

ature”, *Bulletin de la Maison des Études Éthiopiennes* 11, 1997, 29–68, here 30.

Kumlachew Fantahun

### Ğaʿfar al-Mirġanī

Ğ. (Ğaʿfar b. [Muḥammad] Bakrī b. Ğaʿfar al-Şadīq b. Muḥammad ʿUṭmān al-Mirġanī, جعفر بن محمد بن جعفر الصديق بن محمد عثمان الميرغني [محمد] بن جعفر; b. 1871, [?], d. 1943, Tāsānāy, Eritrea) was the leader of the Eritrea “branch” of the *Ĥatmīya* ↗ Islamic brotherhood for most of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> cent.

Of Ğ’s first 30 years we know only that he spent his youth in Umm Durmān during the Mahdiyya in the ↗ Sudan (O’Fahey 1994:208). An Italian colonial report notes that together with his brother Ḥasan, Ğ. was taken prisoner by the ↗ Mahdists in a battle. Ğ. makes his appearance in the historical record following the death of his great uncle, ↗ Hāšim al-Mirġanī – until then the head of the *Ĥatmīya* in Eritrea – in 1901. Governor Ferdinando ↗ Martini’s attempts to persuade Hāšim to relocate to ↗ Kārān in order to exercise his authority over Italian Eritrea’s Muslims had failed. Following Hāšim’s death the Italian authorities directed their efforts to Ğ., who had until then resided in ↗ Kassala, and with whom they were more successful. After a brief stay in ↗ Massawa in 1902, Ğ. settled in Kārān where he became the official representative of the *Ĥatmīya* in Eritrea (Bruzzi 2006:437f.).

Colonial intervention in *Ĥatmīya* affairs and the establishment of Ğ. in Kārān generated tensions over leadership, authority and legitimacy especially with his aunt, *šarīfa* ʿAlawīya (daughter of the late *sayyid* Hāšim) who was based in Massawa where she exercised great influence. These tensions bred internal divisions and factionalism in the Eritrean branch of the *Ĥatmīya*. As the daughter of Hāšim and granddaughter of the founder of the *Ĥatmīya*, ʿAlawīya contested Ğ.’s “engineered” leadership in Eritrea. Colonial intervention seems to have disrupted the hereditary transmission of authority in the Mirġanī family. It also shaped and fuelled the division between the Sudanese and Eritrean branches of the *Ĥatmīya* and revealed cleavages revolving around gender and generational gaps.

Tensions came to a head in early 1910 when ʿAlawīya requested the authorities to assign her a residence in Kārān as well as the payment of a monthly allowance. The problem between Ğ. and ʿAlawīya was also played out among their re-

spective followers. In that context a point of great conflict revolved around the authority to appoint new *ḥalīfas* (here ‘representatives’) and collectors of oblations. ʿAlawīya contested her perceived sidelining which took away from her this capacity. Yet, in December 1910 reconciliation between the two parties was reached: ʿAlawīya recognized Ğ.’s official leadership but it was also decided that adepts of the *Ĥatmīya* order in Eritrea were free to follow representatives of their choice regardless of internal loyalties.

Around the same period and in connection to these rivalries, the Italian authorities considered transferring Ğ. to Massawa or to Asmāra but such plans did not materialize and he remained in Kārān. Some tension subsisted between the authorities and Ğ. as to the elimination of his (“foreign”) Sudanese *ḥalīfas* and the appointment of local *ḥalīfas* recognized by the Italian administration (Bruzzi 2006:438–45).

According to colonial correspondence and reports, Ğ. assisted the Italian authorities in mobilizing ↗ *askari* and legitimizing the conquest of ↗ Libya (1911). Italian propaganda included Ğ.’s statements undermining the legitimacy of the Ottomans as “true” and “legitimate” Muslims (Bruzzi 2006:446). Ğ. worked within a framework of accommodation to Italian colonial rule which led to the consolidation of his power and authority in Eritrea at large. Less is known about his activities and positions in the 1920s and 1930s under the fascist authorities in Eritrea.

