

STATE FORMATION OF WOLAITTA AND ITS KINGDOM UP TO 1894

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Abstract

This study portrays state formation of Wolaitta and its kingdom up to 1894. The main factors that led to state formation of Wolaitta were the developments of socio-cultural and economic dynamics which was related with the settlement in Omo River Valley since the time Neolithic Revolution. The socio-cultural dynamics such as clan development, conflict, control to lead the area and others. The economic dynamics include the beginning of agriculture due to sedentary way of life in Omo River Valley. These dynamics led to the clan union as well as divergence, leadership practice, agriculture, trade and the like. The study moves on to a discussion of the process of state formation of Wolaitta and its kingdom that established various dynasties. The state formation of Wolaitta implicated the rise of strong kingdom and highlights state structure. Finally, the study identifies rather intriguing topics for further inquiry.

Keywords: State Formation, Kingdom, Wolaitta

I. INTRODUCTION

States arose independently in different places and at different times, where the favourable conditions existed. It is natural to consider few theories to the beginning of state formation including Africa.¹ Generalizations are not applicable to all state formations in the world because each them are treated from its own perspective.² Some theories largely focus on the development of agriculture, and the population and organizational pressure that followed and resulted in state formation. Such argument believed that pressures result in integrative pressure for rational people to unify and create a state.³ On other hand, conflict theories of state formation regard conflict and dominance of some population over another population as key to state formation. In contrast with voluntary theories, these arguments believe that people do not voluntarily agree to create a state to maximize benefits, but that states form due to some form of oppression by one group over others. Voluntary theories contend that diverse groups of people came together to form states as a result of some shared rational interest. A number of different theories rely on conflict, dominance, or oppression as a causal process or as a necessary mechanism within certain conditions and they may borrow from other approaches. In general the theories highlight: *economic stratification, conquest of other peoples, conflict in circumscribed areas, and the neoevolutionary growth of bureaucracy.*⁴

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Friedrich Engels articulated one of the theories of the state based on anthropological evidence in his work entitled, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). The theory of Engels developed from study of *Ancient Society* by Lewis H. Morgan and from the sketches of this work by Karl Marx on the *Asiatic Mode of Production*. Engels argues that the state developed as a result of the need to protect private property. Class antagonism and the need to secure the private property of those living on the surplus production produced by agriculturalists resulted in the creation of the state. The anthropologist Morton Fried further developed this approach, positing social stratification as the primary dynamic underlying factor for the development of the state.⁵ Similar to the economic stratification theories, the conquest theory contends that a single city establishes a state in order to control other tribes or settlements it has conquered. Such theory has its roots in the work of IbnKhalidun as well as Jean Bodin, but it was first organized around anthropological evidence by Franz Oppenheimer who argues that the state was created to cement inequality between peoples that resulted from conquest.⁶

Robert Carneiro developed a theory aiming to provide a more nuanced understanding of state formation by accounting for the fact that many factors (surplus agriculture, warfare, irrigation, and conquest) did not produce states in all situations. He concluded that while population pressure and warfare were mechanisms of state formation, they only created states in geographic regions circumscribed, or walled off from the surrounding area. Geographic barriers (or in some cases barriers created by nomadic raiders or by rival societies) create limitations on the ability of the people to deal with production shortfalls, and the result is that warfare results in state creation. In situations of unlimited or vast agricultural land there is no pressures, hence, warfare allowed people to move elsewhere and did not spur creation of a state.⁷ Still other theories on state formation connects its foundation with evolution of leadership systems. This argument sees human society as evolving from tribes or chiefdoms into states through a gradual process of transformation that lets a small group hierarchically structure society and maintain order through appropriation of symbols of power. Groups that gained power in tribal society gradually worked towards building the hierarchy and segmentation that created the state.⁸

In Africa's experience, the state formation has been linked to the broader triple heritage of African history and culture to indigenous, Islamic and western traditions. Some states in Africa were primarily products of purely indigenous forces; some were products of interaction between indigenous and Islamic elements; and others were outgrowths of a basic interaction between indigenous and western ideas. There have been occasions when the heritage has indeed been a fusion of all three-indicating a historical meeting point involving Africa, Islam and the West.⁹

The state formation of Ethiopia begun with the kingdom of Aksum. There was also the pre-Axumite territories such as Punt and D'mt in the horn of Africa. The Punt land existed before three millennium B.C whose myrrh was linked by Ancient Egypt. The Ancient Egyptians sailed to whole Red Sea territory for trade. The land of Punt occupy most of the territory of Southern Egypt up to Somali of whole East African coast including the present

Northern Ethiopia (Tigray), and Eritrea. Besides, the second and mostly linked territory of the present north Ethiopia was D'mt. The territory of D'mt having its link with the large settlement of Yeha with Sabea (South Arabian) culture which existed prior to the establishment of Aksum kingdom. D'mt was the predecessor of Aksum kingdom. The Aksum appeared in the first century B.C in northern part of the present day Tigray region of Ethiopia. The kingdom of Aksum had strong link with South Arabia and other Middle-East areas. The Axumite rulers claimed Menelik I as the son of king Solomon of Jewish to claim divine power. The introduction of Christianity during the reign of Ezanain in the fourth century strengthened the link to Israel. Aksum was well organized political unit with having various economic activities. Due to the internal and external factors the kingdom of Aksum was declined. The other dynasty rose in north which was known as the Zagwe dynasty in the second half of twelfth century to thirteenth century.¹⁰

II. METHODOLOGY

The primary and secondary sources have been used in the writing of the present article. The sources such as letters, private documents, government documents, oral accounts, diaries, artifacts/ antiquities, coins, observation, various archival documents, manuscripts, gazetteers, reports, texts, thesis/dissertations, books, magazines, reviews, journals, periodicals, proceedings, encyclopedias and related available sources to this study were used. The sources are available at different places and institutions. The data collected from both the primary as well as secondary sources are critically analyzed and interpreted to write of this article.

