

## **THE EXPANSION AND IMPACT OF ISLAM IN WOLLO PROVINCE, ETHIOPIA**

**Misganaw Tadesse**

*Department of History and Heritage Management Wollo University*  
miskid19@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*Wollo is a centrally located province in Ethiopia where Islam made early expansion. It is a region where the two major religions of the country, Orthodox Christianity and Islam had their base. Many of the older Monasteries, as well as mosques of the country, are found in this province. It also served as a center for Islamic religious education for centuries. The expansion of Islam towards Wollo made the province has resulted in many forms of diversity. Such optimistic aspects of religious interactions are well studied. Thus, this paper examines the expansion of Islam in Wollo and its impact in transforming the socio-political atmosphere of the province.*

Key words: Islam, expansion, Wollo, diversity, Ethiopia

### **Introduction**

Wollo is a region in the north-eastern part of Ethiopia. Its geostrategic central position and the unique nature of ethnoreligious alchemy has made it a historical focal point of historical dynamics in Ethiopia. The history of Wollo is closely linked to the dynamics of the Ethiopian state building project through the historical quest for access to the sea and the rivalry of the provinces. On account of these, major historical battles among political, social and religious forces occurred in the region leaving a mark on it, and the nature of the Ethiopian state. It is also a province in which the two major religions of Ethiopia, namely, Orthodox Christianity and Islam are deeply rooted; with most of the older shrines of the country found there.

ISSN 2527-8401 (p) 2527-838X (e)

© 2022 JISH Pascasarjana UIN Walisongo Semarang

<http://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/jish>

The introduction of Islam in Ethiopia dates back to the days of the prophet Mohammed. Islam first entered Ethiopia and the Horn through two points on the Red Sea coast: the Dahlak Island and port of Zeila.<sup>1</sup> Historians asserted that the introduction of Islam to Ethiopia was associated with the arrival of the first Muslim refugees who were persecuted by the Quraish Arabs. According to Trimmingham, when the prophet's followers were being persecuted in Mecca by the Quraish, he recommended his followers to seek refuge in Ethiopia saying "if you go to Abyssinia you will find a king under whom none are persecuted. It is a land of righteousness where God will give you relief from what you are suffering."<sup>2</sup> The refugees were warmly received in Axum and could practice their faith liberally.

Outside the Arabian heartland where Islam emerged, the first converts to the new religion, are assumed to have been Ethiopians. Having this reality, the prominent historian and Emeritus Professor Haggai Erlich marked that where "Muslims and Christians first met and talked in Africa is in Ethiopia." Since the first Hegira was towards Ethiopia, it was in the Horn of Africa that Islam and Christianity first met, and the legacy of that initial meeting continues to affect their relations even today.<sup>3</sup> While Islamic contact with Ethiopia can be traced to the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam is said to have actually exercised in the country around the eighth century when Islamic traders from the Dahlak Islands began moving into the Ethiopian hinterland.<sup>4</sup> By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, many nomadic peoples of the Horn of Africa including the Afar, Somali and Beja of Ethiopia are believed to have embraced Islam.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> G.B. Martin, "Mahadism, Clerics and Holy War 1300-1600". In *Proceedings of the First United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies*, Michigan State University, (Harold G. Marcus Ed.), 1973, p. 91

<sup>2</sup> Trimmingham, *Islam in Ethiopia*. . . , p. 44

<sup>3</sup> Haggai Erlich, *Islam and Christianity in the Horn of Africa* . . . , p. 1

<sup>4</sup> Travis J. Owens, "Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses And Ethiopian Imperial Expansion From The 13th to the 16th Century", MA Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California, 2008, p.7

<sup>5</sup> Valerie J. Hoffman, *The Islamic World*, East Africa Publication, 2008, p. 41

In Ethiopia, Islam was introduced under two different circumstances; peacefully by winning the heart of new adherents, and by a war of conquest, the Jihad. In the first few centuries of its arrival, the expansion of Islam was peaceful and gradual. It expanded in a modest way along the coastal areas and lowlands of the interior which were inhabited by pastoralist nomads.<sup>6</sup> The main reason for its gradual expansion into Ethiopia was the presence of a Christian culture and state, affecting the pace of its expansion in the central highlands.<sup>7</sup> It was in the first quarter of the sixteenth century that Islam expanded over a vast area in a short period of time with a war of invasion. This is discussed in further detail in later sections.