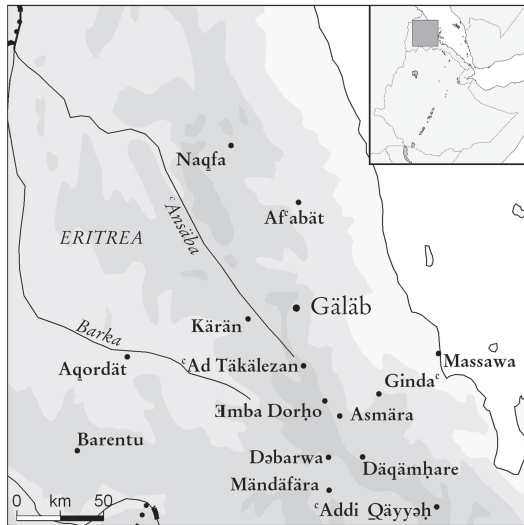
Ğ. was buried in *Ĥatmīya* (al-Sanīya) near Kassala. His son *sayyid* ↗ Bakrī (EAE vol. 5) continued to exercise authority in Kārān. In December 1946 Bakrī was elected President of the Eritrean ↗ Muslim League (Bruzzi 2006:448).

Lit.: SILVIA BRUZZI, “Il colonialismo italiano e la *Ĥatmīya* in Eritrea (1890–1941). *Sayyid* Ğaʿfar al-Mirġanī e *Šarīfa* ʿAlawīya nelle fonti coloniali italiane”, *Africa* (Roma) 61, 3–4, 2006, 435–53; HILLBD 189; JONATHAN MIRAN, *Red Sea Citizens: Cosmopolitan Society and Cultural Change in Massawa*, Bloomington, IN 2009, 184ff., 237; REX SEAN O’FAHEY (ed.), *Arabic Literature of Africa*, vol. 1: *The Writings of Eastern Sudanic Africa to c. 1900*, Leiden 1994, 208; TrIslam 245.

Jonathan Miran

### Gäläb

G. (ገለጌ) is a small town situated in the ↗ ʿAnsāba valley of Eritrea, 47 km north-east of the regional capital ↗ Kārān. It is the main centre of the ↗ Mānsaʿ clan of the ↗ Təġre who live between



the coast and the *ṣ*Rora Mountains. G. is important for the history of *ṣ*printing and education, due to the early presence of a Protestant mission (*ṣ*Evangeliska Fösterlands Stiftelsen). The town has ca. 1,200 inhabitants (Saba Issayas 1996), but at times many more, according to the season.

G. is situated not far from the old boundary of *ṣ*Ḥamasen, in the fertile historical district of Mänsa° Bet Abrəhe. Archaeological findings in G. point to an important role of this area as a “bridge” between the Sudanese cultures and the Ethio-Eritrean highlands, to which it was also linked also in later centuries through a common Christian heritage. Until today, a half of its population professes Christian Orthodox traditions, while most other Təgre groups today are Muslims. Due to missionary activities there are also Protestants and Catholics. The people of G. are traditionally agriculturalists (today ca. two thirds of the permanent population) while some are transhumant pastoralists who move twice a year between the lowlands and the highlands. The latter are Muslims while the Christians are sedentary and live in stone or brick houses following the *ṣ*šalmi land tenure system, in which land is owned by patrilineal families (Saba Issayas 1996).

