

on the border of the decadent Gondärine kingdom. He established his headquarters at the town of Tänta, from where he could control Mäqdäla and the countries beyond the Bäšəlo river (Wadla, Dälanta, and Dawənt). According to local traditions, M.A. laid the basis of Mammädočč authority through low taxation, military feats and Islamic proselytization. He assumed the title of *imām*. This title and the religious warrior spirit involved were inherited by his successors. Thus, M.A. is considered the eponymous founder of the dynasty.

M.A.'s mother Ləbəyat was a daughter of a Christian lord of Wadla Dälanta. M. had two Christian wives, Alkon from Amba Ləgot, who bore him three sons (Bätto, Adäm and Amäde), and Əǧǧəgayyahu from Ambassäl, who bore two sons Yəməre and Qasime. This tradition of intermarriage with women of Christian descent is characteristic of the Mammädočč dynasty.

The only reference to M.A. in Christian historical sources is found in the account of the campaign of *ase* Ḥäklä Giyorgis against Wällo in 1783–84 (BlunChr 273–89). This account mentions M.A.'s eldest son, Bätto, as a leader of Wärrä Himäno. The latter allegedly submitted to the Christian king and was appointed *däǧǧazmač* of Wällo and Wəčale as a reward. However, he was imprisoned three months later for having refused to support the policy of mass conversion to Christianity. Thereupon M.A. led his people against the rear of the Christian army. It is mentioned that Adäm, his “giant” son, fell in this fierce battle. It seems that M.A. himself died then, too.

The issue of M.A.'s succession is blurred. Bätto probably tried to keep his position as heir for some years, but he was challenged by his youngest brother, Amäde “Kolase” (the father of ḤLibän Amäde), who took the title of *imām* and defended the sovereignty of the Mammädočč not only against the surrounding Christian regional powers but also rulers of other Wällo groups.

Src.: SalTrav; BlunChr 273–89.

Lit.: DOMENICO BRIELLI, “Ricordi storici dei Uollo (con note di C. Conti Rossini)”, in: *CRStud* 78–110; HusIslam; ZERGAW ASFERA, *Some Aspects of Historical Development in ‘Amhara/Wällo’ (ca. 1700–1815)*, B.A. thesis, Haile Selassie I University 1973.

Éloi Ficquet

Maḥámmad “Illálta” Ḥanfaǧé

M.I. (Maḥámmad b. Ḥanfaǧé b. ʿAsa Aydāḥis [ʿAfar sp.: Macammad “Illalta” Canfaxe], d. May

1902, nicknamed *illálta*, lit. ‘permanent water hole, prosperous oasis’, hence ‘the man who brought prosperity’), of the ḤModaytó tribe, was the *sultān* of ḤAwsa from 1862 to 1902. His patronym, Ḥanfaǧé, which is often found in the *sultān*'s family, became a synonym for “*sultān* of Awsa” in colonial literature under various spellings: Anfari, Anfray, Hampharé, etc. His grandfather ʿAsa Aydāḥis was the first to receive the title of *amóyta* (*sultān*). During his rule, M.I. increased the power of Awsa; however, his reign ended in a civil war.

M.I. established his domination over the sedentary tribes of Awsa (Harálla [cp. ḤHarla], Intēǧér, Bayǧrʿó) after several short battles in 1863. In 1866, he burnt ḤTaǧūra, the residence of the Adʿāli *sultāns* who had signed the 1862 agreement with the French. He formed an alliance with the Debné *sultān*, ḤḤúmmad b. Loʿoytá with whose assistance he defeated the Somalis (ḤʿIssa) at Mari in June 1867. Also, after M.I. made a secret agreement with ḤḤúmmad b. Loʿoytá, the latter led the Egyptian forces, headed by ḤMunzinger, to an ambush at Lake ʿUddumma where the Munzinger and his troops were annihilated by M.I. on 15 November 1875. This alliance ended ca. 1894, when M.I. ordered the execution of ʿAbdalqādir b. Arbāhintá, ḤḤúmmad b. Loʿoytá's permanent envoy to Mənilək of Šəwa (later *ase* ḤMənilək II).

