

Ethiopia and The Neighbours: Power and Conflicts (1855—1899)

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Abstract:

This study aims to expose factors behind the state of hostility which dominated the relations between Ethiopia (previously Abyssinia) and its neighbors who share with them the longest border and political frontiers in the area, to the extent that they resorted to war. The strategic position of the Horn of Africa, has always attracted the great powers and each tried to support one country against the other. However, these kinds of policies and participations reflected obviously the double crossed role that played by the great power in inciting the local and internal conflicts. Hence in wagged the regional hostilities between the countries of the Horn each other. The theme of their relationship with those groups of countries of the Horn of Africa, during the regime of the three Ethiopian Monarchies respectively, was not static but changing according to the regional, global circumstances, and to their own political diplomatic interests. Both the Great Britain, France and Italy, as well as the Turks, the Egyptians and the Mahdist Revolutionary State in the neighboring, directed and affected the mode of conflicts and its conclusions, between the adjacent countries of the Horn, by supporting one country and aided it financially and militarily at one time before shifting its support to the other partner.

المستخلص:-

تهدف هذه الدراسة للكشف عن الطبيعة العدائية التي كانت مميزة للعلاقات الكائنة بين دولة إثيوبيا (سابقا الحبشة) والبلدان المجاورة لها التي كانت تتقاسم معها سلسلة الحدود السياسية الممتدة بينهما والتي كانت مدعاة بدورها لإثارة الحرب بين الطرفين في البعض من الاحيان ولقد شكلت منطقة القرن الإفريقي

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بموقعها المتميز استراتيجيا علي الدوام ، نقطة للإثارة والجدب وللفت الانتباه بالنسبة للقوي الاوروبية الاجنبية التي تحاول كل منها العمل علي توفير الدعم لتلك الدول بالمنطقة ضد الأخرى. ويتكشف ذلك من خلال السياسات المزدوجة للقوي العظمي. في التكريس للنزاعات داخليا بالقرن الإفريقي والتأجيج للعدائيات الاقليمية. وقد كانت تلك هي السمة المزدوجة لسياساتهم بالمنطقة. طوال الفترات الحكمية للملوك الإثيوبيين. والتي كانت تحكمها الدبلوماسية والمتغيرات دولياً. سياسات كل من بريطانيا وفرنسا وإيطاليا معا وتركيا كانت لها انعكاساتها المباشرة على مصر و إثيوبيا ودولة الثورة المهديية بالجوار. من خلال الدعم المزدوج لدولة ما وحجبه عن الطرف الآخر.

Introduction:

Ethiopia, a name that derived from the Creek and signifying the "land of burnt faces." It has long been the official designations of the country, still sometimes refereed to aboard as "Abyssinia." The name Abyssinia probably had its origin in the terms "Habashat," the name of one tribes in the east of the country, who were known to the Arabs, as the result of which the Arabs extended the meaning to refer to the area in general as "Habash".

Ethiopia, during that era (1855-1899) in the last quarter of the nineteenth century the only country with a sizeable territorial extent in north- east Africa. And a neutrally organized state structure in the Horn of Africa ---being a multi – ethnic , linguistic, multi – cultural and multi- religious state (kingdom), though in its ideology and the general orientation of its political and religious establishment , it was an Amhara dominated Orthodox (optic) Christian state. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the rulers of Ethiopia were also, engaged in a severe struggle to protect their country not only against imperialist encroachment by European Power, but also against aggressive African neighbors. Its neighbors were mostly Muslim pastoral nomadic tribal groups, like Batahanie, Dabaina, Homarhn and others nomads who inhabited the surrounding areas and regions on the