One of the most important Təgre sub-clans of G. are the °Ad Habay (belonging to the Zawra), who trace their origin to an apical ancestor, Haboy, from *ṣ*°Ad Tämaryam (Sundström n.d.) and who became the *ṣ*təgre ‘bondsmen’ or ‘serfs’ of a noble group. The °Ad Kedraš are a Zawra təgre serf group in G. and Məhəlab. Another sub-

clan in G. are the °Ad Hišal, a sub-unit of the °Ad Gabres sub-clan (ibid.). Two other təgre sub-clans of G. are the °Ad Mähari and the °Ad Bula (one of five lineages of the Bet Abrəhe who had their own chief), and both are from the °Ad Lawaḡ. Another lineage belonging to the five Bet Abrəhe are the °Ad Aylay. Originally not Mänsa° but *ṣ*Ḥabab are the °Ad Ammar from the °Ad Hafärom. The °Ad Doba°at are said to have originated from the *ṣ*Sudan. An exiled, formerly noble, group were the °Ad Dobloy, who were forced to leave due to heavy conflicts over the local chieftaincy accorded by *ṣ*ase *ṣ*Fasilädäs. Some of them migrated back from Ḥamasen to G. in the late 19<sup>th</sup> cent., paying tribute like the other təgre (ibid.).

The Swedish mission established itself in G. by the early 1870s where it founded a school, supported by the governor of this then Egyptian territory, *ṣ*Munzinger. The school was attended by students of *ṣ*Təgrəñña and Təgre background such as the deacon *ṣ*Täwäldä Mädhən Gäbrä Mädhən, who worked on a Bible translation into Təgre in G. Many of the first literary works in the Təgre language were produced in G. For example, the “Spelling and Reading Book”, written by the latter together with Täwäldä Mädhən Gäbru (1889) was produced in G. (but, as with other works produced in G., printed in *ṣ*Ḥmkullu). Other languages were also actively studied at G., with the aim of producing religious texts, such as *ṣ*Onesimos Näsib’s Oromo text of ca. 1890. Pupils such as the educational writer *ṣ*Yəšəḡ Täwäldä Mädhən of the G. school played a crucial role in the later Evangelical Church of Eritrea.

The activities of the missionaries had an important impact on the preservation of the Təgre language and oral literature, as they actively documented the rich heritage of the people of G. and its surroundings. Enno *ṣ*Littmann’s principal Təgre informant Naffa° wäd °Etman was from G. Many of the texts collected within the framework of the *ṣ*Princeton University Expedition thus originate from G., especially those from the Mänsa° Bet Abrəhe, LitPEA, vols. 3–4A, nos. 1–265 (s. also Littmann 1911). The missionary Richard *ṣ*Sundström, stationed at G. starting from 1898, collected and documented a number of Təgre tales, songs, poems and oral traditions. One of these texts from G. was published by Littmann in 1904, and there was already a reference to G. in Littmann 1897. Many of these original transcripts by Sundström are now kept in the Carolina Rediviva Library, Uppsala, and some,

seemingly incomplete, can be found in the Littmann Nachlass in Vienna. Sundström gave an important part of his collection to Littmann during his visit in 1905 for purposes of scholarship and for eventual publication. Sundström's list still exists. Littmann's and Höfner's Təgre dictionary was created partially on the basis of information from these sources. However, only one text has been published so far (1961) by his collaborator Höfner, on the ṠAd Šek (s. a longer text on the history of the Mänsa<sup>c</sup>: Sundström 1913).

G. lies in what today is the *zoba* °Ansäba, in the homonymous district of G. The district of G. is inhabited by ca. 40,000 sedentarists and, according to the season, an additional 40,000 transhumant pastoralists. They speak three languages, Təgrāñña, Təgre and ṠBilin, cultivate mainly corn, sorghum and barley, and grow fruits and vegetables on their farms (Saba Issayas 1996). In collaboration with civil society partners and UNICEF, the Eritrean government has started a new educational system adapted to the semi-nomadic life of the people of G., changing the pattern set at the establishment of the first school in which education was given almost exclusively to the sedentary population received education.