### **The Expansion of Islam in Wollo and its Impact**

Among the Ethiopian regions where Islam had spread to a great extent is Wollo. The introduction of Islam into Wollo is assumed to be right from its emergence in Arabia. Oral sources in the area indicate that some Muslim migrants, who were chased by the Quraish and came to Ethiopia, settled around the district of Wore-Himano in Wollo. It seems because of this that rulers of the *Mammedoch* dynasty of Wollo claimed their descent from the Prophet Mohammed. Even Muslims who are currently living in Wore-Himeno still claim that they have a blood relation with the prophet.<sup>8</sup> Extra sources indicate that another group of Muslims came from Arabiya around 744 AD and settled in Qallu district of Wollo mixed with the native Argoba ethnic group.<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is likely that the long establishment of Islam in Wollo was likely since the eighth and ninth centuries.

The earliest period of the Islamization of Wollo falls between the foundation of the Sultanates of *Shawa* and the Sultanates of *Ifat* between the end of the 9th and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Hussein also reported the coming of Muslim clerics into Wollo

---

<sup>6</sup> Jon Abbink, *An Historical-Anthropological Approach to Islam in Ethiopia: Issues of Identity and Politics*. Journal of African Cultural Studies, Vol. 11, No. 2 (December, 1998), Taylor & Francis, Ltd, p. 111

<sup>7</sup> Hussien, Islam in Nineteenth Century Wollo, p. 43

<sup>8</sup> Informant Sheikh Hussien Ali

<sup>9</sup> Tesfaye Mekonen, *The Role of Religion in the History of South Wollo . . .*, p. 14

from Tembien and their dissemination of the faith in the same period. He stated:

*Informants have also recounted other traditions of the Islamization of Wollo. ... These traditions are about the 'Asqari' and 'Ad Kabire' clan in Tembein, claims to have originated from the Hijaz and to have been related to the Asqari. Its clerics later moved into Wollo and disseminated Islam. The ancestors of the clans were two brothers, the eldest of whom was called Kabire while the youngest was Asqari. The off springs of Asqari settled in Borena western Wollo, where they were considered as possessors of Karama (Divine favour).<sup>10</sup>*

According to Fekadu, some groups from Afar, in the eastern hinterland of Wollo had become Muslims by the fourteenth century.<sup>11</sup> This makes Wollo a region with one of the oldest and largest Muslim populations in the country. Though to a lesser scope, Muslim communities were already established in pre-Gragh Bete Amhara since the advent of the faith to Ethiopia. In 1520 Alvarez observed the presence of Muslim communities who were living in co-existence with Christians in Ambasel, or near the present-day town of Dessie. He found it to be “a very good town, and they hold a very great market there. Beyond one of the rivers, there is a large town of moors rich with much trade in slaves, silk and all other kinds of merchandise. Here is a great intercourse between the Christians and Moors (Muslims).”<sup>12</sup>

Despite the above mentioned early developments, Islam to a great extent only expanded into Wollo in the sixteenth century during the civil war between the Christian High land kingdom and the Muslim Sultanate of Adal that lasted from 1529 to 1543. During the first quarter of the sixteenth century, under the leadership of a skilled soldier and Islamic revivalist, Ahmed Ibn

---

<sup>10</sup> Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wollo*, p. 62

<sup>11</sup> Fekadu Begna, “Land and the Peasantry in Northern Wollo: 1941-74”. MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, 1990, p. 16

<sup>12</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, *The Prester John of the Indies. . . .*, p. 251

Ibrahim al Ghazi<sup>13</sup> the new Sultanate of Adal launched a full-scale Jihad against the Ethiopian highland state.<sup>14</sup>

Different scholars put forward different ideas on the cause and aim of the conquest of Ahmed Gragn. For Abbink the aim of this war was to root out and destroy Christianity in the area and to end the Solomonic monarchy which had been reinstated in 1270.<sup>15</sup> Other writers asserted that the cause and aim of the conflict is political and economic than religious. For instance, Owens stated that “the root cause of these conflicts was not religion but the Ethiopian desire to wrest control of trade routes from their Islamic neighbours.” Tesema confirmed the main cause of the conflict between the Christian kingdom, and the Muslim Sultanate of Adal to be complex politico-economic issues. Hussien, who agrees with Owens and Tessema wrote that “from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, prolonged conflicts between the Christian kingdom and the Muslim principalities of southern and south-eastern Ethiopia, caused primarily by economic and political rather than purely religious factors, resulted in the relations between Christians and Muslims reaching their lowest ebb.”<sup>16</sup> I argue that although the conflict has socio-political aspects, it is far more the religious aspects than the socio-political issues. I forward the following reasons for the conquest to have more of a religious intention than a socio-political one.