frontier between the areas actually occupied by each side, gave cause for constant friction. All these nomads have little respect for boundaries even if they know where they are, for they are obliged to follow the grass on which their existence depends, while in the south it was neighbored of principalities, small states, kingdoms, tribal groups who were Muslim or pagan. If the nomads were the principal cause of border friction, there were others causes also. The Jaalin followers of Mek Nimer, who had assassinated Ismail Pasha in the year 1822, had established themselves at river Setit in an inhabited area claimed by both Abyssinians and Egyptians. (Budge 1929; Robinson 1925) On its Northern and North Western frontiers, it was bordered by the Muslim Turku- Egyptian Sudan, while in the east it was bordered by the small enclave of "Habashastan", the small Turku- Ottoman small enclave of the island of Massawa which was later transferred to the control of the Turku- Egyptian government of Mohamed Ali. Neither of the two provided any real threat to the safety and independence of the Ethiopian state until the advent of Khedive Ismail. Hence the year 1855 signifies a terminal point in the history of Ethiopia. It witnessed the advent to power of Tewodors, the end of the period of Ethiopian Era of the Masafents Princes and the beginning of Ethiopia's modern history The end of the country's political isolation ...The conflict with Egypt and the advent of the Italy as an aggressive new European power in the region, and strong revivalist Muslim Mahdist state in the Sudan.

Therefore we can noticed that, the real threat comes to the Ethiopians state from the Khedive Ismail `s expedition and the Turku- Egyptian Sudan and Massawa later Mahadies and the Italians. Yohannes in the Northern and central Ethiopia was the one who was most concerted with the three events. Meanwhile Menilek in Shawa in the South-West was far away geographically. His personal interests is how to gain the imperil Throne, Relations with Italy and how to deal with Mahdists after the death of King Yohannes at Matamma / Gallabat (1889). Hence the different personalities of the three rulers of Ethiopia, and their political interests and attitudes towards Islam and Muslim neighbors, have had shadow led its influences on political relations with Europe.

The eventual result was the survival, Ethiopia again independent African state during the scramble and partition of Africa. Which her struggled for protecting her independence had already began a dozen years before the European Power became seriously interested in the partition of tropical Africa.

Te'wodeos or Theodore, (1820- 1868), reigned as emperor from 1866-68. He reunified Ethiopia's Kingdom into a single empire, and was the first emperor to seek to modernize the county. (Robeson 1976).

Most probably, he spent the following years, living the life of "Shefta" or outlaw, in the Ethiopian-Sudanese borderlands. (Pankhurst 1963). Moreover, in 1852, he was able to eliminate the power of the Masafents Princes of central and northern Ethiopia, and crowned King of Kings T'e'wodros 11 on the year 1855. (Pankhurst 1963; Sanderson 1969).). In his foreign affairs, he regarded the Egyptian expansion in the Sudan and the advance into the borderland of Ethiopia as the main threat to his country. (Bahru Zewde 1992; Rubenson 1966).he fought the against the Egyptians who at that time were continually coming into collision with the Abyssinians among the Western foothills, and he was fanatically determined to repulse any aggression by the Turks. In 1862 he decided to sent letters to Queen Victoria ,which itself is interesting not only on account of the important part it played in causing the Magdala campaign, but also for the light it throws on Theodore's relations with his Egyptian neighbours. However the campaign had a profound effect on subsequent Egyptian policy in the Eastern Sudan ,since the question of the route it should followed arose, and decided to be from Zulla south of Massawa, by way of the Senafi Pass.The Magdala campaign marked the opening of a new era in the Eastern Sudan (Cumming 1937)

Egypt and Ethiopia: A prolonged aggressive Relations:-

The first hint of future complications arose when Ibrahim Pasha, Mohammed Ali's eldest son and most successful general, was appointed Wali of the Hejaz and Abyssinia after he had overcome the Wahabbis of Arabia in 1818Abyssinia was included in the title because in the sixteenth century . Sultan Selim 1 had taken over the posts of the Red Sea including Massawa and collect customs dues in them. The

Turks had never penetrated far into the interior and never reached the Abyssinia Plateau, nor had they ever been in continual occupation of Massawa itself, but it was normal oriental diplomacy that they should include in their empire, as a part of the Pashalik of Macca, a country which they considered they could occupy if they ever wished to do so. Their claim appeared slightly ludicrous at the time because in 1797 they were paying the Ras of Tigre, the northern province of Abyssinia, half the customs receipts of the port for the protection of their own garrison. (Cumming 1937)

