

Agaw Mider During the Italian Occupation (1936-1941)

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Abstract

Driven by a desire to avenge their defeat at Adwa and pursue their colonial ambitions in Ethiopia, the Italians launched an aggression to occupy the country. Agaw Mider stood in solidarity with fellow Ethiopians, playing a pivotal role in the defensive struggle. For five critical years, the people of Agaw Mider made immense sacrifices, dedicating themselves wholeheartedly to the national cause. However, the patriotic history of the people of Agaw Mider was often treated dependently of the rest of Gojjam province, as a whole. This article, therefore, explores the patriotic the patriotic history of Agaw Mider for national Sovereignty and unveils the roles that its people played during the five-year occupation. Besides, it investigates the nature of Italian administration and legacies over the study area.

Keywords: Agaw Mider, Occupation, Patriots, Resistance

Introduction

Agaws are well-known ethno-linguistic groups in Ethiopian history. They inhabit Wag/Lasta along Tekeze basin and Gojjam in the Abbay bend. In Ethiopian history, however, the spatial and administrative name known as Agaw Mider was often associated with the Agaw of Gojjam (Ayalew, 2015; Tadesse, 1972). The term “Agaw Mider” is an Amharic equivalent to the “land of Agaw.”

Until the mid-1950s, Agaw Mider remained a very vast administrative part of Gojjam and it covered Metekel, Bahir Dar, and its surroundings as well. Since then, however, Metekel and Bahir Dar were separated from mainland Agaw Mider and made independent administrative units (Alula, 2011). Therefore, Agaw Mider was severely diminished to include what is today officially known as Awi Nationality Administration. The official name of this part of the former Agaw Mider varied partly from one time to another, and equally from regime to regime. During the Derg and even for a few years after the downfall of the Derg regime, it retained the original name_ Agaw Mider Awuraja (Informant: Ato Shitu Ayen). In 1994, the name of the area in concern was given a new name: Agaw Awi Zone.

As the very name indicates, the historic Agaw Mider was mainly inhabited by the Agaw ethno-linguistic groups. According to recent accounts, Agaw is the greatest majority in Awi Nationality Administration (Central Statistical Agency, 2010). In addition, it is the third greatest majority of the people next to Gumuz and Shinasha in Metekel Zone, in what is known as Benishangul Gumuz Regional State (Ayenew, 2018). This study, therefore, treats the Awi and Metekel part of historic Agaw Mider, highly marked with the Agaw Population.

In the last two decades of the 19th century, Agaw Mider as one of the integral parts of the Ethiopian state was affected by successive aggressions directed by several external powers. In these decades, the country encountered an unexpected Mahdist invasion, which resulted from a British crafty agreement known as Hewett Treaty (1884) (Bahru, 2002). As it was one of the integral parts of the country by that time, Agaw Mider contributed to fighting back the Mahdist aggression. Several sources show that they combated the lost battle of Saruha and Metemma, in 1987 and 1989 respectively. Agaw Mider had paid sacrifices in resistance against alien aggressions (Abiyu, 2019; Kebede, 2018).

In the last decade of the 19th century, Ethiopia also met imperialist interest from Italy. Italy managed to take the Red Sea coasts and the rest of Ethiopia's territories (Marcus, 1994). Therefore, Agaw Mider was involved in the campaign to repulse Italians from northern territories. According to oral traditions, Agaw Mider had paid considerable sacrifice to rescue Ethiopia from Italians. It played a vital role in the Adwa campaign. Some lords from the area under discussion gathered fighting forces from their locality. *Ras Mesfin Deresu*, governor of Agaw Mider, takes the forefront place from among those lords. Recruiting considerable hundreds of able horsemen, the lord marched northwards and after months he reached Were Illu, in Wollo. His cavalry joined other forces still awaiting the coming of the emperor there (Informants: *Qes Getahun Habtu* and *Ato Ayalew Kebede*).

Other sources confer that Tekle Haimanot led about six thousand forces recruited from Gojjam, and journeyed to Adwa. As stated earlier, Tekle Haimanot was the governor of all of Gojjam, and *Ras Mesfin Deresu* seems his subordinate who administered Agaw Mider. Therefore, the two lords must have gathered a total of six thousand forces out of which hundreds of cavalries were from Agaw Mider. Whoever mobilized

and led it, the forces of Agaw Mider were one more source of strength which made Italians lose the battle of Adwa (Abiyu, 2019).

