonsa, Dodoba and Ilgira sebakas were invited to attend, but not as members just as observers(!).14 As a consequence of the split there were furthermore two groups representing the Synod at the EECMY 10th General Assembly in January 1978. They were referred to as: “the Northern Parishes” and “the Southern Parishes” of the South Central Ethiopia Synod. They gave separate reports to the EECMY General Assembly. The latter was furthermore guided by a committee, in which members of the EECMY in Addis Abeba were represented.15

The EECMY General Assembly handled the split in the SCES in a firm way. The members of the Assembly first listened to the reading of minutes concerning the problems in the SCES from all the four different EECMY Executive Commit-

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13 EECMY-A: EECMY 41st Executive Committee minutes, Jan.16-21, 1977, §EC 41-25-77.
14 EECMY-A: EECMY 42nd Executive Committee minutes, May 30-June 4, 1977, §EC 42-17-77. The EC minutes differ with other sources in reference to which month (April or May?) the 1977 Kambata Synod Assembly took place.
tees in 1977. This was followed by the announcing of recommendations from a committee appointed by the 1978 General Assembly concerning the issue. The General Assembly resolved:

1. that the South Central Ethiopia Synod be not divided under any circumstances (unanimous);
2. since the 42nd meeting of the Executive Committee had reported that the Seventh Annual Synod Convention, which was said to have been held in May 1977, did not represent all the congregations,
   a) that the elections made at the Convention be hereby declared invalid (unanimous);
   b) that the Synod leaders elected at the Convention be removed from their elected offices and that others be elected in a way fair to both parties (one opposed);
   c) that the following persons constitute a committee to visit the synod, supervise the elections of the new synod officers before April 1978 (Megabit 27, 1970), and report to the Executive Committee:
      1. The Rev. Yadesa Daba, Chairman
      2. Ato Hagos Tewolde Medhin
      3. Ato Francis Istiphanos
      4. Ato Gutema Rufo
      5. The Rev. Lemesa Bato (unanimous)
3. that the South Central Ethiopia Synod have two Divisions, called the North and the South Divisions, each to be administered by its own Divisional officers; the congregations of each Division to elect their respective officers (3 opposed);
4. that elected officers or employees working in the Synod office be elected or appointed from both Divisions in a manner considered fair to both parties (unanimous);
5. that the officers from the North and the South at present in office at the Synod level be not allowed to stand for election at the next Synod elections; they might however be eligible for election at the Division level should the congregations so desire (6 opposed).16

To make a long story short, the Synod was reconciled and new Church Officers, and a new President were elected at the SCES Synod Assembly in Hosanna in April 1978. The new President was Ato Fiqre Yesus Forsido.17

From what has been related at earlier stages in this study, the theme of splits and reconciliation in the Kambata/Hadiya region indeed sounds familiar. In 1978 the main combatants of the conflicting sides were urged to give room for new leaders. This reminds us of the conflict of 1965, when Ato Zacheus Edamo and Ato Tamru Segaro had to leave their positions in a similar manner.18

18 See above, p.175.
On the basis of the EECMY General Assemblies’ decision in 1978 a multiethnic delegation of Ethiopians, with origins in at least three different ethnic groups and representing various synods in the EECMY, was sent to supervise the elections in the SCES. They would also see to it that a balance was promoted in the representation of members from the two ethnic groups in the Synod. In other words the Synod’s constitution was in need of being upgraded. The similarities with the sending of Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie to the KEC in 1952 and the introduction of a constitution are obvious.\(^{19}\)

Another similarity, which reminds of the KEC’s reconciliation procedures in 1952, is the low profile taken by the missionaries. The Finnish missionaries were not even present at the reconciliation in 1978. Owing to the unrest in the country, in October 1977 they had been asked to evacuate to Finland. They returned to the SCES from July 1978.\(^{20}\) Thus, Ethiopians from the EECMY were again without local missionary support in their former “Home Mission”, now called the SCES.

The remarkable thing is that the EECMY representatives were able to reconcile the conflicting ethnic groups. In the prevailing context of political unrest and warfare this was an extraordinary achievement. The EECMY could very well have abandoned the SCES in 1977-78 to get rid of the problems. But it did not. Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was still powerful in the EECMY of the late 1970’s.

**Ethnic Tensions - a New Theological Imbalance**

Seen from a SCES perspective there was not perhaps much of a choice but to obey the decision of the 1978 EECMY General Assembly. The circumstances forced the splitting groups to make a choice. One option was of course to break away from the EECMY and go on with the internal conflicts. The other option was to be reconciled and reach a balance in the Synod. The conflicting sides in the SCES could not afford to lose contact with the EECMY, neither personally, nor financially.

What would happen to the SCES if the Rehabilitation Program was stopped? What if the contact with FMS was broken for good? After all, all the missionaries had returned to Finland. Ethiopian experiences of reconciliation and diplomacy opened a way for an acceptable solution to the immediate problems in the SCES.

Another dimension of the reconciliation was the strong theological convictions of the need for Christian unity in the EECMY. Being the chairman of the newly established “Council for Cooperation of Churches in Ethiopia” (CCCE), Qes Gudina briefed the EECMY General Assembly in 1978 on “Inter-Church Relations” both inside and outside the country. 1978 was furthermore a year when the EECMY considered applying for membership in the WCC.\(^{21}\)

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19 See above, pp.104f. Ato Francis is Burji, Ato Hagos Tigray, the rest are Oromo.
20 *FMS Årsbok 1978*, p.38 (Swedish); Hirvilammi 1989, pp.66f. (Swedish); see above, pp. 103f.

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Against this background it seems as if the EECMY of 1978 regarded ethnic tensions as of secondary importance, compared to the issue of guarding the unity of the Church. This point is well illustrated by the following recommendations from the EECMY Theological Committee to the EECMY General Assembly in 1978, read by Qes Yadesa Daba the committee’s secretary:

11) Kes Asfaw Kalbero’s Paper (Basis for the ECMY Unity), in which he indicated problems arising out of feelings of tribalism which might hamper the unity of the Church, was discussed at length. In the Bible it is clearly stated that all Christians are members of the one Body of Christ. On this basis the Church neither supports tribalism nor discriminates against anyone. Accordingly the Church does not make any difference between male and female, or master and slave (Gal.3:27-28).

Therefore, the Theological Committee recommends that if there is any individual who supports tribalism or discriminates he/she be encouraged to examine himself/herself in the light of God’s Word and repent.22

The quotation is evidence that the EECMY of 1978 had a clear theological standpoint on Christian unity and argued forcefully against ethnic discrimination. According to the EECMY Theological Committee of 1978 this standpoint was based on the Scriptures and the members drew their own conclusions from it. These conclusions influenced the EECMY synods and the Church at large. Christian unity was regarded as an important part of the EECMY legacy. This is in line with my suggestion that transcending ethnic borders was part of the EECMY legacy of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity from its early pioneers and onwards. As just argued above, it continued in the EECMY of 1977-78 as a unifying factor.23

In my analytical approach I have applied Professor Walls’s missiological concepts: the “indigenising principle” and the “pilgrim principle”, when studying the interaction of the Christian Gospel and culture. As we recall, the two opposing principles (tendencies) have their origin in the Gospel itself according to Walls. The balance between them must be maintained or the Gospel will be too narrow or lose its meaning.24 Here follows an overview of how I have applied the principles.

The imbalance generated by The Decree on Missions in 1944 was due to the Gospel being identified with one dominating culture - the Amhara. The “indigenising principle” was in other words applied too narrowly. The “pilgrim principle”, which proclaims a common heritage in Christ with universalising effects on culture and language, was thus depreciated.25

The “new imbalance”, criticised by the EECMY letter On the Interrelation Between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development in 1972 was that the Gospel was narrowed by identifying with Western culture (“indigenising principle”). The consequence was that Western materialism was “exported” by Western donors. This hampered the holistic approach of the EECMY, who tried to maintain

23 See above, pp.246ff.
24 See above, p.29; Walls 1996, pp.3ff.
25 See above, pp.78f.
the necessity of proclaiming Christ as Lord (“pilgrim principle”). Put differently the EECMY argued that the correct balance between “Witness and Service” must be guarded.\textsuperscript{26}

The imbalance addressed by Qes Gudina Tumsa’s \textit{Memorandum} in 1975 was the risk of reducing the Gospel by identifying it with the ideology of “scientific socialism” (“indigenising principle”). Qes Gudina emphasised the “pilgrim principle” by claiming the uniqueness of the Gospel of Salvation. At the same time he identified with the new context of “Ethiopian Socialism” and was thus able to keep the balance between the two principles.\textsuperscript{27}

The ethnic tensions which threatened to split the SCES in 1978 can be analysed in a similar way. As just quoted above, the EECMY Theological Committee argued that Christians belong to “the one Body of Christ”. This meant that the Gospel could not be identified just with one’s own ethnic group (“tribe”). That would be to “hamper the unity of the Church”. By way of alluding to the EECMY letter from 1972 it would be to create a \textit{new imbalance} and an \textit{artificial division} between ethnicity and the Gospel.\textsuperscript{28} One can say that the EECMY Theological Committee balanced the “pilgrim principle” against the Kambata and Hadiya narrow identification with their own particular ethnicity (“indigenising principle”).

The “pilgrim principle” was moreover spelled out by referring to Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 3: 27-28. By doing so the Theological Committee implied that through the baptism “into Christ” (Gal.3:27) the SCES members were “neither Kambata nor Hadiya” (Gal.3:28), but had a “common heritage”(Walls) and were “one in Christ Jesus” (Gal.3:28). This was again an application of the “pilgrim principle”, which according to Walls is a “universalising factor” with its origin in the Christian Gospel itself.\textsuperscript{29}

To sum up: The 1978 EECMY Theological Committee emphasised that to hamper ethnic diversity in the Church or to promote one ethnic group at the expense of another was to introduce a new imbalance into the Gospel. The solution to this dilemma was phrased in this way by the Theological Committee, and I repeat its formulation:

\ldots{} if there is any individual who supports tribalism or discriminates he/she be encouraged to examine himself/herself in the light of God’s Word and repent.\textsuperscript{30}

I contend that what I have discussed above is a fair interpretation of the 1978 EECMY Theological Committee’s standpoint “on the interrelation between the Gospel and Ethnicity”.\textsuperscript{31}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{26} See above, p.228; EECMY-A: \textit{On the Interrelation Between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development}, 1972.05.09. I refer to it as the EECMY letter 1972.05.09.
\bibitem{27} See above, pp.235f.
\bibitem{28} The words in italics are familiar expressions used in the EECMY letter 1972.05.09.
\bibitem{29} See above, p.29; see Walls 1996, p.9.
\bibitem{31} I allude deliberately to the title of the EECMY letter 1972.05.09.
\end{thebibliography}

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Paradoxes of Religious Freedom in Ethiopia 1983-84

In 1984 the experienced FELM missionary, Rev. Matti Palmu, reported that:

The work in the synod has not been restricted by the authorities, not one single church has been closed. On the contrary new churches are being built. Bearing the situation of the country in mind, it was strange to be able to sell spiritual literature at the market places. The amount of books sold in this year is three times higher compared to last year. This is a witness to the hunger for the Word of God.33

Furthermore, in 1983-84 four missionary pastors; two Germans, one Finn and one Swede, received work-permits as new pastors (kahin) of the SCS in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja. This was unique for Ethiopia in those years.34

The religious freedom in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja was indeed extraordinary for Ethiopia in 1983-84. Just 20 km south from Durame, in Wolayta in the Sidamo Province, measures taken against Christians were extreme. At the end of 1984 The Times reported that:

... all 748 churches in the remote Wolayta area, 200 miles south of the capital, being closed down and religious items removed".35

As a missionary in the EECMY living in Durame from 1984 to 1986, I myself experienced how members from the Kale Hiywot Church in Wolayta in 1984 were crossing the Province border and visiting Christians in Durame. They complained that the local authorities in Wolayta prohibited them even from singing Christian hymns at funerals. Their demand for spiritual literature was great.