Mohammad Ali's career, as a political force in international affairs was ended in 1841, he was an old man and his mind was weakening for the rest of his days he was not even able to make the most of the possessions left to him. And before that, he was more than once warned not to attempt the conquest of Ethiopia and undertook not to do so. A more imminent cause for fearing Turkish interference in Abyssinia became evident when Mohammed Ali undertook his Sudan campaign in 1820, when "Salt", the consul – General in Cairo, interviewed the Pasha in order to find out what the limits of the expedition were to be. He found that the Pasha was quite prepared to invade Abyssinia after occupying Sennar. Salt informed him that any aggression against would displaced the British Government for Abyssinia, as said was to a certain extent under the British protection. Hence she was the only country in Africa that had preserved its Christianity and that none of the European nations could disregard an unprovoked attack on it. To this Mohammed Ali replied that, if the conquest of Abyssinia were unwelcome to England, he would abandon the idea even though success was certain and the reward great. But in the year 1838 he still found it is necessary to placate England by dismissing the Governor –General of the Sudan for carrying out a raid into Abyssinia from the frontier post at Callabat as far as the royal town of Gonder. (Cumming 1937) and in the course of the years that followed, Mohammed Ali, did bring under Egyptian control a broad belt of previously Ethiopian territory extending from al-Atish in the north through Gallabat to the Bani Shanqul country South –east of Fazughli. (Abir 1967)

The more dangerous than these was the concession by the Sultan to the Khedive Ismail in the year 1865 of administrative control over the whole Western Red Sea coast including Massawa. Ismail's ambition to create an Egyptian empire embracing the whole north – eastern quadrant of Africa, necessity implied the subjugation of Ethiopia, which was now deeply outflanked both in the Nile Valley and on the Red Sea. Massawa gave Khedive Ismail a convenient base for attack, especially after the main center of power shifted to Tegraï in the year 1871. The Khedive actually had found in Munzinger, a Swiss with wide extensive Ethiopian experience, an able and enterprising agent of aggression, therefore he appointed him as Governor of Massawa. And in the year 1872, he had occupied the "Bogos" (Keren) region and planning to extend southward into "Hamasin" which had been described as the key to Abyssinia. In the following year he was promoted as the Governor- General of the whole Red Sea littoral. One of Munzinger's first official act was to employ a German botanist to travel through East Africa as an Egyptian correspondent and to report to him in conditions in Eritrea, Somaliland and Zanzibar he used much of this data as a basis for his own recommendations to Khedive Ismail, which influenced him to order the conquest of Harrar by Rauf Pacha. (Cox 1952) Munzinger had previously persuaded the Khedive that the time was propitious for the occupation of the land of the people known as the Bogos centering about Keren in Eritrea, which is much desired as a strategic hinterland for the Red Sea port of Massawa. Bogos was then a disputed territory of approximately 10,000 inhabitants lying between Egypt and Abyssinia and claimed by both countries. But when Munzinger occupied Keren with little opposition, and King John of Abyssinia protested for that, the Khedive asserted that the land of Bogos had belonged to Egypt since the time of Muhammad Ali and now belonged to Egypt by right of occupation. The acquisition of the land of Bogos was Ismail's first step towards controlling all the land in East Africa lying near the headwater of the Blue Nile. However, it appears that in 1872 the Khedive did not wish to conquer Abyssinia, but merely desired to insure Egypt's control of the tributaries of the Nile river system. (Cox 1952) Yet so long as, the next move should be the acquisition of Aussa, which by occupation of it in the year 1875,

Munzinger achieved the Egyptian control of all the territory from the land of Galla to the Red Sea. Hence not only to prevent the French design on Obok but to complete the Egyptian control of the entire Red Sea coast of Eritrea as far as the Gulf of Aden. Thus Ismail's East African Empire, became reality in the year 1875, his leitmotiv was the control of the Blue and White Niles and their tributaries. Beside that the occupation of Keren, Harar, Aussa, Zulla and Berbera. Were necessary complements to the creation of the Khedive's Central African Empire, centering in Khartoum. With regard to the transportation and communication concerning Abyssinia, the Red Sea coast may be nearer but the route crosses many mountains so that the long route down the Nile is in reality by far the shortest. The chronic revolution, moreover under which Abyssinia suffer is not apt to encourage trade with its large portion of the commerce that comes down to Metamma. Also there is a road by the Blue Nile as far as Roseires brings the merchant to the heart of the Galla country which produces coffee, musk, wax, and gold in large quantities, some times the route from Fazugli on the Blue Nile to the Gallas is closed. The frontier tribes are fighting so much that trade is quite destroyed. But later on the Northern Galla trade comes down to Roseires and the Southern Galla trade by the navigable Sobat to Khartoum. (Cox 1952)