Italian Invasion and Local Resistance

Once again interested in colonizing Ethiopia, the Italians were preparing grounds for their future inevitable war in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, they did all their best planning and in October 1935 they opened an offensive war over Ethiopia (Bahru, 2002; Melkamu, 2018). Nevertheless, fascist Italians faced the usual resistance movement from Ethiopians. The resistance movement against the fascist occupation involved ethnic groups from almost all regions of the time and took the lives of thousands of native civilians and actual combatants (Bahru, 2002) including those from Agaw Mider and Agaw people.

The fighting forces mobilized from Agaw Mider and the rest of Gojjam met at Dangila and made necessary preparations. The forces of the first were led by *Dejjazmach* Mesfen Gemechu, chief commander in Gojjam. They marched northwards to stop the enemy's advance to the Ethiopian interior (Abiyu, 2019). During the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the defending forces of the country were generally divided into southern and northern fronts where the latter was arranged into three flanks. Out of those flanks, the western flank mobilized from Gojjam and Begemder was commanded by *Ras* Emiru Haile Silasse (Bahru, 2002). It confronted fascists at Shire where several Agaw chiefs including *Fitawrari* Desta Birru Wesen of Fagita and *Fitawrari* Zelleqe Liku of Belaya and Tumha and many others combated bravely and paid great sacrifice (Kebede, 2018).

The death toll of lesser warlords from Agaw Mider was reported to have been higher. Abiyu listed more than ten major patriots who fell at Shire Front (Abiyu, 2019). However, due to lack of effective cooperation among columns and also arms inferiority, Emiru was defeated and his forces were forced to disperse. Thus, Italians felt strong and speedily advanced to the interior of the country (Melkamu, 2018).

Several Agaw chiefs were credited with having combated the Italians, not only at Shire Front but also at the Battle of Maichew. Former Agaw exiles at Addis Ababa, such as *Fitawrari* Ayele Fenta, *Qegnazmach* Alem Hailu and *Fitawrari* Ayele Noréñ, also went with the Shewan contingents to the north and confronted the Italians at

Maichew. Some of them were killed at the battle and others came back to their homelands and continued to resist (Ayenew, 2010).

According to accounts of informants, forces from Agaw Mider parted their loved family in October 1935 for the north. Several men did not return and those who lost the day arrived home after about seven months. In May, Italians swept through Gonder and controlled Northwest Gojjam (Informants: *Blatta Asres Fenta & Blatta Werqineh Hailu*).

Agaw Mider on Its Immediate Capture

It is said that the Italians warned Agaw Mider by showering the countryside and towns with sculptures of ears made up of tin. The sculpture gave the people two choices: listen and accept or refuse and die. Then their ground force crossed into Agaw Mider and panicked villages (Informants: *Qes Aynekulu Wube & Qes Getahun*).

Military camps were established along the main enemy lines that stretched from Meshenti to Dejen. From among these camps Dangila, Injibara, and Bure were located in Agaw Mider. Dangila was a special stronghold for fascists in the region and served as the main base of arsenal, center of aviation, and colonial administration in Agaw Mider. It was from these camps that Italians made military operations to threaten the locality (Kebede, 2018; Melkamu, 2018). Alula Yohannes conferred the military significance of the region in a line as “... in Damot and Agaw Mider areas (belonging to Italians), there were a total of 23 camps with tough fortresses” and lists down the aforementioned three towns (Alula, 2011).

During the fascist march and occupation, numerous chiefs of Agaw Mider and the rest of Gojjam collaborated with the enemy for some reasons. One of the warlords of Gojjam, *Fitawrari* Gessesse Belew, felt unhappy with the Shewa political dominance and took the forefront position. Gessesse hoped the governorate of Gojjam and saw the fascist invasion as an opportunity to avenge the central government (Alula 2011). He betrayed his people and committed two bold mistakes. Gessesse changed his mind; after reaching Dabat, in Gonder province, he returned to Gojjam. Immediately arriving at Agaw Mider, he is reported to have managed to attack the sons of Mesfin Gemechu (Abiyu, 2019). In addition to this, it was Gessesse who guided Italians to easily capture Debre Marqos on 20 May 1936 (Alula, 2011).