As related by Dr Øyvind Eide, the situation in Western Wollega in 1983 reminded of the situation in Wolayta. In 1983 the LWF reported that 348 churches in the Western Synod (WS) of the EECMY had been taken over by the authorities and were used for other purposes.36

In Sidamo and Gamu Gofa, south of the Kambata/Hadiya region, the South Ethiopia Synod of the EECMY, although better off than the Western Synod, experienced much more harassment from local authorities than the SCS ever did. In 1983, for example, Tabor Theological Seminary of the EECMY in the Province capital, Awasa, was expropriated by the authorities.37 Against this background I will go on by asking: How is it possible to explain the remarkable religious freedom of the SCS in those years?

32 The name of the Synod was translated South Central Synod (SCS) from c.1983.
33 FMS Årsbok 1985, p.32 (Swedish). As mentioned, from 1984 FMS changed its English name to FELM. See above, p.20, n.35.
34 EECMY-A: EECMY Church Officers’ minutes 1983, CO-83-33, CO-83-88, CO-83-121; Hirvilammi 1989, pp.104, Appendix 1 (Swedish). The author of this thesis was one of the missionary pastors. In other synods foreign pastors were receiving work-permit as teachers, development workers etc.
35 The Times 1984.11.14, p.5.
37 Eide 1996, pp.245f.
Reasons for Religious Freedom in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja

According to my sources the churches in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja, experienced major obstacles from the authorities mainly in the years of the “Red Terror” in 1977-78.\(^{38}\) This does not mean to say that it was easy for Ethiopians, especially not for the young people, to live as Evangelical Christians in the region. But compared to the situation in other parts of the country there were big differences.

Representatives of the two largest Evangelical churches in the Awraja, the KHC and the EECMY/SCS, describe the situation similarly. A leader in the Hadiya KHC, Ato Girma Hanano, traces the freedom of his church to two main factors:

1. The personal relationship between Abba Gole and Lt. Petros Gebre.\(^ {39}\)
2. The development program of the Kale Hiywot Church.\(^ {40}\)

The SCS President in 1978-89, Qes Fiqre Yesus Forsido, also points out the role of Gwad Petros Gebre as decisive. He gathered the Christian leaders of the EECMY, the KHC, the Adventists and the Catholics and advised them how to behave so that Gwad Petros himself(!) would not be accused of being too lenient towards Christians. Gwad Petros wanted information on all larger meetings and advised the Christian leaders not to invite strangers. He told the Christian leaders that he himself had been accused of being too soft on the Christians.\(^ {41}\)

The former Ambassador and Minister of the Imperial Government and President of the EECMY from 1963 to 1985, Ato Emmanuel Abraham, can be regarded as a most initiated “insider” on how to interpret Ethiopian politics. He explains the special freedom experienced by the churches in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja as mainly owing to Gwad Petros Gebre. This man originally had the low rank of a military corporal in the Ethiopian Army when he became a member of the Derg. He was trusted by the Chairman of the Derg, Gwad Mengistu Haile Mariam.\(^ {42}\)

As can be inferred from the bloody purges inside the Derg, mutual trust was very much lacking among its delegates. But as Gwad Petros appears to have been trusted by Mengistu, he earned a certain freedom to arrange religious matters in his own manner inside “his” Awraja.

Ato Emmanuel Abraham also points out that the development work of the EECMY/SCS was instrumental in their enjoying this religious freedom. The EECMY gave substantial support in the building of the hospital in Hosanna, which was the flagship of Gwad Petros’s enterprises.\(^ {43}\) The long-awaited hospital in Ho-

\(^{38}\) SG-A: K. Mauranen o.i.1993.10.15; Tesfai Yacob 1997.06.19; Mekonnen Ejamo o.i.1998.01.29; see Cumbers 1995, pp.152-192. Cumbers mentions a couple of later incidents.

\(^{39}\) Abba Gole was the long-time leader of the KEC/Hadiya KHC and “Lt. Petros Gebre” was the Derg representative in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja.

\(^{40}\) Cumbers, pp.180, 153ff.

\(^{41}\) The FELM missionary Kirsti Mauranen heard Qes Fiqre Yesus say these words. SG-A: K. Mauranen o.i.1993.10.15; \textit{Gwad} is Amharic for “Comrade”; see Eide 1996, p.247.

\(^{42}\) SG-A: Emmanuel Abraham o.i.1996.11.12.

\(^{43}\) \textit{Ibid.}; A donation worth two million Birr(!) was handed over to the hospital by the SCS at the end of April 1983. \textit{Ethiopian Herald} 1983.05.01.
sanna was inaugurated in November 1983 by the Derg Chairman. Its name was: The Mengistu Haile Mariam Hospital.\textsuperscript{44}

Another piece of information has been delivered by Dr Tarekegn Adebo. He claims that Gwad Petros Gebre told him the following: a Derg member from Wollega, Gwad Debella Dinsa, accused Gwad Petros in front of the General Secretary of the Derg, Gwad Fiqre Selassie Wogderes, of being too lenient with Christians in “his” Awraja. As Gwad Debella was the Derg’s Shoa Province Chief Administrator he was the superior of Gwad Petros and so the accusation was serious. Gwad Fiqre is however supposed to have answered that the Ethiopian Revolution was not anti-religious and that Gwad Petros could continue to use the missions for development work in “his” region. This was apparently the opinion of Gwad Mengistu, too, as he trusted Gwad Petros.\textsuperscript{45}

**My Explanation of the Religious Freedom Enjoyed by the SCS**

When trying to elaborate my explanation for the remarkable religious freedom enjoyed in the Kambata/Hadiya region, I will first discuss the following five points when making a comparison with Wolayta and the Western Synod in Wollega, and then come to my conclusion.

1. The positive attitude to the Ethiopian Revolution in the region and especially to the rural Land Reform is one of the basics for understanding the regional context. From the start of the new era in 1974-75 there was a positive contact between the political centre of the Derg in Addis Abeba and the periphery in Hosanna. This was, however, true in other parts of the country, too, where Christians later experienced persecution. One such example is the Wolayta Awraja.

2. The Kambata/Hadiya region experienced large revivals after the Italian occupation. A considerable number of Evangelical Christians were among the rank and file of the peasant population. It would have been a risky enterprise to attack Christians in peasant associations and elsewhere too bluntly. Again the same point can be argued concerning the situation in the Wolayta Awraja. Although the number of Evangelical Christians was large there, too, they were severely persecuted in 1983-84.

3. The development work of the churches provided a strong support for the welfare of ordinary people and seems to have been regarded positively by the Derg. The churches, which engaged in development work, enjoyed greater freedom than others. This was at least true for the Kambata/Hadiya region. This seems to be part of the solution to our problem, but needs to be qualified. The Western Synod of the EECMY in Wollega, for example, was in

\textsuperscript{44} Ethiopian Herald 1983.11.22.

\textsuperscript{45} SG-A: Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1999.07.17; see Clapham 1998, p.204.
charge of extensive development projects but was treated brutally by the Derg.\textsuperscript{46}

4. If the small Kambata/Hadiya Awraja is compared with the large Province of Wollega, there are great differences. The former was never regarded as a threat to the Derg centre in Addis Ababa. The western part of Wollega, however, borders on the Sudan and this area was regarded as a base for the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). Moreover, the Western Synod of the EEEMY was a much larger and stronger organisation than the small SCS. It was suspected of co-operating with the OLF.\textsuperscript{47} In short, Christians in the Kambata/Hadiya region were easily controlled by a strong “faithful” Derg leader, whereas Christians living in the vast area of Western Wollega were under suspicion.

5. Gwad Petros Gebre was elected to the Derg from Negelle in Borana although only a corporal. He was among the younger men in the Derg.\textsuperscript{48} The Derg members were appointed administrators in the provinces and awrajas from 1978. At this time Gwad Petros became the Derg representative (\textit{Derg Tewekay}) in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja after a shorter sojourn in Sidamo. He then continued to dominate the Awraja as the Derg representative of the “Commission for the Organisation of the Ethiopian Workers’ Party” (COPWE) from December 1979 and of the Worker’s Party of Ethiopia (WPE) in 1984.\textsuperscript{49}

According to my sources Gwad Petros is from \textit{Ashira} close to Shinshicho in “Kambata proper”, a bit west of Durame. He attended 1-8 grades in the Catholic school in that area. Several of his relatives belong to the KHC or the EEEMY. Gwad Petros was in other words a man from the local environment with personal affiliations to Christians in the region.\textsuperscript{50} To my knowledge there was no Derg member equivalent to Gwad Petros in this respect in Wolayta or elsewhere. The personal factor seems in fact to be a clue. I will now try to answer the question posed above and draw my conclusion. How is it possible to explain the remarkable religious freedom of the SCS in 1983-84?

Owing to the revivals there were many Evangelical Christians in the region. Like other maltreated peasants they were positive to the Revolution and especially to the Land Reform. The region was not regarded as a threat to the new Derg regime in Addis Ababa. Christians living there had proved their ability through education, clinics and road-building. In connection with the famine in 1973-74 they had showed their muscles in the Kambata Relief and Rehabilitation Program and

\textsuperscript{46} It was the general opinion among missionaries and church leaders in Ethiopia in 1983-87 that the Churches’ Development work generated goodwill with the authorities. See Fargher 1996, p.306; Clapham 1988, pp.155f.; Eide 1996, pp.232ff.
\textsuperscript{47} Eide 1996, pp.230ff.; see above, Map 1, p.38 and Map 5, p.136.
\textsuperscript{48} SG-A: Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1997.07.17; Cumbers 1988, p.197.
\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Ethiopian Herald} 1978.05.31, 1979.02.27, 1979.03.18, 1983.05.01; Clapham 1988, p.197; Andargachew Tiruneh 1993, p.255; SG-A: Tarekegn Adebo o.i.1999.07.17.
by other initiatives. One of the first EECMY efforts during the drought in 1974 was to survey the difficult stretch from Sherifa (Durame) to Ashira (Shinshicho) and from Tunto to Gidansonga (in Tembaro) in order to build a road.\textsuperscript{51}

Gwad Petros’s home in Ashira was consequently situated in the midst of the relief and rehabilitation area and he experienced the value of the Churches’ development work. As an individual he thus combined personal sentiments of being part of the local Christian context in his home area with pragmatic concerns of gaining development projects and other benefits from churches and their external partners.