Firstly, there is the blessing Imam Ahmed acquired from the Emir of Mecca. When Imam Ahmed started the conquest, the Emir of Mecca gave him his blessings, signified by the

---

<sup>13</sup> Nicknamed *Gragn* which literally means the left handed

<sup>14</sup> Valerie J. Hoffman, *The Islamic World*, East Africa Publication, 2008, p. 41  
His forces received essential help from Arab Mercenaries and Turks who had been encroaching on the Red Sea coast up to the city of Massawa. They supplied fire arms, cannons and match-lock men from their army. The Christian sate also supported by the Portuguese in the ending stages of the war. Trimingham elucidates that this was the reflection of the struggle between Portugal and Ottoman Turks for the mastery of the Red Sea.

<sup>15</sup> Abbink, *An Historical-Anthropological Approach to Islam in Ethiopia*, p. 114

<sup>16</sup> Travis J. Owens, *Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses . . .*, p. 7; Hussein Ahmed, *Coexistence and/or Confrontation?: Towards a Reappraisal of Christian-Muslim Encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia*, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 36, Fasc. 1 (2006), p. 4

presentation of the green flags of Islamic holy war. This blessing is more religious than political or economic. Secondly, the Ottoman Turks provided cannons and firearms to the Adal Sultanate to use in the conquest. This provision was acquired due to religious similarities.<sup>17</sup> The third factor I forward is the destruction during the course of the war. The major targets of the conquest were churches, monasteries, priests, and Christians as a whole. This has given the conflict a religious character. Fourthly, the invasion was targeted at the forceful conversion of Christians, and the expansion of Islam. From this we can that the invasion was based on religious intent, even though it brought about major socio-political changes in Wollo specifically, and Ethiopia generally.

Davis, who labelled the conflict as a sixteenth century Jihad in Ethiopia, associated the Nigerian Usman Dan Fodio's movement with the Ethiopian Imam Ahmed Gragn conquest. Three hundred years before the Shehu Usman Dan Fodio issued his manifesto initiating the Jihad which brought on great social and political changes in Northern Nigeria, Imam Ahmed also sparked off one of the most decisive military campaigns which brought about change in North East Ethiopia, especially in Wollo.<sup>18</sup>

Like other parts of central and northern Ethiopia, Bete Amhara and its environs were subjected to several campaigns launched by the forces of Imam Ahmed in the early 1530s. During the course of the civil war, many Christians were massacred, and a number of old churches and monasteries in Bete Amhara had been plundered and demolished. Arab Fakih, the chronicler of Imam Ahmed and an eyewitness of the conquest, recounts the destruction of the major churches in Bete Amhara. According to him, the Imam sent his war generals against all the churches, except for Mekane-Sellassie to which the Imam himself went.<sup>19</sup> He also sent Wazir Nur bin Ibrahim, Said Mohammed, and Basera

---

<sup>17</sup> Travis J. Owens, *Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses . . .*, p. 32

<sup>18</sup> Asa J. Davis, "The Sixteenth Century Jihād In Ethiopia And The Impact On Its Culture" (PartOne) *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (December 1963), p. 579

<sup>19</sup> Paul Lester Stenhouse, *The Conquest of Abyssinia . . .*, p.246

## Misganwa Tadese

Bin Jusa against the royal churches of Bete Amhara: Atonse-Maryam, Debre-Negodguwad and Bete-Semayat respectively, to loot and demolish them.