Several chiefs of Gojjam including Agaw Mider were interested in securing some opportunities ranging from local security to personal privileges. The future patriotic leaders including *Dejjazmach* Mengesha Jembere and Negash Bezabih were for shorter times on the side of fascists (Melkamu, 2018). Several nobles who peacefully submitted to the invading fascist forces were allowed to remain with their former titles and were paid considerable monthly salaries. Whatever persuaded the chiefs to give up the national cause, it is clear that their collaboration had made the march of enemy forces speedy and the military casualty of the same simple (Bahru, 2002).

Fascist ‘Administration’ in Agaw Mider

For a few months on their arrival at Agaw Mider, Italians stayed safe from the possible threat of the locality. Because several family members who campaigned for Tigray were dead, every village was in deep grief. At the same time, men were reported to have been confused about what to do next rather than accept alien rule. Unfortunately, however, the Italians themselves provoked local resistance; they introduced two successive proclamations. Firstly, they announced the people to submit each arm and traditional weapon including daggers. In fear of a possible attack, the people responded by submitting all extra, expired, and repaired weapons. Secondly, Italians ordered the people to submit shorts as a tax. The people decided to buy new shorts and submit but Italians urged them to take off their own and do accordingly. Abiyu associated the second proclamation with the strength of Gojjam including Agaw Mider. He reasoned that Italians were aware of local braveness and thus forced men to take off their shorts. But such an order rather shows that fascists despised the people (Abeyu, 2019; Informants: *Ato Ayalew* and *Blatta Werqeneh*).

The issue of shorts agitated chiefs and the peasantry of Agaw Mider to plan an attack. Men from different districts gathered together and met at a place called Tsrigi (in Guangua district) and soon after at Askuna (አስቼና) (in Banja). They agreed that the rich had to contribute with money by which arms would be bought. They called all adult to pick arms and purge Italians out of their locality. They bought arms from those who submitted to the Italians and they expressed the strategy of arms acquisition in a song as follows:

‘ከፈረንጅ ጥበብ የሀበሻዉ በለጠ፤
በቀንጦሮ ሽመል ምኒሽረ ለወጡ፡፡’

‘The cunning of *ferenj* [white] is surpassed by that of *Habesha* [Ehiopian]
He [*Habesha*] exchanged stick with that of *menisher*’ (a kind of rifle)

“የጥቅም ጎጂ ጎበዝ ያበላሻል፤

ፍርስርስ አድርጎ ቶሎ መሄድ ይሻል፡፡”

“The disused hut is getting too disgrace avoiding it and going there is better” (Informant: *Blatta Asres*).

After passing a strong decision, chiefs of Agaw Mider sent a message to *Dejjazmach* Mengesha Jembere, who was at a time employed at Dangila Treasury. They warned him to come to their village and join patriotism lest he would face the consequences. Mengesha, a future famous patriotic leader responded quickly; he hurried to the chiefs and along with him, took considerable arms and money looted from the fascists. On his arrival, Mengesha was advised seriously and was assigned to take responsibility for organizing local patriots. Mengesha mobilized combatants from the locality and had considerable followers who fought for the liberation of Gojjam in general and Agaw Mider in particular. Finally, they opened a surprise attack on the Italians scattered at several camps (*Ibid*).

In the course of the struggle, the patriots of Agaw Mider fought not only Italian contingents but also natives who worked for the benefit of the enemy. The incident was followed by the emergence of two groups in the locality: the *fanno* and the *banda*. The first were either those who submitted in the northern battles and came with fascists to their locality or those who sought personal benefits from the enemy forces. They later refused to give up their national cause and determined to unseat both Italians and collaborators. Villages were terrorized by these groups of riflemen. At day time, the *banda* took upper hands but often encountered surprise attacks by their opposites. All villages suspected of *fanno* bases were burnt into ashes and cattle were looted and brought to Italian camps in Agaw Mider. Even ordinary peasants, who refused to tell the patriots’ hiding places were caught and cruelly lashed. Women and girls were raped and became victims of forced sexual intercourse. To make the hardship of the locality worse, the *fanno* also did the same thing to the suspects of *banda* (Informants: *Ato Ayalew & Blatta Werqineh*).

According to the informants, several men cooperated with the *banda*. They spied on the day-to-day patriotic movements and reported to the *banda*. Such village *banda* are noted to have told the camp *banda* that *Neggdras* Bewqet of Gimja Bet and *Liqekahinat* Kasa of Gembeha had boasted of crushing Italians. Deceived to come to

Injibara, the two individuals were brutally crushed in their head with mallet. Others were hanged and shot (*Ibid*).