He controlled the churches in the region by building a mutual trust between himself and their representatives. He was able to create a nimbus of not being negative to church work. It would probably be wrong to characterise him as a professing Christian in those years, to which Christian myth easily would have it. After all, there were also negative rumours concerning his person and he was part of an oppressive system.\textsuperscript{52} But to say the least, he was smart enough to pragmatically use the churches to gain development assistance for “his” awraja.

At the same time he was trusted by the Derg Chairman, Mengistu Haile Mariam, and this was his great asset. He was no threat to Mengistu but instead presented flattering regional improvements like “the Mengistu Haile Mariam Hospital” in Hosanna. A regional hospital was a long-felt want of local people and a real achievement. Its establishment was naturally exploited by the revolutionary propaganda. Churches contributed a lot of money and personnel to this enterprise.\textsuperscript{53}

By the double strategy adopted by Gwad Petros, he on the one hand could avoid painful conflicts with local Christian friends and relatives. When criticised by zealous members of the Derg he on the other hand could point at the churches’ contribution to development work. The churches also acted pragmatically and earned their freedom by so-called “co-operation”. This often meant lending a car to local authorities. Asking for mileage was by silent agreement out of the question.\textsuperscript{54}

When the Derg’s general policy on religion changed into a more anti-religious direction from 1978-79, Gwad Petros was already in charge as the Derg representative in the Awraja. When Christians in Wolayta and other parts of Ethiopia were severely pressed in 1983-84, Gwad Petros was strong enough to maintain his own regional policy. The churches’ continued support in the emerging drought in 1983-84 and the timely inauguration of the 10 million Birr hospital in November 1983, made the model of Gwad Petros look sensible enough compared to others’.\textsuperscript{55}

My conclusion and the answer to the question posed is: The personal factor of Gwad Petros Gebre and his ability to achieve development support from churches,
in combination with the trust he earned from Chairman Mengistu allowed him to go on with his own line in religious matters. As far as religious freedom in Ethiopia was concerned this made the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja unique in 1983-84.

The Witness of Deaf Children

I have characterised the strategy of the South Central Synod towards the Derg regime as an attitude of trying to find the “right balance”. The challenge was to find a model for the Christian Witness and Service in a difficult context. In a way it was a fight for the survival of the Church. As we have seen, the holistic approach of the EECMY and its application in the SCS’s local area gave the church freedom to proclaim its message in words and deeds. On one hand the Synod was at times pragmatically exploited by local authorities. On the other hand it used its freedom to spread the message of the Kingdom of God. In this strategy of balancing, local Ethiopian Christians carried heavy burdens.

One impressive example of the SCS’s holistic approach is illustrated by the EECMY Deaf School in Hosanna. Its first class started in not yet finished school-buildings in 1981.56 The project was in fact the fulfilment of one of the early goals of the Kambata Synod’s five-year plan from October 1970, which stated that:

The situation regarding deaf, blind and handicapped in Kambata will be investigated. Ways to help and assist such people will be sought.57

“Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity” has been a factor of special interest in this study. Christian solidarity motivated people with different backgrounds to cross barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism. I will finally illustrate this point once more, by giving the concluding words to the first Director of the EECMY School for the Deaf in Hosanna. His name is Ato Asmelash Ogbamikael. He is an Eritrean, who was working with deaf youngsters in the Kambata/Hadiya Awraja in the 1980’s. He himself is an example of how ethnic borders were crossed in the EECMY of 1986. His words represent the voice of hundreds of deaf children, who witness that borders of status were transcended 58:

The number of the deaf people in Ethiopia is unknown. However, if we estimate that there is one deaf person out of one thousand (there can be 10/1,000). That means, there are about 42,000 deaf people. If these people could be trained, it is like lifting them from the darkness of a silent world to a light of love and understanding with people and with God.

Therefore, it seems the right time for the Church to assist this neglected sector of the Society.

Asmelash, Ogbamikael, Director, School for the Deaf

56 FMS Årsbok 1984, p.26 (Swedish).
General Conclusions

A question of wide general interest in Africa is how African Independent (Initiated) Churches (AICs) relate to external partners like neighbouring mainstream churches and international churches or organisations of different kinds. A case study of this question has been given in the story told in the chapters above from the regional Ethiopian perspective of Mt. Ambaricho and Mt. Shonkolla, that is, from Kambata and Hadiya. The Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) broke away from the mainstream Protestant church, the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC). As the KEC-2 primarily reacted to foreign cultural pressure in the KEC, it can be described as a local African Independent Church in Ethiopia. The central question I sought an answer to was: How has a local African Independent Church in Ethiopia related to Ethiopian mainstream Protestant churches and to the different external partners associated with them?

The explorations above have highlighted this central question, which has been subdivided into five further questions:

1. How did the KEC-2 develop into a local African Independent Church?
2. How did the KEC-2 function as a local African Independent Church?
3. How did the KEC-2 develop into a synod of the EECMY?
4. How did the Kambata Synod function as an EECMY synod?

To all these questions I was particularly interested in asking:

5. Who were the main participants at different levels in this process?

Here is the place to summarise the answers.

1. How did the KEC-2 develop into a local African Independent Church?

As has been shown in Chapters Two to Five of my study, the embryo of the KEC-2 was a group of Christians in the Kambata/Hadiya region, which originally was part of the Kambata Evangelical Church. The KEC was related to the interdenominational Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). A split in the expanding KEC in 1951-52 was due to centralisation of leadership and finances to a few elders, and to their adoption of a new ethos. This concerned drinking, including the common local drink borde, and other cultural issues. The new ethos was part of the SIM legacy of “separation” from “worldly practices”, which was reinforced in the KEC by SIM representatives after the missionaries’ return in the 1940’s. As there was a wish for decentralisation in the growing KEC and the relevance of the new rules were not grasped by common people, dissonance was generated. A sizeable
group of KEC members reacted and formed their own party. Part of it was later to become the KEC-2. I have not found reasons to assume that differences in opinion on infant baptism were part of the conflict in 1951-52.

By way of adopting a democratic constitution in the KEC in 1952, the splinter group was reconciled with the KEC. There was peace in the KEC for some years but soon a new split appeared. The new group primarily reacted to pressure from the KEC (SIM) to conform to the new ethos. This had been further clarified by sharpened rules concerning alcohol. Again, infant baptism was originally not an issue in this new conflict. In 1954 the group definitely seceded from the KEC. As it reacted to foreign cultural pressure, but otherwise was very similar to the KEC ecclesiastical framework, it can be described as a local African Independent Church. This group was the early KEC-2.

Who were the main participants at different levels? (Question 5):

At central level the SIM Field Director for Ethiopia Mr Beacham and the SIM General Director Mr Playfair were instrumental in enforcing the SIM ethos on local missionaries and KEC Christians. Missionaries at regional level in the KEC, like the indigenised Mr Couser, had originally a more contextualised approach. The pressure from the SIM centre and various missionaries on the KEC elders, and the presentation of the Wollamo Church as an exemplary “non-drinking church”, generated a change of ethos in the KEC. The new ethos was to abstain from all kinds of alcohol; weak and strong. The KEC’s “leading elders”, popularly referred to as the “Big Three”, Ato Sabiro, Ato Shigute and Abba Gole, were all Hadiya. They were influenced to proclaim the new moral rules in the KEC.

The opposition to the KEC’s leading elders (and the SIM) was led by Ato Abebe Bushero, Ato Retabo Amele and Ato Bekele Nunamo, all Hadiya. The two sides were reconciled by the President of the Addis Ababa Mekane Yesus Congregation (AAMY), Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie. He was appointed and sent by the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) at the request of the KEC elders.

The KEC-2’s early main representatives were Ato Mersha Tesema from Dodoba (a middle-ground for both Kambata and Hadiya) and Ato Ashebo Wolecho from Durame (Kambata). Ato Mersha was an important initial spokesman for the KEC-2. He could express himself well in Amharic and was in contact with the AAMY. The split in 1954 can not be explained by ethnic reasons as people from genuine Hadiya areas were taking part, too, for example from Soro and Lemu. The KEC-2 nurtured a hope to preserve its local cultural traditions, including drinking, by receiving support from Christians outside the region. They looked in different directions, for example at the Norwegian Lutheran Mission’s (NLM) missionaries in Sidamo and Ato Biru Dubale’s new church in Wollamo, but were let down. Instead they turned to the Conference of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches in Addis Abeba in 1955.
2. How did the KEC-2 function as a local African Independent Church?

As has been shown in Chapters Five to Seven the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) was on its own without any supporter at regional level from 1954 to 1961. The KEC-2 was a very local copy of the KEC polity with an indigenous leadership based on districts, so-called “sevens”. It was a church without pastors founded on elders. Its worship and doctrine were also similar to the Kambata Evangelical Church’s (KEC).

The KEC-2 ethos, however, was different. It was an expression of a longing to preserve its local traditions and culture. The drinking of borde became a symbol for the cultural independence of the KEC-2. It can not be denied that the KEC-2’s general attitude to “drinking” was liberal in these years. It was nicknamed the “Seli-Menna Church”, that is “the Drinking Church”. Moral and Educational standards were generally low in this inclusive church at this time.

1954-61 were years, when the KEC-2 struggled for survival in the region. It was pressed by the KEC to live up to its moral standards, while the EOC at the same time demanded loyalty. The KEC-2 experienced dissonance and was indeed a vulnerable church. “Internal migration” into other churches was common.

At central level in Addis Abeba, the KEC-2 found a new fellowship in the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) from 1955. The annual CEEC meetings and the contact with the elite in the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation (AAMY) functioned as a lifeline for the KEC-2 elders. The KEC-2 elders took part in all CEEC meetings from 1955 to 1961 (and in 1963). In order to get support, the KEC-2 representatives became opportunistic in their attitude to the CEEC mainstream and at its central level agreed to accept infant baptism. Their main point of conflict with the KEC, however, was the “drinking question”.

The CEEC was increasingly influenced by missionary “comity-mentality” from 1956 and onwards. To its frustration the KEC-2 realised that it was not receiving any regional support. In 1959 the KEC-2 became very interested in joining the newly founded Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) as one of its synods. It made several petitions to the EECMY for membership in 1960.

A detailed analysis of the KEC-2 in 1954-61 presents the following picture:

**Polity**: The KEC-2 consisted of “sevens” (districts) situated in both the Hadiya and Kambata area. The strongest “sevens” were in Abonsa (Kambata) and Dodoba. The KEC-2 leadership consisted of elders, who met at monthly and quarterly meetings. The meetings were mobile, in order that all “sevens” would be visited. Issues were solved by long discussions in an indigenous way. There were few(20,917),(988,994)
The issue of infant baptism was not a matter of concern in the KEC-2 at regional and local level. Baptisms were normally conducted at quarterly meetings in a river by elders. When a person was able to walk to the river, he could be baptised.