During that period London having accepted the Egyptian expansion on the coast, saw no reason to forbid it in the interior according to its policy prescribed in 1872 of non – intervention in Ethiopian affairs. (Cox 1952) An opportunity which did not neglect by the Khedive, who launched three expeditions towards Ethiopia in the year 1875. Mohammad Rauf Pasha took Harar on the Somali coast without much opposition. The two other expeditions met disaster in the course of November 1875. An expedition under the personal command of Munzinger had been dispatched towards the province of Shoa was annihilated by the Danakil tribesmen before it could reach the hinterlands. The main Egyptian force under the command of the Dane Arendrup planned to march to Adowa and then the Ethiopian capital, it met a similar fate at the hands of the Tigray warriors, at Gundet on the river Mareb. But the Khedive Ismail undeterred by these disasters, he tried with a larger force again which included some of his Americans

stuff officers. it suffered in the year 1876 a humiliating defeat at Gura between Asmara and Adowa. (Trimingham 1952). The Ethiopian victories at Gundet and Gura had been won under the personal leadership of the Negus Negasti Yohannes 1v, the former "Dejamach Kassa" of Tigrai. Since the Egyptians operations threatened the whole of Ethiopia, and not merely Tigrai, Menelik of Shoa obviously rejected Ismail offer to recognize him as King of Kings in term of collaboration against Yohannes. However the immediate fruits of Yohannes' victories were meager. Massawa. Harar and the Bogos country all remained in the Egyptian hands. So long as Egypt retained these bridgeheads, Ethiopia, and especially Tigrai were evidently insecure. (Sanderson 1969) And during the years 1883 and 1884 the Egyptian authority in the Sudan was destroyed by the Mahdist insurrection. By treaty of June 1884 negotiated on behalf of Egypt by the British Admiral Sir William Hewett, Yohannes had obtained the Bogos country in return for Ethiopians assistance in evacuating the Egyptians garrisons isolated in the eastern Sudan. He also pressed for the cession of Massawa, but the Egyptians refused to yield on the grounds that Massawa was still technically under Ottoman sovereignty. However the Hewett treaty including a formal promise for free transit through Massawa for all goods under the British protection. (Wingate 1891) On the other hands, Yohannes faithfully fulfilled his commitments to secure the Egyptian garrisons, and these operations soon lead to local conflicts with Mahdists. There were clashes between the years (1884-1885) at Gallabat and other places on the river bank of Setit and Agordat. Meanwhile the Mahdist State began to emerge as powerful neighbour of Ethiopia with the fall off Khartoum at January 1885.

The Mahadist State and Ethiopia:-

The conflict between Ethiopia and the Mahdist State has sometimes been regarded as "medieval" Wars inspired by the "medieval" motives of crusade and "jihad". This view seems misleading. In Khalifa Abdullah's policy at times strong elements of jihad; but this motives was never as unmixed as is sometimes supposed. It was not infrequently subordinated to other considerations, and after 1889 it disappeared completely. In Ethiopia, however, the outlook of the crusade played no part whatever in official policy

towards the Mahdist State. Both Yohannes and, after he became Negus, Menelik, primarily concerned with the practical problems of safeguarding Ethiopian integrity and independence; and as practical strategy they looked, not towards the crusade, but towards an "African solidarity" With regard to King Yohannes IV who was emperor of Ethiopia from 1862-1889, he wanted peace with the Mahadist State and co-operation against "Turks" and " Europeans". His offensive in the eastern Sudan in the year 1889 was certainly no crusade. It was a preventative operations designed to frustrate opportunist Mahadist aggression during a severe crisis, which threatened to develop into a major civil war with Ethiopia. (Sanderson 1969)

Yohannes during his reign, he tried obliged not only to consolidate his power within his realm, but also to resist threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity posed by the Egyptians, the Italian and the Mahdist movement in the Sudan, that led by Mohammad Ahmad ibn al- Sayyid Abd Allah Al- Mahdi (1844-1885), who founded a theocratic state extending from the Red Sea to Central Africa. Yohannes IV, who was Called "Kassa" before his coronation, descended from a royal family in Tigre province. He was pointed as a Commander by Emperor Te'wodros, and he nevertheless rebelled against the emperor. He established his rule over the Northern Province before the arrival of the British military expedition of 1868 led by Napier.