Sources reveal that the Church remained consistent in its resistance to the alien threat. It inspired the local opposition to the fascist occupation (Nicolas, 1972). As a result, several churches all over the country are reported to have been attacked by the Italians (Abiyu, 2019). The clergy of Agaw Mider gave moral strength to the patriots and also prayed for all victims of fascists. For this reason, they were equally harassed by the Italians and collaborators (Getu, 2000). Priests were denouncing Italian rule, they were sometimes killed, often beaten, and their wives raped by *banda*. This was the case at Chewsa Mikael in Banja district and Zagra Mikael in Guagusa Shikudad (Informants: *Abba Yihun Wube & Qes Dagnaw Alene*).

All the aforementioned brutalities of the fascists rather increased the commitment of local opposition. Numerous sources indicated that Gojjam was endowed with patriots that usually fought fascists up to death (Bahru, 2002). The patriots from different districts of Agaw Mider met together and took an oath that they would not let Italians freely live and govern. One of the meeting places where such an oath was performed was Kuakra, around Dangela (Melkamu, 2018). *Fitawrari* Yenew Engida (nicknamed *Abba Dina*), *Fitawarari* Addam Mesfin, *Fitawrari* Desta Worqe, and *Qegnazmach* Simeneh Desta were local chiefs of Agaw Mider with fighting forces recruited from their districts, Kuakra, Chara, Banja and Fageta respectively. They are said to have been put under the overall command of Mengesha Jembere. Patriots of the area under discussion fought a number of battles scattered in Ankesha, Azena, Banja, Dangila, and the rest of Gojjam (Kebede, 2018).

Aware of the importance of unity, the patriots of Agaw Mider did not hesitate to jointly work with counterparts in the rest of Gojjam (Melkamu, 2018). The patriots of Agaw Mider invited those of Sekela and therefore coalition forces were formed. On 10 September 1937, these forces took their first military assault on the Italian camp at Injibara and caused the enemy to retreat to Dangila. The victorious forces pursued the fascists and on 14 September they entered Dangila where they met unedifying casualties (Informants: *Ato Ayalew Kebede*). On their arrival at Dangila, the patriots won additional support from Damot, Mecha, and Achefer. The coalition forces combated for the next two days until they were overshadowed by Italian arms superiority and finally disbanded (Melkamu, 2018).

According to Nicolas, the Italians attempted to play one ethnic group against another but failed to succeed (Nicolas, 1972). This can be attested to the fact that the patriotic struggle of Agaw Mider was not confined to the locality. Commanded by Mengesha, forces of the stated area marched as far as Rob Gebeya in Mecha district in today's North Gojjam where they played a vital role in defeating and humiliating Umberto Carrano (Melkamu, 2018).

The balance of power was mostly in the hands of local patriots who gave Italians and *banda* a surprise attack. On their defeat in the hands of local patriots, Italian officers were calculative enough. On many occasions, fascists had faced surprise attacks in Agaw Mider and at times they preferred to retreat alone rather than with their local collaborators (Getu, 2000). When they were attacked at Injibara, Italians “fled for Dangila leaving the responsibility of defending the camp to the bandas”. It seems clear that such military tactics had partly delayed the success of patriots (Ayenew, 2010). In addition to this, to obtain local acceptance Italians are reported to have given Islam and local craftsmen. It is likely that artisans, who were looked for centuries down, due to their occupation, were allowed to freely enjoy their career (Alula, 2011). Fascist Italians also sponsored Muslims to build new mosques and repair those already existing in different regions. Among those repaired mosques, one is found in Dangila, Agaw Mider (Trimingham, 1952).

Besides, the Italians intensified air attacks over many districts of Agaw Mider, out of which Injibara remained the most victim of bombardment. Three individuals named Assegge Ayele, Emire Mer’ed, and Teshale Fenta shot the Italian aircraft. But the aircraft fell over their heads and patriots died. Hearing the incident, the Italians sent ten additional aircraft from Bahir Dar and showered Agaw Mider (Informant: *Ato Ayalew*). However, the commitment of actual patriots plus the tactic of inner patriots gradually weakened the Italian base in Agaw Mider. Several inner patriots who served in camps are noted to have deserted Italians. They handed over arms to the combatants; killed fascist military officers; and finally deserted and left the camp to join actual patriots. This was what inner patriots such as *Grazmach* Siyum Tikku and others did over enemy forces (Informant: *Blatta Werqineh*).