M.I. was a ruler who constantly strove for the independence of Awsa; however, the continual threat from ḤEgypt forced him to change his policy. In June 1881, he sent a letter to the French President, Jules Grévy, requesting his protection. The answer came three years later on 23 June 1884, one year after M.I. had signed the “Convention of Friendship and Commerce of Hadelə Gubò” (Addalé-Gub, 15 March 1883) with the Italian Count Pietro ḤAntonelli (known in ʿAfar as Intinoole). Possibly upset by this diplomatic initiative, Mənilək ordered a military expedition against Awsa in 1886. After the convention of Addalé-Gub was unilaterally transformed by ḤItaly into a protectorate treaty with Awsa (1888), the Emperor started preparations for what turned out to be his final battle against the Italians. On 30 January 1896, two months before the battle of ḤʿAdwa, Mənilək's troops, led by *ras* ḤWäldä Giyorgis Abboyye, *azzaž* ḤWäldä Šadəq, and *däǧǧazmač* (later *ras*) ḤTəsəmma Nadāw, defeated the *sultān*'s forces on the plain of ʿArraddó (ḤMillee). However, M.I. was appointed *däǧǧazmač* by Mənilək in 1896.



Maḥammad “Illálta”, portrayed in 1890 by Augusto Valli, from the collection of Enrico Castelli

In ca. 1898, at the instigation of his third wife Rokkiyá, M.I. nominated his nephew Maḥammad, son of his brother Aydāḥis, as his successor. This resulted in a struggle between Maḥammad b. Aydāḥis on the one side, and M.I.’s sons on the other. Known as the “Sangerrá war” (after the name of the *sultān*’s residence), this struggle lasted for ten years after M.I.’s death.

↗Treaties

Src.: BAIRU TAFLA (ed., tr.) *Ethiopian Records of the Menilek Era: Selected Amharic Documents from the Nachlaß of Alfred Ilg, 1884–1900*, Wiesbaden 2000 (AeF 54), 402, 463; GueCopMen 401–06.

Lit.: MorDicAfar 69f., 186, 239, 241–44 (Lit.); GEORGES CLOVIS SAVARD, “Hanfari, Muhammad”, in: *EncAfr* 84.

Didier Morin

Maḥammad Ōbakar

M.Ō. (Amh. *nāggadras* Māhammād, b. 1845, d. 28 March 1915, Addis Abāba) was the second son of ↗Abū Bakr b. Ibrāhīm b. Šāhīm of ↗Zayla^c from the °Afar Ḥasōba (Ōbakartó lineage). He was also known as “Maḥammad *nāggadras*” since he was the chief of the °Afar merchants in ↗Bati. He created the market of Arāmo, between Gaysāsan and Kay, in the vicinity of Farré, Yəfat, where slaves were gathered before being taken to the coast (↗Slavery). ↗Borelli (1890:9) met him with his elder brother, Ibrāhīm, praising their intelligence which, he said, explained their influential role, while Arthur ↗Rimbaud (1954:447) criticized “le redoutable bandit Mohammed Abou-Bekr, l’ennemi juré des négociants et voyageurs européens au Choa”. Oral tradition reports that *aše* ↗Mənālik II used his services to get weapons from the ↗Ottoman Empire. M.Ō., an active arms dealer, seems to have been successful; one tradition claims that it was due to this success that the Emperor conferred the title ↗*nāggadras* on him. M.Ō. established himself at Addis Abāba at the end of the 19th cent.