During the year 1869, he sent missions to Egypt, to secure the appointment of an "abuna" for his national church. In the year 1872, he was crowned at Aksum as Yohannes IV. Where he determined to reunite the ancient empire, which had been dismembered at the end of the reign of Te'wodros. (Richard A. Caulk 1971)

The Egyptians, whom had already occupied the ports on the Red Sea coast, as well as "Gallabat", west of Gondar, "Bogos", in western Eritrea, and "Harar". Most probably sough that they penetrated on Ethiopia's frontiers systematically and, thus blockading all the commercial activity's routes that leading to and from Ethiopia. In 1873 Yohannes sent a mission to Europe to appeal for the aid but the mission failed. Therefore he resorted to war, and met the advancing Egyptian army, and defeated them. After these victories, Yohannes

concentrated on the reunification of the empire. He obliged also Menilek, later (Emperor Menilek II) to submit to him, and crowned him as a king of Shawa.(Abir 1965). In the following year Khedive appeal general, "Charles Gordan", to establish cordial relation between Egypt and Ethiopia without making any territorial concessions, Yohannes demanded the return of the Egyptian-occupied territories, the Red Sea port of Zulla, well as the bay that, to the south of Massawa.. (Abir 1968 .Idem., 1965).

The rise of the Mahdist movement in the Sudan, and the Sudanese rebellion against Egyptian rule, led to the arrival of a British mission in Ethiopia, as a result of a treaty was concluded between the United Kingdom, Egypt and Ethiopia. Concerning "Bogos" "Massawa", in return for permission for the Egyptian garrison posted along the Sudanese frontier with Ethiopia to withdraw to safety through Ethiopia.(Trimingham,1952) Before undertaking this operation, however, Yohannes wrote to the Mahdi, and later to his successor, the Khalifa Abdullah Muhammad, to sound their views. (Richard A .Caulk 1971).

But since in their replies they refused to deal with a non-Muslim, Yohannes gave up diplomacy, and instead sent troops, which defeated the Mahdist forces in a series of Battle at Gallabat, and other ones along the Sudanese-Ethiopian frontier. (Anon. (Capt. Smyth 1942, Robinson 1926-27). The Egyptian garrisons in these places were then permitted to pass through Ethiopia to the coast, to be repatriated. Unfortunately, the occupation of Massawa on the Red Sea coast by Italy, and their subsequent penetration into the interior of Ethiopia, made all these efforts useless. But when Egypt evacuated "Harar", Yohannes instructed, to be occupied for Ethiopia. (Abir 1965).

The Italians, who were advancing towards "Asmara" was defeated in 1887 and when Yohannes failed to eject them, he decided to make a truce with them, to moved westwards towards the Sudanese frontier, where the Mahdists had already defeated Ras Adal of Gojam, had raided western Ethiopia, burning parts of Gondar, and were posing threats to the country. (Richard A. Caulk 1971; Zwede Gabre-Sellassie 1975) Yohannes again appealed to the Methodists to avoid of war between to African States, when both had a common enemy in the

European powers. When his appeal was rejected on religious ground, Yohannes attacked the Mhadists at "Matamma", In Sudan. Mortally wounded in the battle, and died on March of the year 1889. (Bahru Zewde, 1992 .

Menilek **11** (1845-1913), Negusa Nagast (King of Kings), was one of the three great sovereigns who rebuilt the Ethiopian empire in the second half of the 19th century. The other was Tewodros II who reigned from 1872-89. Menilek, who reigned as emperor from 1889 – 1913, (Darkwah 1974) called as a king of shawa in 1865 and during the following years that lasted to 1889, when he crowned as an emperor of Ethiopia; he have had pursued enlightened internal and external policies. (Marcus 1966).