III. DISCUSSION AND RESULT ANALYSIS

3.1 The Development of State formation of Wolaitta and its Kingdom up to 1894

The state formation of Wolaitta was related with the early settlement of the people in Omo River Valley. Thus, the state formation of Wolaitta was as old as the beginning of its sedentary way of life in Uma (Omo) valley. As of the rest of the other world that started in river valleys, Wolaitta also experienced similar early achievements. For instance, the civilization and state formation of ancient civilization of Egypt started at Nile River Valley. Mesopotamia (current area of Iraq and Iran) was started at *Tigris* and Euphrates River Valley, China was started in Young-tze and Yellow river valley, India was started in Ganges River Valley and other too in river valleys. In the case of Africa rivers such as Congo, Zambezi, Limpopo, Niger and the like are bases for human settlements and achievements including state formation. Ethiopia the rivers such as Tekeze, Blue-Nile, Barro, Awash, Gojjeb, Wab-Shebelle, Genale, Athbare and Ghibe or called as Uma (Omo) in lower part had the same deeds as of other river valley achievements.¹¹

The particular issue of state formation of Wolaitta had strong bonds with the river Uma (Omo) and caves such as Wawu, MochesBorrigo, Arujja and the like. The life in the cave and its sheltering practice shifted to the construction of cave-shaped-shelter known as *Wolaitta-keetta* (Wolaitta house) led to the permanent settlement. The permanent settlement, socio-economic and cultural developments led to the state formation in Wolaitta. The

developments of leadership also begun from cave. The state formation of Wolaitta was also linked some terms such as Ilala, Badiya, Badigala, Arujjia, Gada, Barta, Sane, Sabore, Samore, and the like. Some of these were even sometimes called as the people of the Wolaitta, and others explain them as rulers. Some sources indicate that *Wolaitta-malla* established the first dynasty till it was overthrown by Arujjia, contrary others claim *Arujia* was taken as the ancient people of the Wolaitta and insist that *Arujia* were rulers whose clan was went out of Wolaitta to exile to distances.¹²

The development of agriculture by the early clan indicates the settlement of the people and leadership. Sources do not indicate the exact time when either of Ilala, Badiya and Arujjia or any other groups begun agriculture. However, the archaeological excavation confirms the agriculture started in this area during the holocene epoch which is between 11, 000 to the present. Under one of the three holocene period category: Greenladian period, 11700 to 8200; Northgrippian period from 8200 to 4200 and Maghatyan period is from 4200 to present, thus, Wolaitta state formation was linked to the Maghatyan period.¹³

The pre-historic remains of Wolaitta people, as clearly mentioned in the works of Erich C. Fisher on the archaeological excavation of MocheBorago cave, can be stretched back to thousands of years, and its past developments has been appeared since then. However, Wolaitta as a nation had passed many ups and downs in its history till this day.¹⁴ According to WoldemariamLisanu in a booklet entitled "*WolayttaAannissaa*," Wolaitta independently ruled the whole areas of Damot kingdom for a long period of time (for about 240 years); controlling various territories in South and South Western parts of the present-day Ethiopia.¹⁵

At the beginning, the leadership of Wolaitta and its neighboring Uma peoples had common administration origin for both the clan leadership and dynastic systems. Later on, sources state that Wolaitta had influence on neighbouring states. In the period under discussion, the seven brotherhood nations were under one political system. Those were Wolaitta, Gamo, Boroda, Kucha, Dawuro, Konta and Gofa. It was for this fact that Klausberger concludes "Referring to their divine origin the story tells that *Wolaitta-malla*, finally were reorganized as kings by other clans living there,"¹⁶ and he adds "waging war on the neighbour they (*Wolaitta-malla*) expanded their power to the territories of Kucha, Gamo, Borroda, [Dawuro] and [Wolaitta]."¹⁷

After the time had passed, the people demanded to be under strong leadership, which led to collective rule of the Uma people, however, they were became independent states later. As oral history state the Uma people had one descent but later on they were dissected and developed their own socio-economic and political way of life as well as politically independent several unites. During the clan leadership, Wolaitta and its neighbors were ruled by any of the elected *Malla* clans by the process of *chaneta/doruwa*. The election was on the basis of sociocultural and economic merits of an individual. Among those peoples any elected individual could be the clan leader. Later, the state of Wolaitta was shifted to dynastic ruling systems, and based on existing literature there were three dynasties: *Arujia*, *Wolaitta-malla* and *Tigre*.¹⁸