Src.: SABA ISSAYAS (UNFPA/UNICEF), *Traditional Beliefs and Practices that Affect the Health of Women and Children in Eritrea*, ms., Asmara 1996, passim; Uppsala, Carolina Rediviva Library, Richard Sundström Papers; Wien, Akademie der Wissenschaften, Collection of Təgre Texts, in the Enno Littmann Nachlass; RICHARD SUNDSTRÖM, "Names of Families and Tribes", ms., Carolina Rediviva Library, Uppsala, passim; ENNO LITTMANN, *Studies Concerning the Languages, Literature and History of Abyssinia: the Legend of the Queen of Sheba in the Tradition of Axum*, Leyden – Princeton, NJ 1904 (Bibliotheca Abessinica 1); ID., *Tagebuch: Abessinische Reise 1905–1906*, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass Littmann (NL 245 – E. Littmann 88); ID., "Tigrē-Erzählungen", *ZDMG* 65, 1911, 697–708; LitPEA.

Lit.: ArEvang 358f.; ENNO LITTMANN, "Die Pronomina im Tigre", *ZA* 12, 1897, 188–230, 291–316; ID., "Naffa<sup>c</sup> Wad °Etmän", *Der Neue Orient* 2, 1918, 587–91; RICHARD SUNDSTRÖM, *The History of the Mensa People* [in English and Təgre], Asmara 1913 (1923).

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### Ġimma Sänbäte

*Fitawrari* Ġ.S. (ጳ.ጵ ፡ ሰጎቡቴ, b. ca. 1876, Aleltu, Šäwa, d. 1940, Bulga) was one of the noted leaders of the patriots of northern ṠŠäwa from 1936 to 1940 (ṠResistance). He belonged, through his father, to the Maru sub-tribe of the ṠAbbičuu clan of the Oromo while through his mother he came from a ṠBulga ṠAmhara family. His father

had taken part in all the campaigns of expansion of *aše* ṠMänilək II and in the Battle of ṠAdwa.

As a boy Ġ.S. was sent to the local church of Eġersa Giyorgis. As a young man he served in Addis Abäba as a clerk in court. He was then appointed judge (*wänbär*) of Bulga where he stayed for several years. Probably it was at this time that he was given a rifle by Empress ṠZäwditu in recognition of his services, including his participation in the Battle of ṠSägäle. He then returned to Addis Abäba to earn his living as a private (traditional) lawyer.

After the Italian invasion had reached Addis Abäba, patriotic forces moved from there to their native areas in different parts of Šäwa to start the guerrilla struggle. ṠAbbäbä Arägay and Ġ.S. were among their most prominent leaders (Greenfield 1967:229). Ġ.S. quickly raised a force of thousands of followers. In the summer of 1936 they carried out attacks on Italian convoys along the Addis Abäba–Däbrä Bərhan road inflicting heavy casualties and fought against collaborators. In the years 1936 and 1937, Ġ.S. coordinated his struggle with the patriots of Bulga and operated in Aleltu, Koremaš (where Mänilək had a big ammunitions depot) and Assagert, Bulga. In early 1937 the Italian forces intensified their pressure and Ġ.S. had to withdraw to the gorges of the ṠKäsäm valley (Ministero dell'Africa Italiana 1939:168). Family sources confirm this but reject an Italian claim that he had been wounded.

Ġ.S. took part in the political activities of the patriots of Bulga and ṠTägulät to crown a king who would coordinate the patriotic movement hopefully in all of Ethiopia (Taddäsä Zäwäldē 1967/68:105; Tabor Wami n.d.:6). When, finally, their efforts led to the crowning of Mälakä Šähay, the son of ṠIyasu, as Ethiopian king at the end of August 1937, he attended the coronation and was given, like several other Bulga patriots, the title of *fitawrari* (Taddäsä Zäwäldē 1967/68:105; Tabor Wami n.d.:6). The new king died not long afterwards, thus depriving the movement of a much hoped for leadership.

Italian reinforcements in the region in 1939 led to greater pressure on Ġ.S.'s guerrilla. In 1940 he suffered from malaria while hiding in the house of a relative near the Käsäm River in Bulga. After the Italian garrison in the area received a tip-off he was discovered, but, refusing to surrender, he was killed in a shoot-out. The plan of the collaborators to cut off his head and display it on various marketplaces was thwarted by patriot forces.