**Doctrine:** Doctrine was coloured by the SIM legacy of professing Christ as one’s personal saviour in public, which was a requirement for the first communion. The “testing” of people was however confusing, owing to the liberal moral practices in the KEC-2.

**Ethos:** The KEC-2 was permissive concerning drinking, polygamy (to a certain extent) and other moral issues.

**Ecumenism:** As described above there were contacts with the CEEC and the EECMY (from 1959) at central level. At regional and local level ecumenical efforts were rare. The KEC (and the SIM) made an earnest effort at reconciliation with the KEC-2 in 1960.

**Size:** The size of the KEC-2 was claimed to be 25,000 members in 1961. This was a gross exaggeration. 10,000 members including children is perhaps a more realistic estimation. In 1961 the KEC-2 consisted of five “sevens”.

Who were the **main participants** at different levels in 1955-61? (Question 5):

At central level the CEEC representatives and AAMY leaders were important to the KEC-2. To mention a few: Qes Badima Yalew and Ato Gebremedhin Habte-Egzie attended almost all the CEEC in 1955-61. The former often led the CEEC deliberations and was also the Pastor of the AAMY. Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, the EECMY first President, and Ato Emmanuel Abraham were prominent elders in the AAMY and supported the CEEC.

At regional and local level Ato Mersha Tesema (Dodoba), Ato Ashebo Wolecho (Abonsa), Ato Zelleke Luke (Dodoba) and Ato Marqos Gobebo (Dodoba) were important as KEC-2 elders.

**3. How did the KEC-2 develop into a Synod of the EECMY?**

As has been shown in **Chapters Seven to Eleven**, this venture demanded great efforts on the part of the young EECMY from 1961 to 1969. As indicated above, the process had its matrix in the ecumenical ventures of the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) with its base around the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation (AAMY) and its leaders. The CEEC legacy was brought into the EECMY at its foundation in 1959 and the KEC-2 soon wanted to join as a synod. This was, however, a delicate question for the EECMY owing to its own socio-religious base, the various Lutheran legacies of the missions in the four synods and the traditional comity principles of the supporting missions.

Speaking in terms of denominational identity, the young EECMY as already noted presents an intriguing problem, which is maybe best formulated in terms of a dialectic between implied and expressed confessional loyalty. The predominant
supporting missions of the evolving EECMY were Lutheran in the sense that they conveyed their own understanding of the Lutheran tradition. It was, however, when leaders and members of the EECMY were interacting with other mainstream churches that their own implied identity became increasingly expressed. The EECMY constitution from 1959 included Confessio Augstana and Luther’s Smaller Catechism. From what has been said above, it is understandable that the EECMY was not prepared straight away to receive a church almost as large as itself with a different denominational frame of reference. The EECMY’s ecclesiastical and material resources were indeed limited in those years.

The solution to the KEC-2 dilemma came in 1961 when the EECMY had become a full member in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The EECMY then decided to send a Special Commission to investigate the situation of the KEC-2. At the EECMY’s second Executive Committee in June 1961 the four EECMY synods decided to give active support to the KEC-2 and to inform the SIM about their decision. By this step the independent-minded EECMY leaders broke with missionary comity principles.

The EECMY applied for financial support from the LWF in a five-year program called the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP). Thus the EECMY started an indigenous program with the view of integrating the KEC-2 into the EECMY during the period of 1962-66.

Comity agreements made the intervention of a foreign mission sensitive in this so-called SIM “area”. Regional and local support to the KEC-2 was therefore solely given by Ethiopians from the EECMY. Ato Zacheus Edamo from Mishgida became a key-person as the KHMP’s local Executive Secretary in the region. Men like Qes Gudina Tumsa and Qes Ezra Gebremedhin gave support by paying longer visits to the region. They took on the challenge of Ambaricho and Shonkolla, that is, of integrating the independent KEC-2 into the EECMY.

By such efforts the KEC-2 polity was now starting to change into an EECMY synod model. A system of salaried workers and (unpaid) pastors were introduced. The KEC-2 worship, doctrine and ethos were however not influenced to any considerable extent. Since 1962 a regional centre with a school, situated in the Kambata area, competed with the KEC-2 mobile model. Scholarships were distributed and a literacy campaign started. There were however strong tensions in the KEC-2.

In 1966 there was a common interest on the part of the EECMY and the LWF to find a supporting mission for the KEC-2 to serve “under” the EECMY. This had been made possible by the evolving integration of foreign missions into the EECMY. The Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) was brought to the scene and its missionaries arrived in the Kambata/Hadiya region in 1969 as workers “under” the Church. The regional centre of the KEC-2 then moved from Mishgida (Durame) in the Kambata area to the Awraja centre, Hosanna, in the Hadiya area.

In 1969 the KEC-2 was “accepted” as an EECMY synod. The independent Kambata Evangelical Church 2, with its origins in the Sudan Interior Mission-related Kambata Evangelical Church, had thus become the Kambata Synod (KS) of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus.
A detailed analysis of the KEC-2 in 1962-69 presents the following picture:

**Polity**: The EECMY’s centralising and fast administrative approach generated tensions between the new financially powerful body, led by Ato Zacheus Edamo, and the traditional leadership of the KEC-2 elders. The Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) was not contextualised into the KEC-2 leadership structure. Most of its resources were concentrated to the Abonsa “Seven” in southern Kambata. Local KHMP finances were controlled by Ato Zacheus, who also paid the salaries.

From 1963 a new type of church administration in line with an EECMY synod model was introduced by Qes Gudina Tumsa. The President and Secretary of the so-called “Synod” were employed by the KHMP. Qes Gudina’s efforts to unite house-churches into larger units on “neutral ground” led to stubborn resistance.

The concentration of KHMP resources to the Abonsa “Seven”, tensions between KEC-2 “Church Officers” (elders) and the KHMP’s central approach under the leadership of Ato Zacheus generated a considerable split in the KEC-2 from 1963. The EECMY’s temporary solution was to disengage the main participants of this conflict, Ato Tamru Segaro and Ato Zacheus, from their positions in 1965.

From 1965 the EECMY tried to integrate the KHMP into the KEC-2 by sending two “outsiders” to support the KEC-2, Ato Djalatta Djaffero and Ato Geletta Wolteji. The former was titled Director of the KHMP and the latter Adviser. Ato Geletta settled at Mishgida. Instead of integrating the KHMP into the KEC-2 the result of their efforts was that they tended to dominate the church and introduced a cumbersome bureaucracy. Tensions between the Dodoba and Abonsa “Sevens” were strong in 1967-68 as was the KEC-2’s opposition to the two KHMP “outsiders”. KEC-2 financial contribution towards “self-support” was meagre.

**Worship and Doctrine**: A group of three people, led by the young Qes Ezra Gebremedhin, in 1965 tried to introduce EECMY liturgy and the ordained ministry in the KEC-2. A local visiting program and a pastoral course were arranged. It took the three men around the whole Kambata/Hadiya region. 18 pastors were ordained, EECMY doctrine on the sacraments was taught and EECMY rites and rituals demonstrated. These new “inventions” had a certain influence at central places like Mishgida and elsewhere. But they did not change much in the KEC-2 at that time. The pastors were revered but few and had too little education to make a real impact. The differences in the functions of elders and pastors were diffuse.

**Ethos**: Drinking, polygamy and financial irregularities were matters that the inclusive KEC-2 was wrestling with.

**Relations to the EECMY**: Communication between the EECMY Church Officers in Addis Abeba and their local representative, Ato Zacheus Edamo, was not easy to maintain. In 1962 he soon established a centre of the EECMY/KHMP at Mishgida (Durame) among the Kambata. A school aimed at offering six grades was built and challenged the SIM school-model of only four grades. A Bible-school was also started but was of less importance.

The EECMY at first tried to direct the developments in the KEC-2 by its ordinary administrative bodies, later on an “advisory committee” was put in charge.
KEC-2 elders and leaders were invited to Addis Ababa for teaching and discussions. They took part in the EECMY’s General Assemblies and Executive Committees. The EECMY continued to send supporters to the KEC-2.

From 1962 resources in form of the EECMY schools were opened to the KEC-2 in different synods and scholarships were provided. Another crucial influence was the Yemissrach Dimts Literacy Campaign, which started in 1963. Its work in the region was reinforced in 1965 under the auspices of Ato Djalatta Djaffero.

In 1966-67 the problems in the KEC-2 generated a quest to find a supporting foreign mission. In the process of inviting the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS), the KEC-2 was just at the receiving end. In October 1968 an agreement on cooperation was signed in Addis Ababa between the EECMY and the FMS.

The decision to move the KEC-2 centre from Mishgida in Kambata area to Hosanna in the Hadiya area was taken by the EECMY-LWF-FMS. The KEC-2 elders were little involved in this decision. In June 1969 the KEC-2 was “accepted” into the EECMY as its fifth synod by the EECMY Executive Committee.

**Ecumenism:** At regional and local level ecumenical efforts were rare.

**Size:** The membership figure was still unclear, probably between 15,000 to 20,000. The number of “sevens” grew from five to eight from 1962 to 1969.

Who were the **main participants** at different levels in 1961-69? (Question 5):

At central level in Addis Ababa the EECMY Presidents Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and his successor Ato Emmanuel Abraham were key-persons. The missionaries Dr Herbert Schaefer and Rev. Manfred Lundgren were important Church Officers of the EECMY. These persons’ contacts with LWF representatives, like Dr Arne Søvik were crucial. Qes Badima Yalew was important as a bridge-person, representing the common EECMY - KEC-2 legacy from the CEEC since 1955.

The delegation sent by the EECMY in 1961 consisted of Ato Amare Mamo, Qes Gamachu Danu and Ato Zacheus Edamo. Their report called *Report of the Special Commission to Kambata* was important.

At central, regional and local level Qes Gudina Tumsa made great efforts first as an “outside” supporter (1963), then as the EECMY Executive Secretary (1966-79). Qes Ezra Gebremedhin also made several similar efforts as the EECMY Executive Secretary (1963-66). In 1965 he was accompanied by Ato Wondimagegnehu Hailu and Ato Alemu Derseh on an “evangelistic tour”. Ato Djalatta Djaffero and Ato Geletta Wolteji were also “outsiders”, who tried to support the KEC-2.

When the FMS was involved in the region apart from Qes Gudina Tumsa, the EECMY Church Officers, Dr Carl-Johan Hellberg and Dr Arne Søvik of the LWF, Rev. Olavi Ojanperä and Rev. Alpo Hukka of the FMS were important.

Important local participants were Ato Zacheus Edamo and the KEC-2 (the “Synod’s”) “Church Officers”: Ato Tamru Segaro, Ato Zelleke Luke, Ato Marqos Gobebo, Ato Wondafresh Selato and Ato Erjabo Handiso. Qes Gebre Badore and Qes Mattheos Dattago were representative pastors from Hadiya and Kambata area.
4. How did the Kambata Synod function as an EECMY synod?