The role of women who won less suspicion from the enemy forces also contributed to the gradual success of patriots in Agaw Mider. *Weyzero* Belaynesh Wubshet, mother-in-law of one of my informants Abba Wuddaj Chekol is said to have announced the

enemy approach by pumping a traditional trumpet locally known as Turumba. *Weyzero* Kebedech Siyum, a patriot who came from Shewa and joined counterparts in Addis Qidam, also played a great role in unseating Italians and the *banda* in Agaw Mider. She was stated to have been armed with pistols and some highly advanced rifles of the time (Informant: *Ato* Wuddaj Chekol).

Agaw Mider towards Liberation

Italians could not have stayed five years in Agaw Mider, but at least three reasons hindered the complete victory of patriots in the region. Firstly, the lords and the gentry did not come together but rather divided into colliding fronts. The five years of bloodshed was a war of brothers that created good opportunities for invaders. The death toll of Italians, especially in the first four years, was small. It was *fanno* or *banda*, all natives, who were often killed on battlefields (Informants: *Blatta* Belay Siyum & *Blatta* Asres). Secondly, patriots of Gojjam in general and Agaw Mider in particular did not have sufficient skill in operating advanced firearms, most of which were captured by the enemy. It was since 1939 that some skilled patriots such as *Girazmach* Guade Habtu came from Shewa to Agaw Mider and trained patriots how to use machine guns. Thirdly, for some years since the occupation, patriots could not secure considerable foreign aid. Before June 1939, Agaw Mider patriots collected only some ammunition through secret contact with the British in the Sudan (Abiyu, 2019).

The year 1940, which signaled an international change in political and military look, can be taken as a landmark for the liberation of Ethiopia generally, Gojjam particularly, and Agaw Mider more specifically. It was a time when patriots were inclined to achieve freedom from five years of alien ‘administration’. It was, however, not only the patriotic efforts but also external intervention that speeded up the success. Fascist Italians in Agaw Mider were conceded to confront coalition forces from the West. Thanks to Italy’s mistake of declaring war on Britain, by January 1940 Emperor Haile Sillase I was in the Sudan. Since then, there has been a conversation between the patriots of Agaw Mider and the emperor who was still in the Sudan (Melkamu, 2018). The patriots and the emperor made moral and intelligence exchanges and planned an inevitable operation to crush the enemy forces and push them to leave the country. Some patriots had written letters of weaponry assistance and others even went to meet the emperor there (Informants: *Ato* Ayalew & *Ato* Wuddaj Chekol).

The Anglo-Sudanese Army and a great number of Ethiopian exiles in the Sudan were organized into the so-called Gedeon, whose commander-in-chief was Major Orede Charles Wingate (Marcus, 1994). According to accounts of informants, Sudanese forces were divided into a group of one hundred troops each commanded by a single British officer (Informant: *Ato Ayalew*). On 20 January 1941, Emperor Haile-Silasse hoisted the Ethiopian flag at Omedla, Ethiopian land on the Sudanese border. After about a month, the Gedeon Forces arrived at Belaya, and Belaya was the headquarter of military operations from then until liberation (Abiyu, 2019). Thence, patriots of Agaw Mider and the rest of Gojjam had easy access to advanced arms. Rifles, machineguns, and ammunition poured into Gojjam and were divided among the patriots there including Agaw Mider (Informant: *Ato Ayalew*).

Italians left Injibara on 16 and Dangila on 20 February 1941 because the patriots and the newly arriving forces were in a position to ambush (Abiyu, 2019). They moved in the direction of Bahr Dar but were crushed by patriots of Achefer and Mecha, and those who attempted to escape in the direction of Debre Marqos by Damot. Finally, on 22 March, Haile-Silasse-I was at Injibara, the seat of Agaw Mider. The entry of the emperor signaled the complete liberation of Agaw Mider, sub province of Gojjam. According to *Blatta Asres* song of admiration for both the British and Emperor Haile-Silasse was sung as follows:

ጠቅል ባይገሰግስ እንግሊዝ ባደርስ፤
ተፈፅሞን ነበር አርብና ሃሙስ።

If teqil (Haile-Silasse I) did not hurry and the English did not arrive. We might have otherwise been destroyed as of Friday and Thursday (Informant: Blatta Asres).