During the *Malla* clan leadership ruling, the leader was chosen from the present Omotic area people by *chaneta/doruwa* (direct vote) for maximum two years term. In this process individual rule one solid year, and a chance given twice thus, *malla* is the ruling family by direct vote. Before the establishments of *malla* rule in

different areas, the Omotic peoples of Wolaitta, Dawuro, Kucha, Konta, Borroda, Zala, Uba, Gofa, Zayise, Koyira, Oyda, Gamo and others were ruled together by a leadership. Through process of time they claimed their independent states. Their sense of oneness continued until the Oromo population movement which highly influenced the southern part of the area via Abaya and Chamo lakes, as well as the western part via Jimma. In addition, the wars of *Imam* Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi also taken the attention of Wolaitta-malla dynasty to the north, to the area of Bilate river where there was a threat from invading forces of *Imam*. This further aggravated the dissection of the other Omotic people from Wolaitta because Wolaitta gave attention to defend its external enemy from northern direction.¹⁹

There were factors that enabled state formation of Wolaitta. The early state formation of Wolaitta was started due to hunting, conflicts and war, agriculture, trade and the developments of social complexity. According to informants, Wolaitta people were hunters. During this time, they hunt wild animals, and after time had passed they hunted humans too secure the resources from any external threat. For long, Wolaitta people lived in caves and forests. When the time had passed they begun to build huts in in cave shapes, and lived in that hut. Then-after they settled in specific place and they continued to hunt. When they begun farming they hunt animals as part of their tradition, and again they hunt any human who was considered as either enemy. After hunting if he killed either animal and human, he was given higher social status. However, through process of time killing human being is taboo, and they left such practice and focused to hunt only wild animals. Hunting and killing wild animals such as lion, leopard, cutting the tail of elephants, zebra, buffalo, antelope and the like allow him to be honored. The community gave him honoring title known as *gadawa*.²⁰

The *gadawa* had the responsibility to lead hunting. The pre-1894 hunting may take a week to one month or more for further strengthen due to various reasons. The animals may defend themselves by hiding in dense forests. It is mandatory to him to kill during hunting. For this reason, he took a lot of time until he kills and unless he will be *monicha* (non-fighter or non-warrior). It was shame to be called as *monichain* Wolaitta. Hunting had led to social competition for honor and psychological proud. Thus, hunting led to competition of individuals among each and accepted by the community as better to perform including leadership. Thus, the one who had the better practice of hunting individual and his clan had better chance to come to the position of leadership. This speculation is wisely accepted by the oral history to the formation of state of Wolaitta.²¹

The war and conflicts among clans became another factor for state formation in Wolaitta. Oral informants states that during the development of Wolaitta to statehood there were conflicts and war among the clans to dominate each other. The clans and individuals fought for the supremacy of socio-economic status. For instance they fought to control resources such as land. After fighting they controlled large territory and resources, and claimed the leadership over the conquered clans and area. The quest for social status was the other factor in which clans needed supremacy and the control over the other clan. In this regard, the hunting status, the wealth he accumulated and the skill he practiced were taken as parameters to leadership position. Thus, the clan conflicts and war among clans led to the leadership due to the strong personalities of *olancha* (warrior) and the concept of ruling as entity.²²

The practice of agriculture (crop cultivation and animal herding) and trade facilitated for the state formation in Wolaitta. When the sedentary way of life begun the competition to control for the suitable land became the issue

of the time. Not only this but also the accumulation of wealth made the competition to control the community. Besides, the to this trade and the demand to control trade activities led the competition among the community members to control the area. The agriculture and trade were source of conflicts that led to the leadership in which the wealthy man, his family and clan honored by the community. Thus, the rest submitted themselves to those who controlled upper-hand at that time. Thus, through time passage the practice of trade were expanded to wider territory which led to the controversy among the people lived at that time, and the curiosity to control agricultural practices facilitated to the leadership in a system; state formation. Thus, ruling group took the responsibility to keep the safety for their wealth and their social security, in-turn the society paid anything which is demanded from it to the ruler, and led the Wolaitta state to be formed Uma River Valley.²³

Varies social complexities such as immigration, emigration, marriage, funeral, communal social activities and other socio-cultural and economic integration led to the formation of Wolaitta. Sharing and practicing such socio-cultural and economic activities demanded the freedom and security of the people. The people interacted without any restriction when they were granted freedom and security in their life. Thus, the complex social activities needed order and guided by their respective leaders, and when it is difficult to control there they demanded it has to be solved by its respective clans known as *Dabuwa-Dubushsha*.²⁴

For a long time clan leaders settled any social complexity, and when it is difficult they settled it in the settlement of collective clan representation. When the clan order was not effective and the societal nature became more complex, and then the clans discussed in a process known as *ya'ato* control such order. At the time, they agreed to select one clan to lead the whole clans and the land while others must be submitted to them until they finish their term in one year to two year and such process was called *chaneta/doruwa*(giving responsibility to rule voluntary for some time interval). After a long period of *chaneta/doruwa* system had passed the one of the clan unable to be voluntary to pass its power to the next clan and confirmed the power until his son succeeded him. Then his son stayed again his elder son succeed him. Then after the elder male succession continued and his clan defended his position. After long process, the society developed the mentality that rulers were chosen by the creator. As informants state people believed that challenging and disobeying the ruler is challenging and disobeying creator.²⁵ For this reason they accepted dynastic leadership. Through process of time, *Wolaitta-malla* clan established its dynasty for long ago before thirteenth century, and the thirteenth century was the era in which the first written record was appeared.²⁶