As has been shown in Chapters Eleven to Twelve the years from 1969 to 1975 were years of great changes for the Kambata Synod (KS). At regional level the moulding of the KS into an EECMY framework continued slowly but gradually, now with support of Finnish missionaries situated in Hosanna. The move of the centre of the KEC-2/KS to the Awraja capital Hosanna reinforced centralising tendencies started by the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP). Another consequence was that Hadiya influences were stronger than before in the KS leadership. The influence of former KHMP scholarship-holders on the KS was considerable. Many of them were of Kambata origin.

The Church Officers of the KS identified with other EECMY synods and leaders. The EECMY General Assemblies and Executive Committees were instrumental in reinforcing EECMY polity, worship, doctrine and ethos among them. The change of the KEC-2 into an EECMY Synod and the support of the Finnish missionaries generated more positive ecumenical relations. The KS was recognised as a mainstream Protestant church among other churches in the region.

The increasingly holistic approach of the EECMY centre was in line with the KS’s five-year plan, which guided the KS since 1971. The EECMY’s efforts in 1974-75 in connection with the drought reinforced this approach. A consequence of the relief work was that the interaction of the KS centre with its peripheries increased. The Synod’s comprehensive development work influenced the infrastructure of the region and generated goodwill. An intense co-operation with regional and local authorities started. The KS developed an attitude of balancing. It was a question of giving support to authorities and of receiving support in return.

A detailed analysis of the KS in 1969-75 presents the following picture:

**Polity**: The responsibility of the KS’s Church Officers was augmented. The mobile meetings of a KEC-2 model changed into a static model of quarterly Executive Committee meetings. Resources were initially centralised to Hosanna.

The KS Synod Assembly met annually and the nine “sebakas” (the former “sevens”) were sending their delegates to attend. The KS administration was increasingly adapting to Western standards. From the end of March 1971 four out of seven Church Officers were ordained ministers (when counting the two Finns).

The bulk of the finances was carried by the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) and the LWF, while the KS contribution to the central budget was disappointing.

**Worship**: The FMS continued to educate the pastors ordained by Qes Ezra in 1965. Main subjects were the “right” administration of the sacraments, and the EECMY rites and rituals. Infant baptism, in a strict sense, became more normal. Efforts to introduce the EECMY lectionary were made. Most of the services in the KS were, however, still led by laymen in the form of a simple ritual. The KEC-2 model of elders as administrators of the sacraments was developed into a model of so-called “commissioned elders”, centrally educated and approved by the Synod.
Doctrine: A Lutheran doctrinal profile was slowly reinforced in the KS by the teaching at the Bible-school, Theological Education by Extension and at other schools. The pastors were educated at refresher courses. Sunday-school work, confirmation classes and “women work” were gradually spreading in the “sebakas”.

Ethos: Pastors and elders were encouraged to teach on marriage and on the benefits of abstaining from drinking. They were expected to be an example to others. Issues like contributing money to the KS and stewardship were discussed.

Relations to the EECMY: A Relief and Rehabilitation Program led by the EECMY centre (sponsored by the LWF) improved the situation for thousands of people and broadened the KS’s holistic approach. A problem was that the support generated further dependence on foreign funds. An “imbalance” between a resourceful Development Department and a “poor” Evangelism Department was evolving. Literacy Schools were reaching c.41,000 students. The EECMY centre provided tools for the KS leaders to interpret the roots of “Ethiopian Socialism”.

Ecumenism: One of the great differences of the KS’s attitude, compared to the KEC-2’s, concerned ecumenism. The youth showed the way and arranged meetings where students from KS, Kale Hiywot (KHC), EOC, and Mullu Wongel gathered. The FMS belief in the value of good ecumenical relations was a contribution. One ambition was to decrease “internal migration” among the denominations.

Mission: An active outreach was introduced in connection with the EECMY Literacy Campaign. It benefited from radio programs sent by the RVOG.

Size: The KS membership was estimated at 38,000. The increase was partly due to migration from other churches. There were nine “sebakas” (parishes) in the KS.

Who were the main participants at different levels in 1969-75? (Question 5):

At central level in Addis Abeba the EECMY Church Officers were important. The former KHMP scholarship-holder, Ato Tarekegn Adebo, was since the end of 1973 the EECMY Associate Executive Secretary. The EECMY Development Department and its Director Mr John Eriksson co-ordinated relief support from the EECMY Synods, the LWF, Lutherhjälpen and others in the Kambata/Hadiya region. A former KHMP scholarship-holder, Ato Petros Wontamo, was the EECMY regional co-ordinator of the Rehabilitation Program from autumn 1974.

Extensive regional and local support was provided by the FMS missionaries Rev. Kaarlo Hirvilammi and Rev. Ilpo Perttilä from 1969. They were followed by many others from the Finnish Missionary Society, both men and women.

The KS Church Officers were important: Ato Erjabo Handiso (the KS’s first President), Qes Qelbero Wayero (the KS’s second President), Ato Wondafresh Selato, Qes Mekiso Derilo, Ato Liranso Bukute, Ato Lemma Tilore and Ato Retabo Amele. The KS’s first Executive Secretary was Qes Leggese Segaro. He was succeeded by Ato Bekele Basore. Both were former KHMP scholarship-holders. Qes Asfaw Qelbero was the Bible-school Director from 1974. In the traditionally male dominated environment female synod employees, like W/t Adanech Onke and W/t Worke Edamo, were encouraged by Finnish female missionaries.
On the basis of the answers given to the five specified questions above a comprehensive answer can now be formulated to the central question of my study: **How has a local African Independent Church in Ethiopia related to Ethiopian mainstream Protestant churches and to the different external partners associated with them?**

The relations of the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) to the ecumenical Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches (CEEC) in Addis Ababa from 1955 to 1961 and the personal relations to the CEEC members, helped the KEC-2 to survive as a local independent church in the Kambata/Hadiya region. Moreover, these relations influenced the KEC-2 to apply for membership in the Ethiopian mainstream Protestant church, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), in 1960.

As the relations to the Ethiopian mainstream Protestant church, the Kambata Evangelical Church (KEC), and its supporting mission, the Sudan Interior Mission, were tense due to different views on cultural issues, mainly on drinking, the KEC-2 disregarded the reconciliation efforts offered by this church. The EECMY’s efforts to support the KEC-2, with the aim of integrating it as one of its synods, generated the Kambata Home Mission Program. This supportive program was ambitiously directed by the EECMY at a national and local level in Ethiopia, but financed by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Owing to the missions’ comity principles, the EECMY’s regional and local interaction with the KEC-2 from 1961 to 1967 was solely an Ethiopian matter. The KEC-2’s contact with non-Ethiopian partners in this time, including the LWF, can thus be characterised as indirect.

The weaknesses in the approach of the EECMY “Home Mission” and the tensions in the KEC-2 made the EECMY take one further step. In 1967 it invited the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland to send missionaries to support the KEC-2 at the local level in the region. This meant that from 1969 onwards the KEC-2 was closely related to the Finnish Missionary Society, which started its work as an integrated mission “under” the EECMY. From this year on Finnish missionaries were placed in Hosanna, the capital of the Kambata/Hadiya region.

Then in 1969, the KEC-2 merged with the EECMY as its fifth synod under the name of “the Kambata Synod”. This paved the way for closer relations between the former independent church and the EECMY, and its associated partners.

Owing to the dramatic evolution in Ethiopia, connected with the drought from 1973 and onwards, the young Kambata Synod increased its local interaction with the EECMY centre, with different EECMY synods and with Lutheran missionaries of different nationalities. The evolving Relief and Rehabilitation Program of the EECMY in the region was sponsored by the LWF. This new comprehensive program was a continuation of earlier relations between this external partner and the former independent KEC-2, now the Kambata Synod of the EECMY.
When I embarked on this study, I furthermore said that I would discuss three motiv-
vating factors, which I considered as crucial in the development of the KEC-2 into a synod of the EECMY. Now is the time to evaluate my findings of their impact.

The first factor was Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity. I have suggested that it had deep roots in the Ethiopian Evangelical fellowship and functioned as a unifying factor, which transcended barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism. I will differentiate between a wide concept of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity (1941-56) and a less inclusive one (from 1957).

In support of the impact of this factor I have shown the following:

A. A wide Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity which included the KEC.

1. The relations of the CEEC and the EECMY to the KEC-2 can be interpreted as a continuation of the legacy of the inclusive fellowship of the Evangelical Pioneers in Boji (Nejo, Nakamte) in Wollega at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Its roots can be traced to the Bethel Congregation at Massawa from 1872. Ethiopians with different back-
grounds as regards ethnicity, status and denominational background were sent from Eritrea to Boji (Nejo). Three leading representatives of the CEEC and EECMY can be regarded as “types” of this continuation among Ethiop-
ian Evangelicals. They were all strongly influenced by the multiethic and inclusive legacy of the Evangelical Pioneers. They were Qes Badima Yalew, Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie and Ato Emmanuel Abraham. They brought this legacy, which had been reinforced in the time of the Italian oc-
cupation, with them into the CEEC and later on into the EECMY. The three men were deeply involved in the issue on how to relate to the KEC-2 (see pp.25-27, 69-73, 89-91, 126-27, 133, 147-48).

2. Evangelicals from different parts of the country supported each other in matters of religious freedom. The KEC was provided legal support by the Evangelical Congregation’s network from c.1941 and from 1944 by the CEEC’s (see pp.72-73, 89-90, 117).

3. It was the indigenous CEEC, with the support of the AAMY, which sent Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie (an Eritrean born in Nakamte of Eritrean missionaries) on his reconciliation tour to Hosanna in 1952. The KEC was re-unified by this venture (see pp.101-105).

4. The CEEC in 1955 received the KEC-2 as an Ethiopian partner at its annual meeting. CEEC representatives, furthermore, tried to reconcile the new split in the KEC in 1955 (see pp.113-18).

5. The CEEC meetings from 1955 to 1960 harboured the KEC-2 and gave it new strength. Without these meetings and subsequent relations it would hardly have survived as an independent church (see pp.113-27).

6. The Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity was reduced owing to the increased denominationalism of the mid-1950’s. The formation of the Fellowship of
Evangelical Believers in 1956 and the subsequent break of the KEC with the CEEC in 1957 were signs of this trend. The CEEC still continued to support the KEC-2, although this was regarded as a break of comity principles by several missionaries. The CEEC delegates were pressed by the comity mentality of the missionaries (see pp.19-20, 118-20, 124).

B. A less inclusive Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity focusing on the KEC-2.

7. In 1961 the EECMY General Assembly authorised the Church Officers to send a multiethnic delegation from different synods to the Kambata/Hadiya region in order to investigate the KEC-2 situation. Its report led to active EECMY support of the KEC-2 (see pp.138-48).

8. The EECMY’s decision to support the KEC-2 in 1961 furthermore meant a deliberate break with the missions’ comity principles and a reinforcement of the legacy of Ethiopian independence in the young EECMY (see pp.16-18, 26, 117-20, 143-48).