In his foreign policy for example, he pursued a policy of friendship with foreign powers, and also showed himself well disposed towards foreigners in generals. After Emperor Yohannes died in March 1889, as a result of wounds received on fighting against the Mahdists at the battle of "Matamma",at the Sudanese_ Ethiopians Border, Menilek proclaimed himself emperor of Ethiopia, (Bairu Tafila 1977) and crowned himself under the title "Negusa-Nagast".(Darkwah 1974)

During that period, the Italians, However had gained a foothold at the port of Massawa on the Red Sea coast in 1885, and had gradually annexed the adjacent areas. And finally, on 1896, at Adwa. With the help of United Kingdom, a Treaty of Wechale was signed in 1896, ending the hostilities between Ethiopia and Italy. (Pankhurst 1968).

By the year 1899, Menilek's Empire extended as far as the boundaries of the Sudan in the west, Kenya in the south, and the Italian, British, and French Somali lands in the east. (Pankhurst 1968; Rubenson 1964).Before his death in 1913. (Pankhurst 1968; Marcus 1966).

With regard of Menilek's foreign policy towards the Mahadist State, we can say that, far from attempting to avenge the defeat and death of Yohannes, he was making friendly overtures to the Mahadist with six months of his accession. The "undeclared peace" which subsequently developed on his western frontiers suited him well enough until the year 1895. However he sought a formal peace as an

insurance against Mahadist intervention during his war with Italy. I think that in September 1895 after the Italian occupation of Adowa and Axum. Menelik proclaimed a general mobilization against Italy. Some three months before his general mobilization of 1895, Menelik had already sent to Omdurman a Jabarti envoy called "Muhammad al-Tayyab", with a verbal message to the Khalifa proposed a formal confirmation of the "undeclared peace" on the frontier; he may have suggested co-operation against the "Whites" as the common enemies of Africans. His immediate motive was evidently to guard against opportunist Mahadist raiding during the forthcoming struggle with Italy. The Khalifa's reply was cold and not showing respect for the others. Something that clear obviously that Menelik is still dwelt upon his desire for peace with all power but specially with his neighbours, anxious to established friendly relation with the Khalifa who waned him on the contrary to cease any friendly relations with the Whites (the red English) and concludes in one of his letters sent in June (1896) by a Jabarti called "al-Haj Ahemed", as an imperial envoy to the Khalifa, " Your enemy is our enemy and our enemy is enemy and we should stand together as firm allies" (Sanderson 1969) The Khalifa's reply actually, attempted to make the conclusion of peace dependent upon Menelik's breaking off peaceful relations with all the European, including the European traders without admitting that peace and friendship would be to the benefit for both of them. Therefore he sent to the Negus an envoy of his own, called "Mohammad Uthman al-Hajj Khalid" accompanied with his Ethiopian colleague al-Hajj Ahmad to the Negus, who explained that he, had no intercourse with Europeans expect for trade and not recently admitted any new Europeans. Hence he did not press for his part, his request for the return of king Yohannes's regalia. (Wingate 1891; Theobald 1951) However, the Khalifa envoy must have been empowered to conclude at least a provisional peace and the existence of peace and friendship was common knowledge in Ethiopian court circles, and an Ethiopian envoy Alga Guba, returned to Omdurman with Muhammad Uthman al-Hajj Khalid to confirm the agreement on Menelik's behalf, and taking with them letters of congratulations to the Khalifa. (Sanderson 1969)

In the year 1896 the Ethiopian Emperor, proposed a full defensive alliance in the belief that the strengthening of Mahadist resistance that this implied was a valuable first line of the defense against the supposed aggressive designs of the British. Indeed, he valued Mahadist resistance to Kitchener so highly. In spite of his preoccupation with the British, Menilek was also concerned to promote co-operation with his neighbours "the Africans" against all Europeans without distinction of nationality. He was particularly anxious that this co-operation should not be frustrated by religious hostility. Going further he pointed out to the Khalifa's envoy that the conflict between he Christianity and Islam was irrelevant in the face of the threat from Europe. (Sanderson 1969) During the years 1897 and 1898, the relations between the Mahadist State and Ethiopia became increasingly cordial; and, considering the unavoidable slowness of communication, diplomatic exchange was frequently and regular. In the course of the year 1897 Menelik sent an envoy headed by a certain called Kantiba Jabru. Towards the end of that year, Mahmmud al-Bushra was sent by the Khalifa Abdallahi to Addis Ababa. Therefore we can say that, the conclusion of the entente with Ethiopia relieved the Khalifa Abdallahi of all about his eastern frontier and so enable him to concentrate on resisting Kitchener. For Menelik this was the real value of the entente. (Sanderson 1969) But the others goes further, and explains that the external policy of Menelik was dominated by an aggressive campaign of territorial acquisition all along the Western frontier of Ethiopia, after the collapse of the Mahdist army and the state at Omdurman. Therefore the Menelik's entente with the Khalifa Abadalla was no more than reinsurance: that he could still tell the khalifa that he had been true to the unity between Ethiopia and the Sudan. (Marcus 1963) The Ethiopian Monarch actually thinking also, of something that goes beyond the immediate strategy of protecting Ethiopia from a supposed British threat. His correspondence, like that of Yohannes, shows signs of desire to promote the co-operation of African Power against "Whites" of whatever breed. And we can easily notice as early as 1896 when he had declared his particular desire for peace with his neighbours. Beside that towards the end of the year 1897, explicitly and in a very direct and clear tone, he warned the Khalifa not only