Oral history states that the Omotic peoples such as such as Konta, Gofa, Kucha, Dawuro, Gamo, Boroda and others had one ancestor with Wolaitta, and believed that their original birth place was Omo River had common history of state formation despite their separation in later ages. They were believed to be from one ancestor and settled to the present territory sharing the same socio-cultural and political similarity since the time immemorial. Among the *Mala* clans, *Wolaitta-mala* which is old among all dynasties of the area usurped authority on rest clans and had became popular in the area. *Wolaitta-mala* had begun to rule the rest clans in Omo River Valley until the above people were separated as independent state since 13th century.²⁷ Later in the close of the 15th century, the

dominancy of *Wolaitta-mala* clan was weakened, and the rest groups established their separate chiefdom and kingdoms.²⁸

Wolaitta became dominant political unit with strong state structure since ancient time. It is believed that the state hood of Wolaitta was began at Mount Damota area Omo Valley at a particular place of Shela-Sade at Washaqa, then onwards Wolaitta, was ruled the region by both presidential and dynastic political systems. Since the beginning of the state formation in the Uma valley until the beginning of the dynastic ruling system, presidential political system had been the uniting forces of the region.²⁹ The pre-historic period of Wolaitta people, as clearly mentioned in the third round report on the archaeological excavation of Moche-Borago cave, can be stretched to thousands of years back. Thus, the state of Wolaitta was formed before Christ era and widened gradually to all directions.³⁰

The territorial expansion policy of the then time all submitted and subjugated territories were subject to the orders of Wolaitta state. The newly invaded peoples and clans were accustomed to Wolaitta. This dynamic expansion strategies they had built strong empire with unique cultural heritages and practices. Later, this prominent kingdom of Wolaitta shrunk and crunched down to six villages of the current Kindo-Didaye districts (*UsuppunHudugaKinduwaa*) such as Shela (Shatintamo and Woshaqa palaces), Didaye (Gomose palace), Zaro, Sime, Gocho and Patata-Bossa in size because of the failure of the then kingdom until the coming of Tigre dynasty to power in 16th century.³¹

Wolaitta-mallahad shaped the political administrative hierarchy and functions at all levels before thirteenth century. It was golden age during the reign of *kawoMotolomi*. The territory was stretched up to Jama River (North Shawa) and up to Turkana Lake in the north and south respectively. This dynasty had more many kings that ruled at a long period of time. Though it is difficult to put the exact date because of lack of written record, time lengthen, lack of interest to know the past, lack of social memory and due to various sociocultural factors, oral history put Wolaitta-malla as pioneer of Wolaitta state. However, the research investigated the depth investigation claim Wolaitta-mall came to power twice. Wolaittta-mall, Arujia, Wolaitta-malla and Tigre. The last dynasty was Tigre dynasty, and it is well remembered dynasty. This dynasty was responsible for making of the today's shape of Wolaitta. This dynasty remembered with strong military technology. The dynasty had strong diplomatic relations with neighboring states and political principalities. Thus, since its state formation and dynastic establishment Wolaitta practiced state structure and function.³²

Before its conquest by Abyssinan army in 1894, Wolaitta was one of the most powerful and well-organized kingdom in the south which was ruled by different and successive dynasties. However, there are discernible variations among scholars and informants regarding the formation of state and number of the ruling dynasties. Accordingly, TeshomeTadesse and s well as F. Klausberger explain the state formation to twelfth century while AbaynehGirma, AltayeAlaro, BerhanuBibisoandWanaWagesho believed it to thirteenth century. All Sources bases the appearance of the first *Wolaitta-mall*dynasty. Similarly, Beckingham and Huntingford state that "the first dynasty is said to have begun in the time of YekunoAmlak (1268).³³Markakis suggests fifteenth century for kingship in Wolaitta and based only Tigre dynasty but there were two dynasties such as Wolaitta-malla and Arujia before the

Tigre dynasty.³⁴ The thirteenth century was the period in which Wolaitta reached its high-time during *kawoMotolomi*, and the kingship and state formation go back to the contemporary to Aksum kingdom.³⁵

The archaeological and oral history indicate the formation of dynasties in Wolaitta to the time of Aksum. Some oral informants give more than three dynasties but they do not mention the name of the kings. For instance, they state that Badiya, Badigadala, Bada, Gada, Hilala as dynasties but such claims needs strong evidence to prove. The existing sources give the time for the state formation was 12th and 13th centuries and its dynasties in two and three. The assumption to take the state formation of Wolaitta into the dawn of thirteenth century seems to be the unreasonable and imaginary conclusion by the former works and literature which is disproved by this study.