When narrating the looting and destruction of the churches of Mekane-Sellassie and Atronsa Maryam,<sup>20</sup> Arab Faqih inscribed:

*The Imam said, 'whatever anyone takes shall be his apart from the plates.' So, they set to work with a thousand axes, ripping out the gold and the precious stones which were in the church, from the time of the afternoon prayer, until the time of the evening prayer. Each took as much gold as he could carry. They enriched themselves with so much booty that they would never more be in want. More than a third of its gold was burnt in the church. The Emir Nur in the meantime had arrived at the church of Atronsa-Maryam, entered it, and was astounded as its workmanship. But as for gold, they found none in it. The idol worshipers who looked after it had taken the gold that was in it away. The Emir found four monks. He asked them 'where is the church's treasure?' They answered, 'we won't show you, even if we die for the religion of Maryam.' So, the Muslims killed them.<sup>21</sup>*

When the Muslim army which reached Atronsa-Maryam found nothing, they massacred the four monks who were guarding the church. It is reported that similar killings of priests and monks happened at many of the churches of Bete Amhara.<sup>22</sup>

The chronicler of Lenbe Dingel provides us with the list of churches which were destroyed by Imam Ahmed. Among these are the royal churches of Bete Semayat, Debre Negodguwad, Genete Giorgis, and Ganate Maryam. In relation to the looting, Arab Faqih enlightened the following:

---

<sup>20</sup> Atronsa-Maryam literally means the Throne of St. Mary

<sup>21</sup> Paul Lester Stenhouse, *The Conquest of Abyssinia* . . . , p. 248

<sup>22</sup> Jean Dorsse, *Ancient Cities and Temples*, . . . , p. 145

*When the army of the Imam arrived at these churches, entered it and discover vast treasure. They took away its treasure, including the golden calf as tall as a man's height. They also found a number of tabots,<sup>23</sup> which were made of gold. They took away the treasure and gold . . . The Wazir said to them, 'Now that you have satisfied your appetite for booty, you have no camels to carry it for you: so you carry it on your shoulder, and on your mules. The house is still full of treasure and of silk, but we are not going to leave this immense quantity of silk for the idol worshipers. We will burn it'. Then he said, 'burn the house', and they burnt it along with its silk brocades. And the church burnt to a cinder. The Imam received his share of the gold and the silk brocade.'<sup>24</sup>*

The duration of the war is characterized by looting and destruction; treasures were taken, churches demolished, and priests and Christians massacred. A great number of centres of Ethiopian Christian civilization was destroyed. When Arab Faqih writes about the amount of gold looted, he said, that "the amount of gold could not be calculated."<sup>25</sup>

Beyond the material destruction and life cost, the major impact of the war was the expansion of Islam in the areas where the Imam conquered. Both Muslim and Christian sources agree that large scale conversion of the population of the highlands did take place. The Ethiopian Chronicler who carefully preserved a yearly record of the reign of Emperor Gelawdewos (r. 1540-1559) affirmed that "many of the believers left the faith of the church and entered the faith of the Muslims. Hardly one out ten

---

<sup>23</sup> Tabot is a word referring to a replica of the Tablets of Law, onto which the Biblical Ten Commandments were inscribed, used in the practices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Tabot can also refer to a replica of the Ark of the Covenant. A Tabot is a consecrated wooden altar slab, made of wood or marble and covered with gold, which symbolizes the Ark of the Covenant (containing the Ten Commandments) and represents the presence of God in every Ethiopian church. It is the Tabot rather than the church building which is consecrated.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Lester Stenhouse, *The Conquest of Abyssinia . . .*, p. 249

<sup>25</sup> Ibid



## Misganwa Tadese

remained in their faith . . . almost all the Christian population of the highlands joined Islam under threat of the sword.”<sup>26</sup> One of those highland provinces was Wollo. Indeed, Islam has expanded over other northern and central provinces of Ethiopia, but it was in Wollo that it widely expanded. When we see the recent demographic structure of the different zones of the Amhara region, it is in Wollo, particularly the southern and eastern parts with the highest number of Muslims.