against " the red English" but also against the European of all nationalities equally, against French and English alike. Hence after warning the Khalifa Abdallahi of the movement of the British, French expedition in or towards the Southern Sudan, he exhorts the Khalifa to be strong lest if the European enters our midst a great disaster will befall upon us. (Sanderson 1969). The continued existence of Menelik's entente with the Mahadist State depended upon his convincing the Khalifa that there was nothing to fear from Ethiopian aggression, above all in collusion with the other enemies the Whites. (Sanderson 1969) The object of the entente, as planned, was to promote the most effective possible Mahdist action against the British, who appeared to the Negus to be threatening Ethiopia almost as directly as the threatened the Mahdist State itself. The entente with Omdurman was therefore an integral and indispensable part of Menelik's solution to Ethiopia's "European problem", or "Menelik's diplomatic dilemma", as so described latterly (Marcus 1966), which the battle of Adowa seem for a time not to have solved but rather to have revived in a new and even more dangerous form. (Sanderson 1964) The monarchies, Menelik and the Khalifa, on the other side actually, they have exchanged both together, some information and assured each other of their intention but apparently never made any formalistic agreement or any entangling commitments.(Marcus 1966) But the others goes further, and explains that the external policy of Menelik was dominated by an aggressive campaign of territorial acquisition all along the Western frontier of Ethiopia, after the collapse of the Mahdist army and the state at Omdurman. Therefore the Menelik's entente with the Khalifa Abdallahi was no more than reinsurance: that he could still tell the khalifa that he had been true to the unity between Ethiopia and the Sudan. (Marcus 1963) From the above mentioned, we can illustrate that at the very least, some very important points. Firstly: The British knew that Menelik and the Khalifa Abdallahi had long had diplomatic contacts with each other (Sanderson 1962). Secondly: The Mahdist State whose political and military posture was deteriorating by the year 1897, its hostility towards Ethiopia were no longer in practices something to be considered, the real situation, Theoretically could better be described

as cold war or at least undeclared peace. Thirdly: The European pressure became more and more threatening the Ethiopian Empire itself. Because of the Great Britain's position as neighbour with very real strategic interest in Ethiopia. Hence the French and the confrontation between them and the Great Britain in the Nile basin, (Marcus 1975; Sanderson 1965) which might well have led Ethiopia into serious difficult with either the Sudan or Great Britain. (Sanderson 1959; Holt 1958)

Conclusion:

The study includes geographical and strategic importance like it gives the historical background of the Ethiopians country .she also pointed to the consequences of the civil wars and political crisis in Ethiopia and especially the period of the struggling for the throne and the power between the three Ethiopian Monarchies, Menilek II (1845-1913), (King of Kings), Theodore, (1820- 1868) and Yohannes IV (1831-1889) and their reflections internally. Also focuses on the interference of regional and international forces in the affairs of the area because of the borders dispute between Ethiopia and her neighbors (Sudan and Egypt) as well as under other motives concerning the Ethiopian Royal Court foreign affairs polices in the region. The research also deal with the rise of the Mahdist state in the Sudan, and her foreign polices towards the both , her neighboring Ethiopia and the European power and their posing threats to the regional area, especially along the Sudanese-Ethiopian frontier.

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