9. The EECMY applied to the LWF for a “Home Mission” - the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP). It was known that it was going to be administered by Ethiopians. Ethiopian negotiators like Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie, Qes Ezra Gebremedhin and Qes Gudina Tumsa brought the KEC-2 voice to the LWF/CWM meetings (see pp.149-50, 170-71, 197-98, 205).

10. Ethiopians led the KEC-2’s integration process into the EECMY by regular visits to the Kambata/Hadiya region from 1962 to 1969. These visits demanded great efforts. Most notable were the ventures of Qes Gudina Tumsa (Oromo) and Qes Ezra Gebremedhin (Eritrean), (see pp.160-64, 182-88).

11. In 1967 the delegates of the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) were introduced to the KEC-2 by Ethiopians. This paved the way for a further integrated venture of the FMS in the EECMY (see pp.199-203).

12. Even if it is a bit outside the scope of the issue at question I will list my findings from a later period relating to Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity. In 1978 the EECMY General Assembly sent a multiethnic team from different EECMY synods to the Kambata/Hadiya region. The Kambata Synod, now called the “South Central Ethiopia Synod”, had split into a Hadiya and a Kambata part. The team managed to reconcile the large division in the Synod. As this was accomplished at a time of unrest in the country, owing to “Red Terror” and the Ethiopia-Somalia conflict, it must be regarded as a remarkable achievement (see pp.246-48).

The second factor, which influenced the KEC-2 to become a synod in the EECMY was the External Financial Support from EECMY partners. Especially the LWF support to the Kambata Home Mission Program (KHMP) was important. It started as a five-year assignment from 1962 to 1966.
In support of the impact of this factor I have shown the following:

1. The decision of the EECMY to give active support to the KEC-2 in the Kambata/Hadiya region was taken after the EECMY’s decision to become a full member of the LWF in January 1961. The implication is that the EECMY expected financial support from the LWF and thus “dared” to start its “Home Mission” (see pp.139-50).

2. It was the EECMY which invited the LWF to provide financial support in accordance with the former’s conditions. Owing to the circumstances related to comity it was clear that regional support would be directed only by Ethiopians (see pp.145-46, 155, 159, 191).

3. From the LWF point of view the KHMP was one time-limited project among many others in different parts of the world. The LWF appears to have been eager to end its financial engagement in the region from 1967. Its ambitions to find a supporting mission to the KEC-2 and the tensions between the LWF and the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) on financial responsibilities point in the same direction (see pp.189-91, 198-200, 213-14).

4. The results of the KHMP and the financial input were ambiguous. Achievements like the Mishgida School and scholarships were generated but great tensions occurred, too. Problems in the leadership structure of the KEC-2, poor local support of the KHMP and “internal migration” from other churches into the KEC-2 appear to have been due to a lack of proper contextualization of the support. Western budget procedures did not give time for deliberations (see pp.161-72, 176-81, 188, 191-92).

5. It is relevant to ask if the KEC-2 would have become a synod in the EECMY without external financial support. Perhaps its members would have turned elsewhere and joined other churches? How strong were the bonds of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity between the EECMY and the KEC-2? Would the EECMY still have provided an active regional support without the external financial backing? Perhaps in a slower and more contextualized manner? These are hypothetical questions and can not be answered properly. My point is that the EECMY, in fact, was motivated to apply for external financial resources in support of the KEC-2. This strong motivation of the EECMY led to the inception of the KHMP, the continued EECMY efforts to integrate the KEC-2 into the EECMY and the invitation of the FMS as a supporting mission (see pp.147-208).

The last point above leads to the **third** motivating **factor**, which influenced the KEC-2 to develop into a synod of the EECMY. It was a **desire** in the EECMY to **become an All-Ethiopian Church**.

In support of the impact of this factor I have shown the following:
1. When the EECMY had been formed in 1959 the four synods’ representatives started to meet regularly and brought their reports from different parts of the country. A growth in membership appears to have been regarded as a measure of “success” in the EECMY. A strong church would, moreover, be able to defend its members’ “right” to religious freedom in Ethiopia. From this perspective it is relevant to assume that the KEC-2’s petitions for membership in the EECMY was looked upon as an open door for EECMY growth in a new area (see pp.129-32, 148, 170, 202).

2. A pragmatic motivation in line with the previous point is mirrored in the report of the “Special Commission to Kambata”. It can be expressed by the following words: “If we do not support the KEC-2 others will do it and benefit from it” (see p.142, 278, that is, Appendix II, p.5).

3. In 1959 there were already several members in the different evolving synods of the EECMY who were from the Kambata/Hadiya region. It was in their interest to encourage the EECMY to integrate the KEC-2 as one of its synods. The two brothers Qes Shamebo and Qes Asfaw Qelbero, Ato Tamru Segaro and Ato Zacheus Edamo are examples of such early EECMY members. There were many others (see pp.68, 126, 140-41).

The process of encouraging the local African Independent Church, the KEC-2, helped it to hold fast to its cultural independence inspired by Ambaricho and Shonkolla and to develop into a synod in the EECMY. A long-lasting motivating factor in this process was Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity. From 1955 to 1969 Ethiopian Evangelical Christians showed a great portion of solidarity with and faithfulness to the poorly educated KEC-2. Ethiopian representatives of the Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches, the Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 were the main participants in the process of integrating the KEC-2 as a synod into the EECMY.

The External Financial Support was a significant factor, too, but came in at a later stage. It functioned as an incentive for an active and local EECMY support to the KEC-2 but also generated ambiguous results, which were not easy to solve.

A desire in the EECMY to become an All-Ethiopian Church appears to have been important from the early 1960’s.
As I have stated above in the General Introduction it is impossible to identify all the factors which influenced the Kambata Evangelical Church 2 (KEC-2) to become a synod in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). I have identified three factors. My analysis of these factors and the answers given to my questions above contribute to explaining the dynamics of my subject matter in depth: Ambaricho and Shonkolla. From Local Independent Church to the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia. The Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya.

The present study has thus shown how a local African Independent (Initiated) Church in Ethiopia established relations with external partners, like a neighbouring mainstream Evangelical conference of churches, a neighbouring Ethiopian mainstream Protestant church, an international Lutheran organisation, a mainstream overseas Lutheran church and its mission.

The study has highlighted how these relations influenced the KEC-2 to develop into a synod of the EECMY. It has furthermore discussed the impact of three crucial factors in this process.

The study has illustrated the problems and opportunities involved in such relations in a regional Ethiopian context. The need of good communication, a contextualized approach when providing support and plenty of time appear to be fundamentals in keeping such relations healthy.

The study has, furthermore, discussed how the KEC-2’s and the subsequent Kambata Synod’s relations to their external partners made an impact on the ecclesiastical and socio-political environment in the Kambata/Hadiya region. In this case study it appears that the KEC-2’s and the early Kambata Synod’s ecumenical interaction with local churches in the region in the long run (at least from 1971 and onwards) was strengthened by their relations to external partners.

It is, furthermore, plausible to claim that the support generated by the KEC-2’s and the Kambata Synod’s relations to their external partners, seen in a longer perspective, may contribute to an explanation of the remarkable religious freedom experienced in the Kambata Synod in the “Marxist” Ethiopia of 1983-84.

Questions of Human Rights have not been deliberately focused on in this study, but have been implied: such as religious and cultural freedom. The dynamics of the “right” to a decent life and the “right” to survival are part of the Ethiopian context.

My study, thus, raise new questions for further research. What is the impact of the legacy of Ethiopian Evangelical Solidarity on barriers of ethnicity, social status and denominationalism today? Is it possible for a wider ecumenism to grow strong in Ethiopia today with its legacy of traditional Church-State relations? What is the Ethiopian churches’ contribution to Human Rights and to the Proclamation of the Kingdom of God in today’s Ethiopia? How should “external partners” relate to indigenous Ethiopian Christians today? The questions are indeed challenging . . .

With this case study I hope to have added new insights and a wider understanding to the scholarly debate on how African Independent (Initiated) Churches (AICs) have related to outside partners.
Appendix I: The KEC Constitution in 1952

Rules Concerning the Church in Kambata

Members of the Kambatta Evangelical Church assembled Megabit 27th 1944 Eth.C. in Hosanna town and wrote the following rules.

1. The Persons who were chosen from the 6 districts chose 4 elders from each district.
2. Elders who are chosen from the Lemmu district are
   1. Ato Abba Gole Nunamo
   2. Ato Shigute Dada
   3. Ato Sabiro Wesero
   4. Ato Abebe Bushero

Elders who are chosen from the Soro district:
   1. Ato Barasa Tumebo
   2. Ato Fontaye Hagena
   3. Ato Basore Hagena
   4. Ato Asabo Burka

Elders who are chosen from the Amburse district:
   1. Ato Awano Rameto
   2. Ato Segaro Selato
   3. Ato Ateno Aleto
   4. Ato Dadebo Ababo

Elders who are chosen from the Ilgira district:
   1. Ato Bambore Angore
   2. Ato Wandjelo Wanore
   3. Ato Milkiso Andjadje
   4. Ato Djarga Herego

Elders chosen from Kacha district:
   1. Ato Anulo Djofe
   2. Ato Edamo Eltiro
   3. Ato Abura Bachore
   4. Ato Agafari Selamo

Elders chosen from the Dinika district:
   1. Ato Molloro Melebo
   2. Ato Ashebo Edamo
   3. Ato Arficho Sumamo
   4. Ato Sumoro Delbato

The above list of 24 elders have agreed on the following church rules:
1. These 24 elders have assembled and have elected out of the 24 district elders the following list of persons:
   a) Head of elders
   b) Vice
   c) Secretary
   d) Treasurer

   Ato Abba Gole Nunamo
   Ato Shigute Dada
   Ato Abebe Bushero
   Ato Sabiro Wesero

The “Church Rule” was originally written in Amharic and was signed with signatures or fingerprints by the elders. Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie’s signature is at the bottom. Ato Erjabo Handiso also signed. The translation is made by the SIM into English. SIM-A: Ye Kambata Wongelawit Bete Kristiyen Denb, Megabit 27-30, 1944 E.C. (Apr.1952). See above, pp.104f. I have “improved” the spelling of personal names translated from Amharic.
2. Elders are authorized to decide and to assemble only if they are 12 in number, but if less than 12 in number they are not authorized to decide and assemble in matters of church.

3. Elections from the 24 elders will be held once every two years.

4. **Finance Matter**: Any amount of money gathered from different churches must be divided, half to the local church and the other half to be handed over to the Hosanna Church Treasurer and must be registered in the Cash Book.

5. Every collection made monthly or yearly. All cash money must be handed over to the Head Treasury office in Hosanna.

6. **Strong Drink**: In the Evangelical Church strong drinks are completely forbidden. This is because some time ago two members of the church were drunk and while quarrelling one of them bit his Christian brother and suffered a real injury. Beside that, from the early Kambata church constitution strong drinks are absolutely forbidden.

7. **Concerning Marriage**: It is not permitted to break an engagement for boys and girls who are members of the Evangelical Church and who have announced their engagement in elders’ presence. Once married divorce is forbidden.