M.Ō.’s son, Ōbakar *nāggadras* (also known as Abu Bākār Čanno, allegedly being from Čanno in Yəfat, s. GebMollyas 359) had a daughter, Fātuma (b. 1900), who became 20-year-old *ləǧ* ↗Iyasu’s third official wife (or the first according to °Afar oral sources) in a ceremony conducted at M.Ō.’s house in Addis Abāba in 1916. This marriage shows the political importance that the Ōbakartó family still had. Fātuma has been described by witnesses as an “admirable and skilled woman”. It is said that she was baptized in the church of Abo behind the French legation (Jugniac 1979:63), an indication of her royal ambition. However, Iyasu was deposed on 27 September 1916, his relation to M.Ō. also being used as an argument against him (*L’Afrique Française* 1917:9, 11). Leaving Ethiopia, Fātuma took refuge in the French territory in the Godá mountains, in Ḥasōba territory, at Dīdalé (MorDicAfar 29), where she gave birth to a boy she called ↗Mənīlək Iyasu, after Iyasu’s grandfather. Her date of death has not been recorded.

Src.: JULES BORELLI, *Ethiopie méridionale. Journal de mon voyage aux pays Amhara, Oromo et Sidama, septembre 1885 à novembre 1888*, Paris 1890, 9; ARTHUR RIMBAUD, *Oeuvres complètes*, Paris 1954, 447; “Le Nouveau Gouvernement de l’Ethiopie”, *L’Afrique Française, Bulletin mensuel du Comité de l’Afrique française et du Comité du Maroc*, December 1917, 6–13, here 9, 11.

Lit.: GebMollyas 359; MARC FONTRIER, *Abou-Bakr Ibrahim, Pacha de Zeyla – Marchand d’esclaves*, Paris 2003; GONTRAN DE JUNIAC, *Le dernier Roi des Rois, l’Ethiopie de Haïlé Sélassié*, Paris 1979, 63; MorDicAfar 29.

Didier Morin

Maḥammad Yāyyó

Sultān (locally: *amóyta*) M.Y. (°Afar sp.: Macammad Yaayyo, also Yayyo, b. 1885 [or ca. 1896], Gargori, about 30 km from Aysa^ciyta, d. December 1944, Addis Abāba) ruled ↗Awsa from 1927 to 1944. He was the eldest son of the powerful *däggazmač* ↗Yāyyó, *sultān* of Awsa, son of *sultān* ↗Maḥammad “Illálta” Hanfaǧé. M.Y. took over the Sultanate after his father had eliminated any possible challenger to the eldest son’s succession. Different from his father, M.Y. decided to cultivate good relations with the Šāwan leaders. In 1927/28 he visited Addis Abāba where Empress ↗Zāwditu and the Crown Prince, *ras* Tāfāri Māk^wännən (later Emperor ↗Ḥaylā Šəllase I), conferred the title of ↗*däggazmač* on him.

After Ḥaylā Šəllase had gone into exile in 1936, M.Y. became involved with the Italians. It

was agreed with the colonial ministry that M.Y. would remain in his position as the leader of Awsa with a certain degree of internal autonomy, but being directly responsible to the Italian colonial administration. M.Y. was then registered in the colonial payroll and received a monthly salary. In addition, the Italians constructed palaces for M.Y. at Massawa and °Asāb.

In 1939 he was invited to visit Rome where he met Ḥ Mussolini. M.Y. was accompanied by 30 delegates including prominent Awsa leaders like *fitawrari* Yāyyó Ḥámmadu and Kurba Ḥámmadu. M.Y. presented Mussolini with a hand-made carpet woven of golden threads weighing 30 kg which his father *sultān* Yāyyó had received from *ləḡ* Ḥ Iyasu. In return Mussolini gave M.Y. a car and conferred colonial titles on the *sultān* as well as some of the delegates. After 34-days stay in Italy M.Y. returned to Awsa on 13 August 1939. The meat supply of the Italian army was largely organized by Awsa.