As it was revealed during the five years of Italian occupation, Agaw Mider was disturbed by the joint violence of fascists and local *banda*, some living in the camps and others in their villages. To make the hardship worse, patriots themselves had threatened villages suspected of *banda* base. Sad to say, *banda* and patriots, brothers had fought for years which paved temporal opportunity to the alien rule. The wartime rule itself, of course, was confusing. Tax was not collected properly; regulations were often disrespected and resistance went on to be strong enough. Negash Bezabih, who was assigned to govern Gojjam remained a patriot usually in combat (Denser, 2018). Hailu II who openly cooperated with aggressors (Nicolas, 1972) and was restored in 1939 to the governorate of Gojjam by Amadeo Umberto d'Aosta was unpopular and thus failed to satisfy Italians (Denser, 2018). As such, for five years since occupation,

Agaw Mider was in general instabilities. In short, it was a stateless state (Informants: *Blatta Belay & Qes Dagnaw*).

Conclusion

Italians were preparing grounds for their future inevitable war in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, they did their best planning and in October 1935 they opened an offensive war over Ethiopia. Nevertheless, fascist Italians faced the usual resistance movement from Ethiopians. The resistance movement against the fascist occupation involved Agaw Mider. The fighting forces mobilized from Agaw Mider and marched northwards to stop the enemy's advance into the Ethiopian interior. They confronted fascists at Shire and Maichew where several Agaw chiefs combated bravely and paid great sacrifice for the national cause.

Italians felt strong and speedily advanced to the interior of the country. In May, Italians swept through Gonder and controlled Northwest Gojjam. Their ground force crossed into Agaw Mider and panicked villages. Military camps were established along main enemy lines and they served as the main base of arsenal, center of military aviation, and colonial 'administration' in Agaw Mider.

For a few months on their arrival at Agaw Mider, Italians stayed safe from the possible threat of the locality. Later, however, men and women from different districts gathered together and planned what to do for liberation. Chiefs mobilized combatants from the locality and had considerable followers who fought for the liberation of the country in general and Agaw Mider in particular. Furthermore, they opened surprise attacks on the Italians scattered over several camps. In the course of the struggle, the patriots of Agaw Mider fought not only Italian contingents but also collaborators.

Well aware of the importance of intraregional collaboration, the patriots Agaw Mider did not hesitate to jointly work with counterparts in the rest of Gojjam. They convinced patriots some far away Injibara to joint forces. The joint forces unseated the enemies and forced them to leave one camp for another, though sometimes the balance of power shifted to the latter's side.

In hope, at least of getting acceptance from some sections, the Italians attempted to play one ethnic group against another but failed to succeed. In addition, Italians are reported to have given further sympathy to Islam and craftsmen. Craftsmen, who were looked for centuries, due to their occupation, were allowed to freely enjoy their careers. Fascist Italians also sponsored Muslims to build new mosques and repair

those already existing in different regions. In contrast to this, Italians harassed Orthodox Churches. However, they still failed to arm Muslims and craftsmen against patriots.

Therefore, Italians went on to intensify air attacks over many districts of Agaw Mider, out of which Injibara remained the most victim of bombardment. However, the commitment of actual patriots plus the tactic of inner patriots gradually weakened the Italian base in Agaw Mider. The role of women who won less suspicion from the enemy forces also contributed to the gradual success of patriots in Agaw Mider.

Thanks to Italy's mistake of declaring war on Britain, by January 1940 Emperor Haile-Silasse-I was in Sudan. The patriots of Agaw Mider and the emperor made moral and intelligence exchanges and planned inevitable operations to crush the enemy forces. On 20 January 1941, Emperor Agaw Mider hoisted the Ethiopian flag at Omedla, Ethiopian land on the Sudanese border. Therefore, patriots of Agaw Mider had easy access to advanced arms. Italians left Injibara on 16 and Dangila on 20 February 1941 because the patriots and the newly arriving forces were in a position to ambush. They moved in the direction of Bahr Dar but were crushed by patriots of Achefer and Mecha, and those who attempted to escape in the direction of Debre Marqos by Damot. Finally, on 22 March, Haile Silassie-I was at Injibara, the seat of Agaw Mider. The entry of the emperor signaled the complete liberation of Agaw Mider.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

Author contribution: MT conceived the study, collected the data, and made data analysis and reporting.

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