Most of the existing sources trace the first kings of Wolaitta since 12th century,³⁶ however, the oral history and some assumptions of the recent literature put to the very remote past. The former assumption based the link between *AbuneTekleHaymanot* (known by Wolaitta community in his nick name *shumuruko* or *Ichega*) and *kawoMotolomi* as base. Contrary to this the recent sources state that *kawoMotolomi* was not the first king of Wolaitta rather he was conqueror king of all kings of the *Wolaitta-malla* dynasty. This is to say that as we shall see in the following discussion, conquest of *kawoMotolomi* that took place in the thirteenth century that indicates the power and hegemony of Wolaitta in the region.³⁷ it was for this reason that Zeleke Haile states “The kingdom of [Wolaitta] was a strong one and much devoted to its independence...The original home country was Damot, a hill on [Wolaitta]. They protected themselves from invaders by building walls and digging trenches around [Wolaitta].”³⁸

In spite of the fact that Damot was the capital political center of Wolaitta especially during the *Wolaitta-malla* dynasty, medieval history of Wolaitta was indicated first as in the literature as Damot linking the kingdom with *kawoMotolomi*-the expansionist king of medieval Wolaitta. Several sources reveal that king *Motolomi* (*SassoMotole*), as oral tradition called him, was the most powerful and expansionist king of the *Wolaitta-malla* dynasty. Informants and some written sources acknowledge that king *Motolomi* expanded his territory up to far distances in all directions and made his capital at Mount Damota (*SaattoMotoleTazaGaruwaa*).³⁹

The writers call the the kingdom of Wolaitta as Damot because they call the kingdom from its capital that is why most writers mentioned medieval state of Wolaitta as Damot. At this time it was very dominant kingdom in the area and the horn of Africa as “pagan” (this is to say that state was neither Christian nor Muslim). Among its kings the well known was *kawoMotolomi* and his interaction with *Igihizariya*; the mother of *Abune*(Saint) *TekleHaymanot* of the 13th century evangelist in Ethiopia. King *Motolomi* territory was vast because he was conquerer king in Wolaitta history, thus, he conquered *Shewa* people and *Igihizariya*; she became captive. For this reason after *Abune*(Saint) *TekleHaymanot* grew up he wanted to evangelize the kingdom which conquered his mother and many others. The strengthen and the socio-economic aspects of Damot recorded by different writers.⁴⁰

Damot was also a powerful kingdom in southern Ethiopia which contributed for the decline of even Aksum kingdom. It was probably for this reason that one of the documents stated that “Another possibility (cause for the decline of Aksum) is that the Aksumite power was ended by a southern pagan queen named *Bani al-Hamwiyah*, possibly of the tribe *al-Damutah* or *Damoti*.”⁴¹ Besides to this the record of Arab historian *IbnKhalidun* (1332-1406) cited in *TadesseTamirat* mentioned Damot in the following manner: “To the west of the countries of the *habesha*

(Abyssinia to mean the country of Tigray and Amhara) is situated the city of Damot. A great king ruled there in former times, and he had large empire...Oulasma (Walsma Sultanate of Shewa) had recognized the authority of the king of Damot."⁴² This witness was exactly similar with the oral information and other valid sources. Furthermore, the strengthen of Wolaittas indicated in the chronicle of king Yishak (r.1414-1429) of Tigray (core of Abyssinia) as "Walamo"⁴³ The state of Wolaitta from its capital in Mount Damota was organizes state at the time of the above witness, and Wolaitta was dominant and independent state.⁴⁴

The state of Wolaitta by its capital name: Damot was also recorded in the chronicle of AmdeTSION (1312-1334), chronicle of LibneDingel (1508-1540) which was written by chronicler of Zara Ya'eqob (1434-1468) and hagiography of *AbuneTekleHaymanot*. More details of Damot found in the hagiography of *AbuneTekleHaymanot* which was written in 1450. In this regard, the hagiography clearly mentioned its king and the power-fullness of the state. Thus, the successive literatures frequently mentioned the term Damot, and even the post 1894 researchers used to call the same thing until it faced the challenge after the development of professional history and emergence of native researchers who had plenty of information on the issue.⁴⁵

At least from 12th to 16th century, the kingdom of Wolaitta was known for the non-natives by the name "Damot". The reason was that Damot was the political center of the kingdom. Damot was on the top of Mount Damot (Damota), where non-natives call the kingdom as Damot. Even though the name of the kingdom was Wolaitta various sources mentioned the whole of its territory as Damot. The reason for this was that hagiography of *AbuneTekleHaymanot* (hagiography of Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot*) and other Abyssinian sources without crediting the indigenous name of the state which was Wolaitta, frequently mentioned Damot as the kingdom (though Damot was the place where the palace found). Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot* lived from 1215-1313, and his hagiography of Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot* was written after a century of his death. The hagiography states that the saint preached in the land of Wolaitta at that time the palace and political center of the kingdom was Damot. Besides, the hagiography of Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot* was written in 1450 known as Waldebba version, the DebreLibanos version in 1515, Synassarian version in 1550 and the Almeida vesion in 1585.⁴⁶

The first version was published in 1896 by Ernest Alfred Wallis Budge a British who lived between 1857-1934. The DebreLibanos version was published in 1906 by Carlo Conti Rossini (Italian who lived between 1872-1949), the Synassarian and Almeida (Manuel de Almeida, who lived 1580–1646) version was published in 1911 by IgnazioGuidi(an Italian 1844-1935) and in 1954 by C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntingford. The later two versions are the revision of the first two versions of hagiography of the saint. Thus, even-though the first version of the hagiography of the saint was written after 127 years of his passed way it mentioned the evangelical activities of the saint in Wolaitta. The saint then came to Damot; the capital of Wolaitta and met the powerful king called Motolomi.⁴⁷