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Orthodox Christian</b>	<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Catholic</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Others</b>
South Wollo	2,518,862	725,390	5,494	937	1,785,568	1,107	366
North Wollo	1,500,303	1,241,363	1,232	1,229	256,242	168	69
North Gonder	2,929,628	2,794,231	3,085	290	125,648	186	6,188
South Gonder	2,051,738	1,972,513	2,069	1,045	75,462	51	598
North Shewa	1,837,490	1,740,338	6,507	194	90,176	107	168
East Gojjam	2,153,937	2,098,362	1,668	151	53,541	106	109
West Gojjam	2,106,596	2,078,683	2,631	148	25,044	28	62

<sup>26</sup> Asa J. Davis, *The Sixteenth Century Jihād in Ethiopia . . .*, p. 579

Zone	Total Population	Orthodox Christian	Protestant	Catholic	Muslim	Traditional	Others
Wag Himra	426,213	424,584	159	11	1,445	5	9
Awi Zone	982,942	927,865	1,847	28	44,205	3,727	5,270
Oromia zone (In Amhara Region)	457,278	10,977	1,974	155	443,874	142	156

Table 1: Central Statistics Agency, Census 2007 Tables: Amhara Region, Table 3.3, Population by Religion

As can be seen in Table 1, in the Amhara region the highest number of Muslims is recorded in South Wollo zone and Oromia zone, the former Qallu district. Those two zones comprise the medieval province of Bete Amhara.

Sources indicate that during his campaign, Imam Ahmed had with him preachers of Islam. He is said to have left a number of preachers in various parts of the region to propagate Islam among the indigenous population. Two of the early propagators of Islamic education were Sheikh Sabir and Sheikh Garad who lived near Kombolcha and Dessie, respectively. These scholars were credited for converting the surrounding Amhara communities. The villages of Sheshabir in Kombolcha and Garado (near Dessie) are believed to have been named after them.<sup>27</sup> It is recounted that during the nineteenth century, except

---

<sup>27</sup> Hussien Ahmed, Harar-Wollo Relations Revisited: *Historical, Religious and Cultural Dimensions*. African Study Monographs, Suppl.41: 2010, p. 111; Informant: Ato Samuel Mesganaw

for the districts of Sayint and Wadla-Delanta, that other parts of highland and lowland Wollo were dominated by Muslims.

Later, Wollo became the center of Islamic education and culture. Various Islamic schools were opened in different parts of the province. The most influential Islamic schools in Wollo were Geta, Jema Negus, Turu-Sina, Aman Amba, Dana, and Dabat. Most of these Islamic school centres were assumed to be established during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Prominent Sheikhs such as Talaha Ja'far, Mufti Dawd, Muhammad Shafi, Hajji Said Bushira, and Ahmad Yassin, were a few of the renowned scholars that contributed to the establishment of Islamic education in the region.<sup>28</sup> Despite its influence in Wollo, the expansion of Islam later resulted in the development of common understandings and cultural practices which led to peaceful co-existence among the different religious and ethnic groups of the province.

### **Integrating Impact of Islam in Wollo**

The expansion of Islam towards Wollo not only affect the political atmosphere of the province, but also completely transformed the socio-political landscape of Wollo provithe region to a greater extent. It brought changes to the political geography of the Christian highland kingdom. It ended the political centrality of Shawa and Bete Amhara. After the sixteenth century Jihad, the Christian highland kingdom shifted its centre to the north-western part of the country and its political geography had been restricted only to the north of the Abbay River. Above all, the geographical boundary of Bete Amhara had been so greatly contracted that the province disappeared from the medieval map of Abyssinia.<sup>29</sup>

According to Davis the sixteenth century Jihad that occurred in Ethiopia was responsible for the greatest cultural transformation in the history of Ethiopia.<sup>30</sup> Among other central

---

<sup>28</sup> Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wollo*, . . . , p. 82; Informants: Sheikh Abdu Mohammed and Ato Kedir Ali

<sup>29</sup> Derb Tefera Tassew, "The Nexus between Water Supply Infrastructure and Socio-economic Developments in Amhara Region, Ethiopia: 1941-2005". PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, 2017, p. 56

<sup>30</sup> Asa J. Davis, *The Sixteenth Century Jihād*, . . . , p567

and northern provinces of Ethiopia, it was Wollo that was highly affected by the expansion of Islam. After Ahmed Gragn, particularly, Wollo became a predominantly Muslim area more so than any of the other central and northern provinces of Ethiopia. Nevertheless, the Christian population remained as the substratum of the area.<sup>31</sup>

As Vilhanova mentioned, in Africa, Islamization was mostly followed by a cultural change in the places where the religion is extended.