8. **Concerning Church Rules amendments**: The above rule is written by the 24 elders, and is therefore to be called the Kambatta Church Rule. This Rule will be used as long as found useful to the work but if members of the church find that it need some amendments it is agreed that they are to amend this Rule according to time and work needed and issue another suitable Rule instead.

   Written in Kambatta, Hosanna
   Megabit 30th 1944 Eth.C.
Appendix II: The Report of the Special Commission to Kambata

Report of the Special Commission to Kambata.¹

How Evangelical Work Began in Kambata

The first protestant missionaries began evangelical work in Kambata before the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. The name of Dr Lambe is familiar among many people until this day.

During this period evangelical work among the Kambata people had little success. After the Italian invasion the missionaries stopped their work and left the country. But the few national Christians who had been led to knowledge of Christ continued the work and were able to win many of their people to the Kingdom of God.

While the work was being carried out by the Kambata Christians themselves, the enemy was driven out of the country. During this time the great revival broke out among the people. Thousand of Kambatas accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour. This was a result of the work of the Holy Spirit through the medium of the few Kambata Christians. While the great revival was taking place, missionaries whose work had been interrupted by the invasion came back to Ethiopia and continued their work. Among these were the Sudan Interior Mission. The S.I.M. resumed its work at a place called Bobicho near the town of Hosanna.

Actions Taken by the Elders Divide the Congregation

After their return, the S.I.M. missionaries through the help of the nearby congregation in Lemu started working to organise the Kambata congregations into one body. This was accomplished and elders were elected from one particular place (Lemu) to lead all the Kambata congregations. After some time the elders got together and promulgated certain moral and disciplinary rules. These rules were communicated to the various congregations at meetings and through local elders. Strict observance of the rules was demanded by the elders. The Christians tried to put the rule into practise to the best of their ability.

In 1943 E.C. the elders announced the abolition of infant baptisms. Until this the various congregations were practising infant baptism. This sudden breaking off from the teaching of infant baptism led many of the leading Christians to a serious consideration of this particular teaching. Through the guidance of the S.I.M. missionaries, many of the Christians were convinced that infant baptism was unbiblical. However, there were a great many Christians who were opposed to the abolition of child baptism.

Evangelical Work - Kambata

After this the Kambata Christians were told not to taste any alcoholic drinks including Borde. Borde is a special Kambata drink made of barley. The Kambatas use it as part of their food. It can be alcoholic. Any Christians found violating this rule had to be punished by being barred from Holy Communion.

¹ The Report of the Special Commission to Kambata was originally written in Amharic and discussed by EECMY Church Officers on May 9, 1961. It was translated into English and presented at the EECMY 2nd Executive Committee on June 12, 1961; see above, pp.141ff., 147ff.
This step taken by the elders divided the Kambata Congregations into two groups. Until recently, the two groups were represented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Church and were trying to find a solution to their problems. Some years ago, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church sent Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selassie to Kambata in order to investigate the situation and to help the Kambatas settle their differences. Owing to sharp disagreement between the two groups, his efforts did not bring about the desired solution.

In response to the request of the Evangelical Church of Kambata (those separated from the S.I.M. groups), the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus decided at its General Assembly this year to send delegates to Kambata for a thorough investigation of the situation.

We, the undersigned three delegates: sent by the Church, present the reports of our ten days stay in Kambata, in the following manner.

**The Five Seven**

The Kambata Evangelical Church has a congregational structure. The leaders are called elders. These eligible to this office are men who are solid Christians. No other qualifications are required. The office of the elders has no time limit.

The Kambata Congregations are divided into Five Seven. A Seven roughly corresponds to a Synod. The names of the Five “Sevens” are as follows: Dodoba, Abonsa, Hadaro, Soro and Lemu. Each Seven has an average of twenty congregations.

Each congregation has a Sunday service. The services are conducted in the following manner. Hymn singing, prayer, preaching and a closing hymn. Each Seven has a monthly meeting. Once every four months the Five Seven have a common meeting. Such meetings have great attendance. On our arrival in Hosanna, we heard that more than three thousand people were gathered at the quarterly meeting. The number of those baptised at the meeting was 543, among whom were one hundred children.

Evangelical Work Kambata

Those who administer baptism are special elders elected from the Five Seven. The mode of baptism is immersion in a river.

Anyone who professes Jesus Christ as his personal Savior publicly is baptised and becomes a communicant. There is no confirmation.

The Bible is the sole rule of discipline and conduct.

The work of the congregation at large is financed by the Five Seven. Offerings and tithes are received at great meetings only.

During our eight days travel, we were able to visit one congregation from each Seven. They are the following: Hawora, Mishgda, Alolamo, Sorgago, and Indara. The meetings we held have brought us in contact with two thousand people.

At the meetings, we asked questions and demanded free expression of the individuals’ opinions as regard to the split of the Kambata Church into two groups. Both the elders of
the various congregations and the Christians unanimously told us that the main reasons that brought about the split were: The abolition of infant baptism, the decision of the elders to send the money of the various congregations to Bobicho (the station of S.I.M.), and action taken by the elders neither to baptise nor to give Holy Communion to anyone who tastes alcoholic drinks. Those who were found to have tasted alcoholic drinks were not allowed to be married or buried as Christians.

The Christian farmers in the low-land told us that they were told by the elders not to plant tobacco, gesho, chat or to sow barley, or to raise goats.

To the question, “Why do you want to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus?” We got the following answer:

Jesus Christ has been and is the only hope both to our fathers and also to us in this life and for the life to come.

Many years have passed since the S.I.M. began work among us. As far as our observation goes, the missionaries who came to Kambata do not agree with each other in the basic teachings of the Christian faith. It has appeared to us as if one missionary takes pleasure in dismantling what the other has built. The abolition of infant baptism is a good example. (One elder told us that on his conversion he was baptised with his wife and children.)

Moreover, it has become a tradition in our country to elect elders from the different congregations for a special course at Bobicho (S.I.M. station). The fruit these elders bring forth after such courses is to promulgate rules contrary to the teaching of the Bible and a burden to the Christian conscience. This has been going on for years.

Our being represented at the annual meeting of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church has opened our eyes in many ways. It has most of all helped us to see that the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus stands on the foundation of the Apostles. The reason we want to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus is because we agree with its teachings.

Our Views

Kambata is a fertile and beautiful country. The Kambata people are divided into two tribal groups. The Hadiyas and the Kambatas. The language of the two tribes differs slightly. The main occupation of the people is agriculture. Those who live in the low-lands are very industrious.

It is not difficult to observe that Kambata has a great population of Evangelical Christians. The group which wants to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus has an estimated membership of 25,000 Christians.

The educational standard both of the elders and the Christians is very low. The few teachers who help the congregations in teaching do not have schooling above the third grade.

This did not surprise us when we realised the fact that the Mission (the S.I.M.) responsible for the work there has not more than two stations in that Vast area. The second mis-
tion station is of recent date. There are only two elementary schools (4th and 6th grades), one Bible-school, and one Girls Training school in the whole of Kambata.

It is evident that the educational progress of the groups which want to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus has stagnated since they were separated from the S.I.M. groups. According to the reports we heard, this was due to the fact that they were not allowed to send their children to the few schools run by the S.I.M.

One cannot say that the Church in Kambata does not have an organisational structure. But there are many vital things which are lacking in the existing system. For example, elders are elected on a life-long basis. If an elder is not found committing an open sin, he can retain his office for an unlimited period. The result has been a sharp patriarchal difference between the common Christians and the elders.

Evangelical Work - Kambata

The income and expenditures of the Church are not kept properly. Those who are baptised and are communicants are not registered.

Many years ago the Catholics began work in Kambata. In the past few years the Catholics have started working with a new Vigor. They have built many new stations at strategic places. Their good schools and clinics have become means of attracting even the evangelical Christians. There are many evangelical Christians who send their children to Catholic schools.

The Seventh Day Adventists do not yet have organised work in Kambata. But their evangelists wander from place to place spreading their literature. They are especially aiming to gain access among those groups which wish to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus. They haven’t been successful as yet.

The influence of Islam among the Kambatans is insignificant. But the neighboring tribe-the Alabas - are Predominantly Mohammedans. Most of the Kambata people understand Amharic. Their judgement of things and ideas is mature.

As mentioned above, the educational standard (both spiritual and secular) of those groups which want to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus is not as it should be. It is only the Spirit of God who has kept the congregations intact without further splitting and division until now.

It is clear that the groups who wish to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus need educational, organizational and medical helps.

If these helps are not forthcoming, they will sooner or later fall into the ever-outstretched arms of the Seventh Day Adventists and Catholics.

Submitted by:
Kes Gamachu Dano
Ato Zaccheus Edamo
Ato Amare Mamo
Appendix III: A Program of Help to the People of Kambata

Church Officers’ meeting
9 May 1961

A PROGRAM OF HELP TO THE PEOPLE OF KAMBATA
Accepted by the Officers of the
Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus
On the Basis of the Special Investigation Report

I. SITUATION:
About 20 to 30 thousand souls desire to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus. They come from a revival background. The Christian message was first brought to their area by Dr Lambe in the late 1920’s and early 1930’s. The movement to Christ caught fire during the Italian occupation. The Sudan Interior Mission returned to nurture the faithful and encourage the movement. It established mission centers, hospitals, clinics, schools, a Bible-school, and spiritual retreats. However, it failed to establish a strong self-governing church - instead it tended to lead and dominate the elders. The inconsistency of the S.I.M. past polity gave rise to difference of doctrine and deed. Increasing confusion over what is doctrine and what is church law, and growing emphasis on conduct rather than understanding of the Gospel led to practises such as forbidding of drinking of all alcoholic beverages, planting of wheat and barley, raising of goats, prohibition of child-baptism, and the rebaptism of adults. The “believers” - lacking a strong congregational organisation to give them cohesion, lacking a consistent example in the missionaries (some baptised children and others rebaptised the baptized), lacking Ethiopian pastors and evangelists who were well versed in the Gospel, lacking sufficient opportunity and knowledge to rightly interpret the Gospel for themselves - divided over the issues of infant baptism and legalism first expressed in the prohibition of alcoholic drinks and later by comprehensive laws of conduct and life. Repeated efforts to bring about a resolution of difficulties and reunion, spearheaded at times by Ato Emmanuel Gebre Selasie and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus and at other times by S.I.M. missionaries have failed to resolve the difficulties. It has become clear that fundamental differences of doctrine and faith have grown so large that possibility of compromise and reunion is no longer possible. The Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists are already at work. The Catholics are showing strength and increase. Those who have left the fold of the S.I.M. now for more than nine years have petitioned the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus for over three years for membership. As it is a matter of doctrine, and as a failure to act will surely drive many to the fold of the Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists, the time for a decision by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus is at hand.