According to oral tradition, the saint came to Wolaitta for two reasons. One was to see king Motolomi. Sources confirm that Motolomi captured the mother of *AbuneTekleHaymanot* called Igi hizariya as captive during his conquest of Shewa. At that time he took to his palace at Damot but she was escaped after seven months to her birth place in Bulga where she born saint. So as informants assert that he was probably came to Wolaitta at very

teenage after heard this story from his mother and wanted to see the king. Thus, the oral tradition and informants indicate that saint was the son of this king, and that is why he came at this age to see his true father under the umbrella of evangelization. The second reason why the saint come to Wolaitta was to evangelize the powerful kingdom which was ruled by pagan king and once captured saint's mother.⁴⁸

It seems for this intention that *AbuneTekleHaymanot* wanted to evangelize and revenge the king that captured his mother. Similarity, to this hagiography of Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot* states that the saint wanted to preach the country which invaded his mother and his mothers land. Therefore, the mentions in the hagiography of Saint *AbuneTekleHaymanot*, the story in the tradition of north Ethiopia, especially Shewa, Wollo and Tigray (where the saint preached) and the later Christian as well as European sources which based one of the above sources mention frequently about Damot. Thenafter, the name of the kingdom was called as Damot than Wolaittaduring medeival period. Thus, mentioning as Damot, the medeival Wolaitta was explained by various writers.⁴⁹

The established churches during *AbuneTekleHaymanot* found in Wolaitta, Borroda and Gofa still remains as evidence. Some written literature concerning the location of Damot lacked accuracy and trustworthiness. The reason for this is that most travel and missionary accounts based their writing from those informant out of the kingdom of Damot who only and only heard its strengthen and power. Besides, the pre-16th century written records only based the evidence from north Ethiopia which was neither bordering nor politically linked to the kingdom of Damot. Damot was however, the name for the capital of Wolaitta kingdom, from mount Damot in Wolaitta. On top of the mountain there was the palace called DomotTazaGarua; where king Motolomi lived and ruled the kingdom.⁵⁰

The written records after 16th century, based the hearsay and imaginary records of the pre-16th century story that confused the historical kingdom of Wolaitta and its capital Damot. Even in the 20th century, some of the writers based their narration on Wolaitta basing the pre-16th century records. However, the then time, records don't contradict on socio-economic and political history of Wolaitta but the difference exists on mapping of "Damot" as a kingdom. Since the writers based their source from those informants, who have no mapping knowledge, except the evidence of the strength of kings from Damot, the writers simply put their assumption for the location of Damot that led to misused mapping on Damot location. Contrary to this Carlo Conti Rossini in 1943 confirmed the kingdom of Damot wore the coat of the kingdom of Wolaitta and he put the location of Damot was Wolaitta. Thus, Damot was the political center and Wolaitta was the name of the kingdom.

Francisco Alvarez stated the existence and strengthen of Damot kingdom. He put the location of Damot west of Xoa (Shewa) and Muslim-merchants interest to slaves of Damot kingdom. The Muslim merchants connected the slaves of this kingdom to Arabia, Persia, India, Egypt and Greek. Alvarez mentioned Damot as power state having had trade contact with foreigners via the Muslim merchants.⁵¹ Though he did not mention the term Wolaitta in the document, all the attributes and facts were conducted the remains of medeival Wolaitta. The reason he mentioned only the term "Damot" was that the kingdom was governed from the palace in Damot which was the capital of the kindigom. Thus, almost all non-native sources accepted Damot as the kindomthan capital. Thus, up to recent time most writers call the center of the kingdom (Damot) as the name of the state (Wolaitta).⁵²

Manoel de' Almeida visited Ethiopia in 1824 and narrated the story of Damot kingdom by explaining Jesuit Father, Antonio Fernandez journey in Ethiopia. In his argument de' Almeida concluded that the territory of Damot but he put it was not vast as preceding writers exaggerated its territory.⁵³ It was clear that neither Manoel de' Almeida nor Antonio Fernandez see the center of the kingdom. Both travelers only heard the strengthen of its kings and about the strengthen of the kingdom. They also did not mention the location of the kings palace. This misleading documents and sayings misled Paul Balisky to accept and conclude the travel accounts of Antonio Fernandez paraphrased by Manoel de' Almeida⁵⁴ and Mohammed Hassen as fact.⁵⁵ However, the relatively fair and non-biased sources rejects this notion.

Contrary to this, the written accounts of Ludolf ("father of Ethiopia studies in Europe" but the author of this paper say him a father of Semetic studies in Europe than whole Ethiopian study) indicated the location of Damot. He put the location of Damot somehow south of the Blue Nile. However, Ludolf did not see Damot territory but the confiled all his story from Aba Gregory, (Ethiopia monk) who visited Europe at that time. This informant (Aba Gregory) by himself did not see Damot but only heard about its greatness by far distance when he was in Gojjam before going to Europe. If there is problem on locating the kingdom of Damot by Ludolf, it must not surprise anybody, because both informant (Gregory) and the writer (Ludolf) did not see the kingdom, except hearing its glory, and telling it. Ludolf stated about the kingdom what he heard from merchants.⁵⁶