*In the African context, Islamisation refers to both the religious change and the accompanying cultural change, allowing, once the core requirements of the faith were fulfilled, for numerous local interpretations of Islam. The introduction of Islam meant many changes involving religious belief and concomitant changes in the material sphere, economy, society and politics.*<sup>32</sup>

Consequently, Islamic expansion in Wollo brought about socio cultural changes in the province. A region which once was centre of Christianity and Christian culture became the center of Islam and Islamic education. The action of Imam Ahmed was one of the most important contributing factors in shaping the demographic and cultural aspects of Wollo.

## **Conclusion**

Wollo is a province in Ethiopia where Islam made early expansion. It is a region where the two major religions of the country, Orthodox Christianity and Islam had their base. The expansion of Islam towards Wollo made the province has resulted in many forms of diversity. The expansion of Islam into Wollo transformed the socio-political atmosphere of the province. Followers of the two religions shared common cultural and ritual practices together. In their interaction for centuries, the one imposed its own influence on the other and in return took some

---

<sup>31</sup> Fekadu Begna, *A Tentative History of Wollo, . . .*, p. 1

<sup>32</sup> Viera Pawlikova-Vilhanova, "Rethinking the Spread of Islam in Eastern and Southern Africa", *Asian and African Studies*, Vol 19, 2010, p. 136

cultural elements from the other. To discuss in brief, Islam for instance, dominated Wollo which was absolutely a Christian and Amhara province. In return, it has been heavily influenced by various elements of Christianity and Oromo traditional belief. As a result, Wollo exemplifies socio-cultural hybridity, pragmatic tolerance, and the accommodation of diversity.

## References

Abbink, John *An Historical-Anthropological Approach to Islam in Ethiopia: Issues of Identity and Politics*. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (December, 1998), Taylor & Francis, Ltd,

Ahmed, Hussein. *Islam in the nineteenth century Wollo, Ethiopia reform and reaction*, (Leiden: Boston university, 2001)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Coexistence and/or Confrontation?: Towards a Reappraisal of Christian-Muslim*

*Encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia*, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 36, Fasc. 1 (2006)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Harar-Wollo Relations Revisited: Historical, Religious and Cultural Dimensions*. *African Study Monographs, Suppl.41*: 2010

Begna, Fekadu. "A Tentative History of Wollo: 1855-1908". B.A. Thesis. Department of History, Haile Selassie I University, 1972

\_\_\_\_\_. "Land and the Peasantry in Northern Wollo: 1941-74". MA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, 1990  
Davis, Asa J. "The Sixteenth Century Jihād In Ethiopia And The Impact On Its Culture" (Part One) *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (December 1963)

C. F. Beckingham and G. W. B. Huntingford: *The Prester John of the Indies: a true relation of the lands of the Prester John, being the narrative of the Portuguese embassy to Ethiopia in 1520 written by Father Francisco Alvares. The translation of Lord Stanley of Alderley (1881) revised and edited with additional material.* (Works issued by the Hakluyt Society. Second Series, Nos.

CXIV–CXV.) Cambridge: University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1961. 70s

- Derb Tefera Tassew, “The Nexus between Water Supply Infrastructure and Socio-economic Developments in Amhara Region, Ethiopia: 1941-2005
- Erlich, Haggai *Islam and Christianity in the Horn of Africa: Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan*. Lynne Rienner Publishers Boulder, CO 80301 USA, 2010
- Hoffman, Valerie J. *The Islamic World*, East Africa Publication, 2008
- Martin, G.B. “Mahadism, Clerics and Holy War 1300-1600”. In *Proceedings of the First United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies*, Michigan State University, (Harold G. Marcus Ed.), 1973.
- Owens, Travis J. “Beleaguered Muslim Fortresses And Ethiopian Imperial Expansion From The 13th to the 16th Century”, MA Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California, 2008
- Trimingham, Spencer. *Islam in Ethiopia*. London: Frank Cass and Co, Ltd., 1965
- Valerie J. Hoffman, *The Islamic World*, East Africa Publication, 2008
- Vilhanova, Viera Pawlikova. “Rethinking the Spread of Islam in Eastern and Southern Africa”, *Asian and African Studies*, Vol 19, 2010