1 A Program of Help to the People of Kambata was written by Dr Schaefer and Rev. Lundgren in short time, when the EECMY Church Officers had received the Report of the Special Commission, of May 9, 1961. It was presented to the EECMY Church Officers on May 17 and was sent to the LWF together with Appendix II and IV. For further references, see above, pp.144ff. The type-writing at the top left on p.1 and at the bottom of p.4 is probably added later on.
II. NEED:

If the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus responds to this call for help, it must realize that

1) Any help given should be given by the Church and not directly by the Lutheran Missions or the Lutheran World Federation. This means that
   a. The Church should shoulder the responsibility for the direction and support of this work,
   b. The Church should be prepared to sacrifice men and money for this work,
   c. The Church should be prepared to not only welcome the Kambata Christians into its midst, but also to defend and protect them, and
   d. The Church should seek means by which it can accomplish this task through the people of Kambata themselves, since the resources of the Church at this time both in men and money are limited.

2) Although doctrinal differences are basic to the desire of the Kambata Christians to join the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus, most of the people are far from being well-versed in an adequate understanding of the Scriptures. This means that
   a. Much instruction in God’s Word should be provided,
   b. Education should be made possible so that there are at least a nucleus of people in each congregation who are literate, and
   c. Christ-centered, dedicated, Gospel-knowing leadership should be encouraged and made possible.

3) Any help given to the Kambata Christians will mean acceptance into the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus. This means that
   a. Instruction in what the Church and its polity is should be given to all Christians at the congregational level,
   b. Help should be provided in organizing the Kambata Christians into congregations and a Synod of the Church,
   c. The Church should be prepared to answer criticism from the other Protestant missions and churches.

4) Assistance rendered to the Kambata Christians must take tangible shape as well as spiritual. This means that
   a. Clinics, hospitals, schools will have to be encouraged and assistance given in their establishment,
   b. Provisions should be made in the institutions of the Church such as the Ethiopian Evangelical College and the Seminary for the training of pastors and other leaders,
   c. Scholarships should be provided for advanced studies for selected candidates of the congregations.

III. PROBLEMS:

The problems facing the Church are

1. How to provide Christian nurture to the congregations when there is already a great need for pastors and evangelists in the Church.
2. How to provide guidance and help in organizing the Kambata Christians into effective congregations and a Synod without doing violence to their particular needs and past traditions.
3. How to provide education for leaders and laymen without educating the students out of their culture and environment.
4. How to provide material and spiritual help in the form of schools, clinics, hospitals, without destroying the self-governing, self-propagating, self-supporting nature of the Christians already there.
5. How to provide any assistance in men and money when the Church is lacking in both even for the running of its already established programs.
6. How to keep this work an indigenous work of the Church if funds from missions or the Lutheran World Federation are necessary for its support.
7. How to obtain the support of all members of the Church when the Church itself is not yet a living reality to all its congregations.
8. How to assimilate twenty to thirty thousand souls into the Church at this time when the Church numbers only between thirty-five to forty-five thousand souls.

IV. SUGGESTED ACTIONS:
1. Inform the Kambata Christians that we are prepared to assist them at this time, but that membership in the Church will be considered only after some time.
2. Ask the Kambata Christians to send four to six leaders who have the full confidence of all the congregations to Addis Abeba for a period of two weeks for special instructions on the Constitution of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church - Mekane Yesus, congregational organization, and church polity. These elders should then return to Kambata to spend four to six months in the congregations helping to organize them into effective units. After six to eight months they should return for an additional period of two weeks for further instructions. The Kambata Christians should finance all expenses involved.

3. Establish an Evangelist Training Center in Kambata or the Norwegian Mission area for three four-month training periods for one to two members selected by each congregation. (This in order that these men may serve as lay leaders in each congregation.)
4. Establish in Kambata an 8th grade elementary boarding school run and administered by Ethiopians for selected boys of the Church.
5. Provide six scholarships for students selected from the congregations and by the congregations for study at Debre Zeit School.
6. Begin to seek and train candidates for the Seminary (four to six in number).
7. Establish a Bible-school in Kambata using one or two of the Ethiopian pastors now serving established congregations of the Church.
8. Encourage congregations to establish their own elementary schools. For this a dedicated Ethiopian teacher should be sent into their midst.
9. Make the program known to the Church and seek aid in men and money from the Synods.
10. Conduct a Literacy Campaign for three years.

Submitted to
Dr Arne Sovik, Director, LWF, Geneva
## Appendix IV: Suggested Budget

### SUGGESTED BUDGET

#### ANNUAL BUDGET

1. Evangelist Training Center (12 months) 
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Board</td>
<td>$9,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gospel literature and textbooks</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor’s salary and allowance</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,875</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Elementary School Boarding 
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Board</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor's salary</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zebanya's salary</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of buildings</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks, etc.</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,210</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. Six scholarships - Debre Zeit 
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers 2 x 90 x 12</td>
<td>2,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 x 90 x 12</td>
<td>3,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 x 100 x 12</td>
<td>4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zebanya 50 x 12</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supplies</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Salary</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,400</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Bible School (12 students) 
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Board</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor’s salary</td>
<td>7,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks, etc.</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,610</strong></td>
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5. Teacher-adviser (300 x 12) 
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and Board</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor’s salary</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks, etc.</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,610</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. First Year Needs --
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget estimate</td>
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#### BUDGET ESTIMATE

1. Evangelist Training center:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,875</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Bible School:
   
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zebanya’s salary</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Transportation</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office supplies</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks, etc.</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,210</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Postage, etc.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Salary</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,400</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 The Suggested Budget was sent to Geneva in June 1961, see above, pp.148, 279, n.1. Rev. Lundgren was then the EECMY treasurer; see above, pp.131ff., 147ff.
**Glossary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abba</td>
<td>Father; clerical title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuna</td>
<td>The Leader of the EOC; archbishop, metropolitan, patriarch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amba</td>
<td>A flat-topped mountain, “fortress”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaphora</td>
<td>The central part of the EOC Mass; there are 14 EOC anaphoras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andinnet</td>
<td>Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aricky</td>
<td>Liquor, arrack, aquavit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ato</td>
<td>Notable; now Mr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awraja</td>
<td>Sub-province of an administrative region/province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balabhat</td>
<td>Member of the local gentry, collector of landowners’ tribute/tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bete Kristiyan</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birr</td>
<td>Ethiopian dollar; E$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blatta</td>
<td>Page; court official, title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borde</td>
<td>A local daily drink, often made of barley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>Judge at a lower court, title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dejazmach</td>
<td>Commander of the Gate; general, provincial governor, title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derg</td>
<td>Committee; The Military Government from 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denb</td>
<td>Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecchege</td>
<td>Post in the EOC next to the Abuna, held by an Ethiopian monk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensete</td>
<td>“False banana”, local staple food in the Kambata/Hadiya region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandano</td>
<td>Muslim syncretism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferenj</td>
<td>Foreigner (esp. Western)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidel</td>
<td>The Amharic Alphabet, letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitewrari</td>
<td>Commander of the vanguard, title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuga</td>
<td>Cast of potters and tanners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabbar</td>
<td>Tribute, tax; bondsman of the state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geez</td>
<td>The classical language of Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gult</td>
<td>Land from where nobility had right to collect tribute or tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwad</td>
<td>Comrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadiyissa</td>
<td>The language of the Hadiya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haimanote Abew</td>
<td>The Faith of the Fathers; EOC student group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabarti</td>
<td>Ethiopian Muslim trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kairos</td>
<td>Special time in contrast to Kronos (general time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale Hiywot</td>
<td>Word of Life; name of former SIM-related churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kambatissa</td>
<td>The language of the Kambata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketema</td>
<td>Town; originally a military camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maganancho</td>
<td>A local Kambata priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahiber</td>
<td>Congregation, association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merahut</td>
<td>The Keys; Name for the AAMY lectionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neftanya</td>
<td>Rifle-man, military colonist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigus</td>
<td>King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromiffa</td>
<td>The language of the Oromo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qalicha</td>
<td>Ritual expert of a “shamanistic” type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qes; Qeshi</td>
<td>Priest; Qeshi is Tigrinya for priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras</td>
<td>Head; duke, governor, second only to nigus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rist</td>
<td>Inherited land; formerly in a kinship system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebaka</td>
<td>Parish with several congregations or “rural deanery”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebat</td>
<td>Number seven; a local designation of a district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>A local designation of a district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shengo</td>
<td>Council of elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink</td>
<td>Food supply for a journey (or for prisoners etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabot</td>
<td>Ark of the Covenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewahedo</td>
<td>“Union”; the official doctrine of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woizerero/Woizerit</td>
<td>Mrs/Miss, abbreviated as W/o - W/t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wongel</td>
<td>Gospel; Mullu Wongel means “full Gospel”; name of a church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woreda</td>
<td>Sub-district of an Awraja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zemecha</td>
<td>Campaign; e.g. the campaign at the rural Land Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zemen</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACC</td>
<td>All Africa Conferences of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AALC</td>
<td>All Africa Lutheran Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAMY</td>
<td>Addis Abeba Mekane Yesus Congregation (at Siddist Kilo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAU</td>
<td>Addis Abeba University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALM</td>
<td>American Lutheran Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUPM</td>
<td>American United Presbyterian Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCMS</td>
<td>Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEEC</td>
<td>Conferences of Ethiopian Evangelical Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPWE</td>
<td>Commission for Organisation of the Workers Party of Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRDA</td>
<td>Christian Relief and Development Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Church of Sweden Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWM</td>
<td>Commission on World Mission (LWF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMS</td>
<td>Danish Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWM</td>
<td>Department of World Mission (LWF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.C.</td>
<td>Ethiopian Calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“EEC”</td>
<td>“Ethiopian Evangelical Church”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EECMY</td>
<td>Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus; Mekane Yesus Ch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIMC</td>
<td>Ethiopia Inter-Mission Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELCT</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOC</td>
<td>Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E$</td>
<td>Ethiopian Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEB</td>
<td>Fellowship of Evangelical Believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FELM</td>
<td>Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMS</td>
<td>Finnish Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHM</td>
<td>German Hermannsburg Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEC</td>
<td>Kambata Evangelical Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEC-2</td>
<td>Kambata Evangelical Church 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHC</td>
<td>Kale Hiywot Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHMP</td>
<td>Kambata Home Mission Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Kambata Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMC</td>
<td>Lutheran Missions Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWF</td>
<td>Lutheran World Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWS</td>
<td>Lutheran World Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MYS</td>
<td>Mekane Yesus Seminary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLM</td>
<td>Norwegian Lutheran Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLF</td>
<td>Oromo Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMAC</td>
<td>Provisional Military Administrative Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRC</td>
<td>Relief and Rehabilitation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RVOG</td>
<td>Radio Voice of the Gospel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCS</td>
<td>South Central Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCES</td>
<td>South Central Ethiopia Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEM</td>
<td>Swedish Evangelical Mission; In Swedish: “EFS”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>South Ethiopia Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIM</td>
<td>Sudan Interior Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMBV</td>
<td>Bibeltroga Vänner/Swedish Mission Bible-True Friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEE</td>
<td>Theological Education by Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WADU</td>
<td>Wollamo Agricultural Development Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPE</td>
<td>Workers Party of Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>WS</td>
<td>Western Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWS</td>
<td>Western Wollega Synod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YDLC</td>
<td>Yemissrach Dimts Literature Campaign</td>
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