Isenberg and Krapf (cited in Paul Balisky) clearly stated the matter of Damot kingdom and its expansionist king Sate Motolomi as well as the preaching of *AbuneTekleHaymanot*.⁵⁷ During the reign of Motolomi from his capital Damot (central Wolaitta) in the 13th century Shewa was conquered and made many captives including the mother of *AbuneTekleHaymanot*; Egizahariya. Egizahariya was stayed up to seven months in palace of king Motolomi; Xaza-Garua. Motolomi had planned to marry with her. The ceremony was prepared on the hill of Amigoda, currently the village is found in Soddo-Zuriya district at Zalla-Shasha. In this place, the king orderd a huge amount of preparation for wedding ceremony to be conducted inoreder to officially marry Egizahariya, and this place is still owned by the private family. However, she was escaped due to religious differences of the king; who followed the traditional religion whereas she was Christian religion follower, and she had already oath with Tsegaze-ab of Shewa. It was for this reason that *AbuneTekleHaymanot* come and preached in the land of Wolaitta after teen-age and church education in his birth place.⁵⁸

Similarly, Gebre Selassie; chronicler of Emperor Menelik II nineteenth century) clearly indicated that the kingdom of Wolaitta was mentioned as Damot in literature by mentioning the capital as the name of the kingdom. For this reason, he explained that the king from Damot and one of the Wolaitta-malla dynasty called king Motolomi conquered Shewa including the mother of *AbuneTekleHaymanot*. Thus, after the incorporation of Wolaitta kingdom to the Ethiopia Empire, the historical state of Wolaitta and its capital Damot was began to be reminded in historical setting. Therefore, the real name and location of Wolaitta was explained as Damot, whereas Damot was the capital. Thus, this study proved the fact that Wolaitta was the name of the kingdom and Damot was its capital from which writers and outsiders called the name of the kingdom.⁵⁹

Due to deliberate diversion of the fact, subjectivity, bias and lack of written language in WolaittaTsehayeBerhaneSellassie and TadesseTamirat technically separated and mentioned Wolaitta and Damot as separate kingdoms. The former based the later and vis-a-vis to divert the history of Wolaitta without identifying the historical fact (Damot was the capital for Wolaitta which was said that kings from Damot). They based either imagination or scanty sources. However, the archaeological excavation, oral tradition, indigenous studies and professional and other non-professional studies proved that Wolaitta is the name of the state and Damot was the capital where its palace found. The writers before 16th century explained the kingdom of Wolaitta in terms of its capital center than its name and it was commonly called Damot than Wolaitta as modern society call Washington instead of USA, Moscow instead of Russia, Pyongyang instead of North Korea, Asmara instead of Eritrea and the like. Furthermore, none of them visited the kingdom rather than saying about its strengthen and existence as kingdom.⁶⁰

The arguments of TadesseTamirat, TsehayeBerhaneSellassie and others based the same sources and diverted the historical facts. However, their hypothesis was disproved by the later studies of archaeological, historical, anthropological as well as oral traditions of the community. Besides, Paul Balisky based his conclusion on missing arguments of TadesseTamirat and TsehayeBerhaneSellassie. TsehayeBerhaneSellassie based her conclusion on misinformation of TadesseTamirat, and he never and ever collected data from Wolaitta. Thus, his Tadesse misconception was based on records of imaginary writings than facts on Damot and the kingdom of Wolaitta, even though he claims travelers and missionary accounts. Indeed, those travelers and missionaries gathered information about the kingdom of Wolaitta mentioned as Damot in far distance or out of the territory of the kingdom basing those informants, who had never seen neither Damot nor Wolaitta. Informants only heard about the prestige of the kingdom somewhere far in the south.⁶¹

Enarya was also stated in the literature as part of Wolaitta. For instance, AfeworkGebre Selassie linked Enarya as part of Wolaitta by putting its territorial limit, and indicating the term used by non-natives. Its capital was mentioned as Kindo (western Wolaitta in Omo Valley).⁶² Moreover, the term Enariya was also part of Wolaitta kingdom that was appeared in historical records of Charles T. Beke,⁶³ AleqaTayye⁶⁴, and Aba Bahrey cited in Getatchew Haile.⁶⁵ Getatchew Haile translated about Enarya which is witnessed by Aba Bahrey linked Wolaitta and Enariya. In similar manner, AleqaTaye indicated Kindo was once the political center. These all sources state that Wolaitta was ruled by organized dynasty despite the names of the state was mentioned in various forms by non-natives.

The existing oral history and written record do not show full picture of each kings or dynasties history, except the Tigre dynasty whose kings first recorded by J. Borelli.⁶⁶ Basing the anticipation of Jan Vasina to write the African past especially those who had no written record, it is possible to find the date for each of the existing three dynasties in Wolaitta. Mostly the Wolaitta oral tradition claim about twenty kings for each of the existing three dynasties; *Arujia*, *Wolaitta-malla* and *Tigriya*. As of Jan Vasina if each king had ruled 25 years the total of 20 kings in three dynasties ruled one thousand five hundred years, which would goes to the close of 4th century (394) A.D. However, it is difficult to conclude the year because the total known kings lists of Wolaitta were around fifty-one.

