

Coup d'état 1916

Ləǧ /Iyasu, son of *ras* Mikaʿel Ali of Wällo and grandson of *ase* Mənilək II, became a de-facto ruler of Ethiopia after the death of *ras* /Täsämma Nadāw in 1910. With the growth of his power, the Šāwan party, lead by *fitawrari* /Habtä Giyorgis, *ras* /Wäldä Giyorgis and probably *däggazmač* Täfäri Mäkʷännən (later *ase* /Haylä Šəllase I), among others, grew afraid of losing its central position in the country. The international context of /World War I and the ruler's support for the Central Powers was also of some meaning for the Šāwan party, mostly connected with the Allies. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church felt at the same time threatened by the pro-Islamic sympathies of Ləǧ Iyasu.

As a result, in 1916 the nobles and clergy used Iyasu's visit to Harär for a coup. At a meeting on 27 September in Addis Abäba, they accused Ləǧ Iyasu of betraying both Mənilək's will and the Christian religion. They proclaimed Mənilək's daughter /Zäwditu the new Empress and Täfäri Mäkʷännən the Heir to the Throne, with the title of *ras*. *Fitawrari* Habtä Giyorgis became the third member of the triumvirate. On 11 February 1917, Zäwditu was crowned Empress (*nəgəstä nəgəstat*). The Wällo army led by *ras* Mikaʿel was defeated by Šāwans under *fitawrari* Habtä Giyorgis at /Sägäle on 27 October 1916. Ləǧ Iyasu would spend the next years hiding until he was arrested and imprisoned in 1921.

Src.: BORG G. STEFFANSON – RONALD K. STARRET (ed.), *Documents of Ethiopian Politics, the Decline of Menelik II to the Emergence of Ras Teferi, Later Known as Haile Selassie 1910–1919*, vol. 1, Salisbury 1976, 113–18; HSLife I 43–59; GebMollYas 60–96, 354–88; DIDIER MORIN, *Le texte légitime. Pratiques littéraires orales traditionnelles en Afrique du nord-est*, Paris 1999 (Langues et Cultures Africaines 25), 260.

Lit.: HAROLD GOLDEN MARCUS, *The Time and Reign of Menelik II of Ethiopia*, Oxford 1975, 272–81; ID., *Haile Sellassie I, the Formative Years, 1892–1936*, Berkeley, LA 1987, 18–27; BZHist 127f.; TSTarik IV 108f.; HANNA RUBINKOWSKA, "Wybrane aspekty panowania Lydza Ijasu, 1909 – 1916", *Biuletyn Polskiego Towarzystwa Afrykanistycznego "Afryka"* 12, 2000, 25–38; ID., "Coup d'état in Ethiopia – 1916", *Studies of the Department of African Languages and Cultures* 29, 2001, 39–52.

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Coup d'état 1960

On 13 December 1960 A.D., Brigadier General /Mängəstu Nəway, commander of the Imperial Bodyguard, and his younger brother /Gərmame

Nəway, governor of Ğiggiga province, occupied the imperial palace in Addis Abäba. Their supporters included General /Mulugeta Buli, former Imperial Guard commander and personal Chief of Staff to the Emperor, *ase* /Haylä Šəllase I; Brigadier General Şagge Dibu, Chief of Police; Lieutenant Colonel /Wärqənäh Gäbäyyähu, chief of security; and Getaččaw Bäqqälä, Acting Minister in the Marine Department; and parts of the Imperial Bodyguard's rank and file.

On 14 December 1960, the rebels detained *alga wäras* /Asfa Wässän Haylä Šəllase, announced the overthrow of *ase* Haylä Šəllase who was in Brazil on a state visit and appointed *alga wäras* Asfa Wässän Haylä Šəllase as the new Emperor. The rebels also appointed *ras* /Əmməru Haylä Šəllase, *ase* Haylä Šəllase I's cousin, as premier for a government that advocated an 11-point socialist and nationalist program under a constitutional monarchy. Major-General /Märəd Mängäša, chief of staff of the armed forces, and Major-General Käbbädä Gäbre, chief of ground forces, opposed the rebels. The rebels sought to avoid a battle by opening negotiations with these two loyalist officers through the US military attaché. However, Märəd Mängäša and Käbbädä Gäbre used the interlude to gather reinforcements.

On 15 December 1960 Märəd Mängäša announced that troops had deployed throughout Addis Abäba and called on all Ethiopians to remain loyal to the Emperor. The following day, he declared that the C. had failed. On 17 December 1960 countless thousands of Ethiopians lined the streets to welcome the Emperor's return. However, fighting continued on the outskirts of Addis Abäba for some days. On 21 December 1960 the authorities captured Getaččaw Bäqqälä while Mulugeta Buli, Şagge Dibu, Wärqənäh Gäbäyyähu committed suicide. On 24 December 1960 soldiers killed Gərmame Nəway and captured Mängəstu Nəway.

On 12 January 1961 the Emperor pardoned all Imperial Guard privates and non-commissioned officers who had participated in the C. but indicated that officers would be placed on trial. Two officers eventually received prison sentences of 15 and 10 years respectively. On 30 March 1961 Mängəstu Nəway was hanged in a public square in Addis Abäba. The failed C. attempt resulted in numerous casualties in the armed force (29 killed; 43 wounded), Imperial Guard (174 killed; 800 wounded) and among the civilian popula-

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tion (121 killed; 442 wounded). At least seven foreigners also died in the fighting.

The events that led to the C. attempt centred on dissatisfaction with the growing corruption, inefficiency and incompetence of the Imperial government. The C. plotters also expressed sympathy for the plight of the landless peasants and believed they could be freed from exploitation by a more socially conscious government.

The most important consequence of the C. concerned its impact on Ethiopia's intelligentsia, students and armed forces, all of which became more convinced that a more modern, responsive

government would ensure social and economic progress for all Ethiopians.

Lit.: RICHARD GREENFIELD, *Ethiopia: a New Political History*, London 1965, 375–418; "Ethiopia", *Keesings Contemporary Archives* no. 17882, 14–21 January 1961; no. 18107, 20–27 May 1961; CHRISTOPHER CLAPHAM, "The Ethiopian Coup d'État of December 1960", *Journal of Modern African Studies* 6, 4, 1968, 495–507; JOHN MICHAEL COHEN, "Traditional Politics and the Military Coup in Ethiopia", *African Affairs* 74, 295, 1975, 222–48; REIDULF KNUT MOLVAER, "About the Abortive Coup Attempt in Addis Ababa from 5 Tahsas to 8 Tahsas 1953 (14–17 December 1960)", *NEAST* 3, 2, 1996, 21–38; Paris Match no. 612, 31 December 1960, 21.

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