After the end of the Italian occupation of Ethiopia and Ḥaylā Šállase's return from exile in 1941, the Emperor summoned *sultān* M.Y. to Addis Abāba. But the *sultān* kept on replying that he was sick. Following a conflict in 1942 with his deputy in 1942, *fitawrari* Yāyyó Ḥámmadu, M.Y. dismissed Yāyyó and appointed a "naturalized highlander" (s. Kassim Shehim 1982), Maḥammad "°Asiyaytu" Gemmessis, son of a former slave of unknown origin living in Awsa and an °Afar woman, °Asiya. After his dismissal, *fitawrari* Yāyyó played a major role in dislodging M.Y. from office. He went first to Dāse, where he met the nominal governor of Wällo province (including Awsa), Crown Prince Ḥ Asfa Wāsān Ḥaylā Šállase, and then the Emperor at Addis Abāba. *Fitawrari* Yāyyó disclosed confidential information to them and accused the *sultān* of "selling" Awsa to France.

Some months after that event, in 1944 ca. 1,500 troops of the *kəbr zäbännä* (the Ḥ Imperial Bodyguard) with a convoy of 34 military vehicles, led by *fitawrari* Yāyyó and *fitawrari* Māk°ännən, invaded Awsa to capture M.Y. at his palace at Ḥinnale. There was only sporadic and uncoordinated resistance, but no effort was made by the *sultān* to challenge the invasion (Kassim Shehim 1982). On 14 April 1944 his wife Ukkubi Madina, daughter of °Ise, shot and killed the lieutenant who tried to arrest *sultān* M.Y. who was lying on his sick bed. Madina was immediately shot dead. M.Y. was arrested and taken to Addis Abāba where he died



Amoyta Maḥammad Yāyyó in Sardo, °Afar; in the background lieutenant Bartelletti, Vice-Commander of the *colonna di Dancali irregolari*; photo 1936, courtesy of Didier Morin

a few months later, reportedly executed. He was succeeded by *sultān* °Ali Mirāḥ, with *fitawrari* Yāyyó Ḥámmadu again becoming the deputy, and °Asiyaytu resumed his former post of supervisor of the *sultān*'s cattle.

Src.: interviews with *sultān* °Ali Mirāḥ, Ḥabib Maḥammad Yāyyó, August 2006, ṣayḥ Amin Ḥazali, *ḥāḡḡi* Yusuf Aḥmad, September 2006; DAVID BUXTON, *Travels in Ethiopia*, London 1949, 162; LEWIS MARIANO NESBITT, *Desert and Forest: the Exploration of Abyssinian Danakil*, London 1934, 262, 283.

Lit.: ABDALLAH A. ADOU, *The Afar: a Nation on Trail*, Stockholm 1993, 51; DAHILON YASIN, *The Rise and Fall of the Sultanate of Aussa with Particular Reference to the Reign of Ali Mirah*, Addis Ababa 1985, 13–19; GĀMĀLADDĪN AŠ-ŠĀMĪ B. IBRĀHĪM B. ḤĀLĪL AŠ-ŠĀMĪ – HĀŠĪM GĀMĀLADDĪN AŠ-ŠĀMĪ, *Al-manḥal fi ta'riḥ wa-abbār al-°Afar (ad-Danakil)* ("The Source of the History and the Narratives of the °Afar [Danakil]"), Cairo 1997, 357–59; KADAFO MOHAMMED, *The Background History of the Sultanate of Awsa*, Nigeria n.d., 36–48; KASSIM SHEHIM, *The Influence of Islam on the Afar*, Ph.D. thesis, Washington 1982, 108f.; MorDicAfar 71f., 74, 242ff.

Yasin Mohammed Yasin

Maḥbār

The Orthodox Christian M. (ግብር), alternately described as religious fraternal associations, are reputed to have existed for hundreds of years in Ethiopia. The original purpose of the M. was to collect money to host feasts on church saints' days. Membership was restricted to Orthodox Christians and specific M. were formed by people who felt an affinity to a particular saint. Members would meet on the saint's day (Ḥ Calendar), which was once a month, in the house of each member in turn.