Proving the fifty-one king lists from the evidences the year went back to 619 A.D. Besides, the name of the kings might have been forgotten by the generation due to the length of the time. Thus, based on evidences, the kingship in Wolaitta might have begun between 4th to 7th century.⁶⁷

However, the existing oral tradition claim more dynasties and kings but it is difficult to identify some as either dynasty or king and even the name of the clan. The informants state names such as Bito, Bidinto, Hilala, Badiya, Badigala, Gada, Bayuwa, Bardela, Sane, Sabore, Samore and the like as the time of ruling period than specific kings. Contrary to this the manuscript of Zebdewos Chama Geramo claims some of the names above as dynasties, by mentioning totally ten dynasties in Wolaitta. His manuscript mentions Hilala, Bayuwa, Badiya, Bardala, Badigadala, Worde-haxe, *Wolaitta-malla* I, Arujia, *Wolaitta-malla* II and Tigre.⁶⁸ This shows that the Wolaitta had a long kingship history with dynastic rule. The informants don't mention the kings under each dynasty because of lack of written language, time longevity, loss of social memory, immigration and assimilation, the bias of the existing talks and the current socio-political scenario. The lion share was external socio-cultural and political developments of the end of the nineteenth century violated and blanketed the history of Wolaitta before 1894.⁶⁹

Based on evidences, the current study there were four dynasties in pre-conquest Wolaitta. These include *Wolaitta-malla I*, *Arujia*, *Wolaitta-malla II* and *Tigre*. *Wolaitta-malla* had established dynasty which was lost its power to the Arujia dynasty. After the ruling of nearly three hundred years, the Arujia became dictator. Then the community opposed Arujia and the Wolaitta-malla again came to power for the second time till its power was transferred to Tigre at the beginning of sixteenth century. For the first time Aysha Amado mentions the names of the kings.⁷⁰ By considering the methodological claim of Jan Vasina which provides the average of twenty-five years for African rulers, the four said dynasties had the following kings with their time intervals. Even though the oral tradition and oral informants claim the king kingship of Wolaitta to the B.C, this study proves that Wolaitta dynasty was established in the ninth century. In exceptional way, some Wolaitta kings ruled about forty years. For this reason the first *Wolaitta-malla* dynasty rulers were Bitto, Bidinto, Hansa, Haxiyo, Haxe, Worde, Woda, Sagada, Bure, Haruroand Halala. After the passage of time, the *Wolaitta-malla* political power was usurped by *Arujia* dynasty in the beginning of twelfth century. *Arujia* dynasty kings claimed were Badia, Badila, Badigadila, Barichigodira, Bade, Bayuwa, Burana, Gongga, Dangula and Damota. The *Wolaitta-malla* regained power from *Arujia* dynasty and restored or second *Wolaitta-malla* dynasty. Its kings were Sane, Sabore, Samore, Sagolo, Sa'ala, Salimona, Same, Sate, Zate, Sate-motoloroqe, Motolomi, Talame, Mosika, Mote, Oche and Lache.⁷¹ Among these kings, *kawo* Motolomi (SassoMotole) was the most powerful and expansionist ruler of Wolaitta whose territory was vast making up Mount Damota as his capital.

The Tigre dynasty begun to rule at least since the beginning 16th century to 1894 and ruled for four centuries. The Tigre dynasty was the fourth and well stated dynasty whose kings include Shumgayim Mikala (c.1504-1544) Girma 1544-1584), Azagna (1584-1609), Adaye (1609-1634), Kote (1634-1674), Libana (1674-1699), Tube (1699-1724), Sana (1724-1761), Ogato (1761-1800), Amado (1800-1835), Damote (1835-1845), Gobe (1845-1886) and Tona (1886-1894).⁷² Some of the Wolaitta kings ruled more than forty years, though the methodological claim of Jan Vasina which suggests to provide twenty-five years for each African traditional leader

to know their reign. For instance, *kawoMotolomi* (r.1200-1255),⁷³ *Kote* (1634-1674), *Sana* (1724-1761), *Ogato* (1761-1789) and *Gobe* (1839-1886) had ruled more than forty years. This was one of the indication that Wolaitta had organized monarchical system and its political command was organized based on divine kingship.⁷⁴

The historical Wolaitta state was categorized in to *bitta* (nation) which was the territorial entity, *deriya* (subdivision of nation), *allana/mantiya*(district) which had its own local leaders and *shucha* (village) was smallest unit. Village had specific market place and share many socio-cultural and economic activities. In the nineteenth century, Wolaitta had *hossipun-woyisha*(eight-principalitiesand *lapun-dana*(seven-administrators), and later they were adopted to *Kindo*, *Koisha*, *Sore*, *Boloso*, *Ofa*, *Humbo*, *Damota* and *Duguna*. Some sources claim that these *hossipun-woyisha* and *lapun-dana* had been the link of Wolaitta *Kucha*, *Borroda*, *Malo*, *Gamo*, *Konta*, *DawuroKoyira* and others. This was because they had common genealogy till they were disintegrated as separate principalities.⁷⁵

IV. CONCLUSION

State Formation and Kingship in Wolaitta appears, for the first time in present South Ethiopia, a historical kingdom in the consolidation of the vast territory. The state formation and the kingdom of Wolaitta begins with an overview of the period from 4th to 7th century. Thereafter issues related to state formation and kingship and are linked with the royal administration, legal and military institutions, various socio-cultural institutions, dynastic formation, relations between king and his servants, the development of divine kingship ideology and expansion of the state. The state of Wolaitta was characterized by organization of the state structure, strong dynasties, monarchical kings, genealogy and landholdings of powerful families, warrior kingdom, class division among societies and existence of socio-cultural and economic institutions. State development of Wolaitta was placed firmly within its African context. Therefore, Wolaitta was independent state established in Omo Valley with organized state structure till it incorporated to Ethiopian Empire in 1894.

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